



# Red River Ramblings

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## Four Sundays in April ~to enhance our journeys

### Sunday, April 7, 2013

#### What Is The Meaning Of Life?

The Rev. Dr. Don Fielding, *speaking*

A review of the history of the idea of meaning of life as it has been expressed over the ages, and a conclusion about where we have come to today.

#### DRUM ROLL PLEASE!

Today we start our Religious Education Program for children. (Details on page 4)

### Sunday, April 14, 2013

#### Mixed Blessings

The Rev. Dr Christine Tata, *preaching*

Complaining about taxes is definitely a first world problem. As we pay our taxes, we might well be advised that "gratitude can change your attitude." At the same time, we have a stake in knowing what our taxes are spent for. Let's come together and consider what it means to "render unto Caesar" and to explore what happens when we don't.

**Share The Plate Sunday:** Cash donations will be contributed to the Texoma Earth Day Festival

**Out To Lunch** - After church today we go Out To Lunch, this month to Nick's Family Restaurant (details on page 7)

- ☺ Adult Forum - 10
- ☺ Worship - 11:15
- ☺ Children's R.E. - 11:15
- ☺ Fellowship Gathering - 12:15

### Sunday, April 21, 2013

#### It Is Getting Hotter Than Hell

The Rev. Doug Strong, *preaching*

The world is getting hotter and it is getting dirtier and shifting water tables create sink holes and carbon credits confuse me and cleaner fuels saves wild life and curly cue light bulbs saved fuel and recycling everything from methane gas to dentures save landfills. It appears that even Religion is becoming eco-friendly. That leaves the politicians whose hot air is hotter than hell! A sermon For Earth Day.

### Sunday, April 28, 2013

#### The Noble Savage

Dr. Steven Denson, *speaking*

Dr. Denson returns to our pulpit this morning and will speak on the European thoughts on nature and the American Indian's role in the natural order vs. colonization and subsequent justification of everything from "civilizing the savage" to Indian relocation to Oklahoma. He explores how this lead to intertwining of Native and Christian faiths.

*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 understanding of Native American life.*



Elbert Leading the Parade

## Epistle from Elbert

What a wonderful Dedication Service we had! A great big round of applause to all who helped, way too many to list individually.

Actually, almost all members and friends contributed to the success of the day. But I will mention some who deserve *special* thanks: the Building Dedication team—Doug, Marla, and Faye—who put together an excellent and memorable program; the choir of Community UU of Plano and Dan Althoff, whose beautiful music added much to the day; to speakers Don Fielding (retired minister and frequent guest minister at RRUU), Peter Morales (president of the UUA), Lisa Casto of Horizon UU (who read a statement from minister Dennis Hamilton), and Aaron White (former RRUU member and now associate minister at First UU Dallas) for their messages of congratulations regarding RRUU's accomplishments; to Doug Strong, Dan Althoff, and Marion Hill, who wrote and presented highlights of RRUU's history; to the Good Times Team, especially organizer Marilyn Alexander, who prepared that sumptuous, delicious buffet for the reception; and to all those who worked on cleaning and "spiffing up" our building and grounds for the occasion. Thanks, as well, to all who came from NTAUUS and from other congregations in north Texas to help us celebrate.

Our all-church spring workshop is set for April 6, 2013, 10 a.m.-12:30 p.m. (lunch provided). Mary Sue Foster, from First UU Dallas, will be the facilitator. Mary Sue led our board retreat last summer and is good at helping congregations and boards to see where they are now, where they want to go, and how to get there. Please come! We need the ideas, energy, and enthusiasm of each of you.

Earth Day Texoma is coming up April 20, 2013, in downtown Sherman. The Green Team Chalice Circle of our church are the primary organizers, and lots of hands and feet are needed to make the event a success. It is our biggest outreach in the north Texas area. If you can volunteer time to help with Earth Day Texoma, see Carole Harner (treasurer@rruu.org). She needs all the volunteers she can get to man booths, carry water, direct visitors, and so on. It's an all-day event, but you can volunteer for as few or as many hours as you choose.

See you in church, friends!  
Elbert

## Booked for Lunch ~ Apr 11<sup>th</sup>



The date is April 11 at 11 am. In the Emerson Room. Conversation - mostly about books. Books you have read recently, read long ago, books you want to read when your life slows down..... Join us for this and lunch, which will be provided by The Lunch Fairy.

## New Members



On Easter Sunday we welcomed four new members, Rick and Lesli Dauenbaugh (with Matisse and Hawk), Jana Norris and Terry Watson. The next time you're at church be sure and introduce yourself.

# "Who, Exactly Are We?"

An All-Church Retreat

Sat. April 6, 2013

10 - 12:30

followed by **Pizza and brownies**

meeting at church

This spring we are celebrating our accomplishments as a congregation. We have overcome great odds. Despite small numbers, changes in leadership, challenges with location and funding, we have a home and we have a congregation. Neither of those is a small accomplishment.

We will spend the morning working on defining ...

- ♦ Who, exactly, are we?
- ♦ What have we been dreaming?
- ♦ Who do we want to become over the next few months & years?
- ♦ What could we, together, dream into existence that would be so compelling, so satisfying, so nurturing, that we would all know that each of us is cherished and important.

Impossible in only one morning?

We'll use Appreciative Inquiry and other tools to uncover and clarify our hopes and dreams, engaging in some simple conversations to restore and enhance our hope in the future. Everything we do at the retreat, you can replicate in your own families and organizations to re-kindle an exciting future there as well.

MarySue Foster, our facilitator, says, *"I promise this is one of the most powerful mornings you will spend in three ways ..."*

- ♦ *You will be, literally, creating a new future for RRUU based on the work you've already done*
- ♦ *You will be creating new relationships with old friends and new and*
- ♦ *You will be building strong bonds for the future of this congregation, bonds that can only grow over the months and years to come."*

**The retreat is free and open to everyone associated with our congregation!**

## R.E. for Children Starts!

After months of planning and with much gratitude to the grant we received from NTAUUS



along with renovating and updating various rooms and installing a safe kid-friendly playground, our R.E. program for children starts

this Sunday.

The curriculum which Lesli (and by now everyone knows Lesli Dauenbaugh is our new Director of Religious Education) created, *Biographies of Famous UU's*, sounds intriguing and even involves those of us who once were kids, if we can remember back that far!

To help the children understand what a biography is, they will be writing a brief biography of the members of RRUU. Each Sunday, members will be approached by a child and asked a short series of questions, and have their picture taken. Remember how nervous you were as a child when you had to approach an adult? Keep that in mind when a soft voice asked you if they might interview you. Please say yes! We want our children to know how much we appreciate them.

If you are not comfortable posing for a picture, you will be asked to provide a picture, a painting, or written word you feel best describes you. When the biographies are complete, they will be displayed, and the members will be invited for a viewing.

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*When a soft voice asked you if they might interview you. Please say yes! We want our children to know how much we appreciate them.*

## Tx UU Social Justice Conference

The new Texas UU Justice Ministry was formed to raise the voice of Unitarian Universalist values in the public arena. All UUs (and friends) are invited to a special conference on **Saturday, April 13th** at Community UU Church in Plano.

The UU Justice Ministry seeks to have UU values enacted into legislation and then promulgated in public policy. This conference was designed to help UUs in North Texas learn more about this important ministry and to provide an opportunity for members from various churches to discuss ways to increase our effectiveness by working together.



Our special speaker for this event is Rev. Chuck Freeman from Austin. Rev. Freeman is the founding minister of the Free Souls Church in Round Rock, Texas. He is the creator, producer, and host of the radio program "Soul Talk,"

which has been broadcasting since 1996. His op ed pieces have been published in the Austin American Statesman; Austin's NPR affiliate, KUT; and The Washington Post/Newsweek "On Faith" blog. He is a dynamic speaker who will talk to you about this ministry and inspire you to get involved. You will learn many important things that you can do to uplift our UU values.

Mark your calendar and be sure to attend! Child-care will be provided, and a free lunch following the session (12:30 p.m. to 1:30 p.m.) will provide an opportunity to meet and chat with individuals from area churches and to brainstorm about how we can work together.

Registration is not required, but to help us plan for the lunch you must RSVP to [UUInAction@CommunityUUChurch.org](mailto:UUInAction@CommunityUUChurch.org) if you plan to attend the lunch.

## Adult Forum for April ~ Sunday Mornings 10 am



During April we will explore *Cultural Literacy for Religion: Everything the Well-Educated Person Should Know*,

a video series by Mark Berkson for the first two Sundays and then continue our exploration of *Building Your Own Theology* for the last two Sundays

### April 7

Video lecture #4 (Cultural Literacy for Religions) covers Hindu God and devotional practices.

### April 14

Video lecture #5 (Cultural Literacy for Religion) is from Gita to Gandhi----Yogas and Modern Hinduism.

### April 21

Building Your Own Theology, pp. 4-12, "Unity and Diversity: What Holds Us Together?"

Discussion about Theological Perspectives and the Dogmatism Index.

### April 28

Building Your Own Theology, pp. 13-20, "The Nature of Spirituality: What is Holy?" Discussion about: Does life matter? A sense of humor, connectedness, commitment to justice conviction that the good life is necessarily messy.

## The Sweet Smell of Success . . .

is something everyone savors. The best part of the sweet smell of success is that it has *no aroma*. And that is significant for us at church because among our midst are people who suffer from fragrance sensitivity, a condition which is defined as a disability by the Americans with Disabilities Act.

Fragrance sensitivity is either an irritation or an allergic reaction to some chemical, or combination of chemicals, in a product. Although perfumes and colognes are generally what come to mind when discussing fragrance sensitivity, fragrance is often added to a variety of daily use items including but not limited to toiletries, cosmetics, air fresheners, cleaning products, and pesticides. Materials used in fragrance are not required to be disclosed on labels, which can make it difficult to identify the ingredient or product that is responsible for the sensitivity

The hard part about Fragrance sensitivity is the prevailing attitude "Oh, it all in their head." It is in their head (can't breathe) and on their body (rashes, etc.).

Please remember as you get ready for church to think about hand lotion, after shave cologne, scented fabric softeners and avoid them for the morning.

We want RRUU to be a welcoming place for everyone and we all can do our part to keep it as fragrance free as possible.

## In Search of Leaders ~

The Nominating Committee is looking for a few good people to serve in the following leadership positions:

- ◆ Vice President - 2 yr term
- ◆ Board Secretary - 2 yr term
- ◆ Trustee at Large - 2 yr term
- ◆ Committee on Ministry - 3 yr
- ◆ Nominating Committee - 3 yr
- ◆ Nominating Committee - 1 yr

In a small church as ours, it can be difficult to get people to take their turn at serving in leadership positions. If you are willing to take your turn, or if you wish to nominate someone, please contact anyone on the nominating committee:

L.D. Clark; Faye Shadrack or Marla Loturco.

Recently Bruce Cameron and others went on an expedition exploring the crawl space under the chapel. Several once-alive critters were removed, along with an assortment of potential culprits that could be thwarting our commitment to fragrance free environment. It all helps. Thanks for doing your part.

## A Look At The Books! ~ The Feb. Financial Report

In the month of February we had income of \$2,646 from general operations. After operations expense of \$2,176, we had a net income from operations of \$470.

We also received donations of \$600 for renovations in February and spent \$619, primarily on the playground equipment. I'd like to especially thank the Alexanders for all the work they have done on the playground. It's looking great!

On a year to date basis, our net income from general operations covers our year to date principal payments. That is a big step forward and is much better than our budget. The improvement is primarily due to lower expenses than budgeted and to additional donations.

For the year to date period of July through February 2013, we had net income of \$4,214 from operations on the income statement. We also

had expense of (\$3,161) for the cash payment of principal on our loan, income of \$1,195 for renovations, expense of (\$1,500) for the board retreat that was covered by a grant from last year, and received \$9,000 for two new NTAUUS grants for a RE program and worship.

As of the end of February 2013, we had cash of \$48,188 and debt of \$40,305. The cash amount includes \$4,331 reserved for renovations and \$11,050 reserved for grants for the RE program, worship and board retreats.

In February we contributed \$31 to the Earth Day Festival from the Share the Plate program.

Carole Harner, Treasurer

## Board Bits ~ From the March 14, 2013 board meetings.

The entire congregation is encouraged to attend the spring workshop April 6, 2013, 10 a.m.-12:30 p.m., with lunch being provided. More details are printed elsewhere in this newsletter.

Lesli Dauenbaugh has been hired as Director of Religious Education and began work on a planning phase March 1, 2013.

We have been trying for some time to move our Adopt-a-Street commitment from Harrison St. to a street or streets closer to our new home. Kat Walston has learned that the

City of Denison has decided to cancel that program for now.

Reminder: The Stewardship Team has distributed pledge forms and Time-&-Talent cards to all members and friends. Hopefully, you've already returned your completed documents. If you haven't done so, please do it right away so that we can intelligently budget for expenses for next fiscal year. (Commitment Sunday, when all pledge materials are due in, is April 6.)

Thanks, everyone, for your help in keeping the church running well!

Remember that any member or friend is welcome to attend board meetings (usually held at 1:00 p.m.

on the second Thursday of the month) to address a concern, propose new business, or just to see how the board works.

Elbert

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***Reminder: Commitment Sunday, when all pledge materials are due in, is April 6th. Thanks everyone for your help in keeping the church running well!***

## Texoma Earth Day Festival ~ Apr 20<sup>th</sup>

The Earth Day Festival, now in its 5th year, is the largest outreach ministry we have. Our tiny congregation creates this event - and over 3,000 people attend.



Come and be part of this day - be a volunteer. Take 2 hours, or 4 or 6 or 8 and flaunt your faith by volunteering. While you're at it, tell people why it is that our church make this day possible - our gift to the community. We're educating people about why it is so important (nationally over 80% of

American homes have some sort of local recycling available to them - not nearly that many actually recycle however.)

Right now - click [HERE](#) and fill out your volunteer form and send it or give it to Carole Harner. The festival is more than a lot of fun - it is a way for us to let the larger community know who we are and what we're about. Besides you get a spiffy T-shirt you can wear to church the next day!



*Flaunt Your Faith! Be a  
volunteer at the Earth Day  
Festival - we create it!*

### Canopy Needed

One of the non-profit organizations having a booth at the Festival is in need of a 12x12 (or smaller) canopy. Might you have one? If so, please let us know - click [here](#).



## Out To Lunch ~ April 14<sup>th</sup>



Several people have suggested that we to Nick's Family Restaurant, which is at 210 S Austin Ave, Denison - (903) 463-3687 and that's half a mile from church (2 minute drive).(OK the sign is from a restaurant back east but it may help us remember the name of the place!).

Everyone is invited to come - it is a Dutch-treat affair, there is no agenda other than having a good time together. It's a super way to meet folks from church that you might not know very well.

Do come! People generally get there around 12:35.

## Meditation Group

Back from their winter "break" the Meditation group will meet after church on April 28th. They meet in the Barton Parlor @ 12:45 and anyone who would like to learn more about meditating or enjoy meditating is invited to attend.

## April Birthdays

Apr 7 - Matisse Dauenbaugh

Apr 7 - Bruce Cameron

Apr 27 - Pablo Cohen

## Missing Vases

Might anyone know what happened to all the glass vases which were part of the Worship Team's stash of "goodies" for use on Sunday mornings? Not one could be found for the building dedication or the flower communion service.

If you took one home perhaps to wash, or because it had flower remaining from a service, could you bring it back?

Or if you have any large vases that you're tired of dusting, consider donating them to the church.

## Movable Feast

April's Movable Feast will be at Chez Hill in Durant (better known as Marion and Elbert's Place!) on **Thursday, April 18 @ 6 p.m.** The food theme is Middle-Eastern which one can define very loosely.

Please let the Hills know by April 11 if you're be coming and what you'll bring. Click [here](#) to reply.

Road construction may make getting to their place a challenge, so plan ahead or ask Marion for directions.

## 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: *Marilyn*

Communications: *Doug*

Chalice coordinator: *Open*

DRE: *Leslie*

Finance/Endowment: *Dan*

Good Times: *Carolyn, Carole,  
 Lura, Marilyn & Marion*

Long Range Planning:

*Amy, Gil, Marilyn*

Membership: *Marion*

Nominations: *Faye, L.D., Marla*

NTAUUS Rep: *Marla*

Safe Congregation Panel: *Elbert*

Social Action: *Open*

Ways & Means: *Open*

Worship:

*Carla, Doug, Faye, Marla*

## The Rhetoric of Worship Workshop ~ June 14<sup>th</sup>



A 3-hour workshop coming June 14th (from 1 - 4 pm) with Rev. Dr. Christine Tata. Here's a peek at what we'll be studying. Open to all who wish to attend.

### Logos

Worship begins with the *logos*, the word – the verbal message that you want to deliver. We'd talk about the best ways to choose and deliver those words, and how important it is that they are heard – and how very important the words are in our tradition. What message does the church want to give?

### Ethos

Then we'd talk about the church's *ethos* – it's attributes and reliability as a source of truth. The ethos of an institution is displayed in the attention it pays to the necessary components of its work. If everything is sloppily done, the sound is bad, the hymns don't fit, the offering is lackluster, the missions are forgotten, and the worship unprepared, it belies the important message it is trying to convey in its logos. Here is where we would address all the technical details that are so important.

### Pathos

Finally, once we have defined our logos, and we have created a reliable ethos, our worship can evoke *pathos* – it can encourage the movement of the human heart. This third session would talk about how vulnerable people can be when they come to church and the worship leader's responsibility to be generous and cautious and kind, in helping people move through the moments. The church needs to have a coherent message and a credible, competent framework, in order to make a safe space for feelings. We'd talk about the music, and the candles, and the meditation, and all the other ways in which the human heart responds to worship at its best.

## 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 go to The Blue Door restaurant in Sherman on March 7<sup>th</sup>. Details on Page 7. Speak with the facilitators: [Elbert & Marion Hill](#).

**OMMMM... Meditation Group**, Meditation will resume Sunday April 28th. Since we have refreshments after the service, we will not have pot luck. We'll discuss it and see if people would like to resume potluck. 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 April 11<sup>th</sup>

**OUT TO LUNCH**, 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. See page 6 for details. Email [announcements@rruu.org](mailto:announcements@rruu.org) if you have a restaurant suggestion.

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