



# Red River Ramblings

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## REMEMBER...

You can access the church calendar by clicking on the picture below.



[Adult Forum](#)

10:00

[Worship](#)

11:15

[Children's R.E.](#)

11:15

[Fellowship](#)

[Gathering](#)

12:15

## Meaningful and Spirited Sundays ~ Each Week!

**January 5, 2014**

### **The Power of New Beginnings: Burning Bowls and Resolutions**

The Worship Team

While we could mark time on any day, it is humankind's custom to pause at the start of each year to take stock; to pledge to do better; to make promises to ourselves and one another. On this first Sunday of 2014 we will take time to intentionally let go and set ablaze that which we want to release – the pains, the hurts, the failures, the regrets and then set free our aspirations, covenants, hopes, dreams.

**Sunday, January 12, 2014**

### **A Sermon in Song**

Jim Scott, in concert

Songwriter and singer Jim Scott returns to grace our chapel with a morning of music. Many people know Jim as a member of the Paul Winter Consort. Jim has a long connection with UUs. His hymn, "Gather the Spirit" has become a staple for many congregations, one of three he has in the UU Hymnbook. There's lots of good humor in his songs; kids and adults will all find something to laugh as well as sing about.

*Jim has long been active in the Unitarian Universalist (UU) Church. and has visited over 300 UU churches across the country, leading services, presenting concerts, and offering workshops. Three of Jim's songs are included in the new Unitarian Universalist Hymnbook, and "Gather The Spirit," has become a favorite across the denomination. Jim has served on the board of the UU Musicians Network and*

*was Co-Chair of the ecological/spiritual activist group the UU "Seventh Principle Project." Share The Plate Sunday! Cash donations will be given to the Grayson County Shelter.*

**Sunday, January 19, 2014**

### **The Existential Grand Canyon**

Dr. William Fridley, *speaking*

Existentialism, the meaning of life, personal identity, and my trip to the Grand Canyon.

*William Lloyd Fridley is an Associate Professor of Education and has been at Southeastern Oklahoma State University since 1999. He teaches Foundations of Education and his areas of expertise are philosophy of education, professional ethics and ethical theory, and multicultural education. William is also an artist and song writer and collaborates with his wife Carolyn in musical recording, performing and other creative projects.*

**Sunday, January 26, 2014**

### **Unitarian Universalism: Living at the Intersection of Science and Humanities**

The Rev. Doug Strong, preaching

What is the proper role of science in modern thought? Some argue science is the avenue leading us to deeper insights about everything. Not so fast, clamor Believers who point out the science can't explain some of the most perplexing human concepts – like beauty, or love.

On Sunday, a look at this intriguing intersection and how liberal religion can snuggle in and happily exist without taking sides.



## Elbert's Epistle ~ Update from the president

Happy New Year! 2013 seems to be going out with a whimper rather than a bang. Our average fall attendance has been slightly down from that of a year ago.

However, there are signs that growth is coming. Two new families with children have been attending fairly regularly the past few months, and other visitors have indicated that they will return. Three people have indicated an interest in joining RRUU, and a membership induction ceremony is being planned for early in the New Year. Please invite friends and acquaintances to visit, especially those who are not attending church elsewhere.

In case you missed the announcement in a recent e-news, another member of our congregation will receive the Marty Robinson Award (given to a non-paid volunteer) at the January luncheon of NTUUC (North Texas Unitarian Universalist Congregations). Marion Hill has been a member of RRUU since its beginning and has served admirably in many positions. She has helped keep the church going through many, sometimes-difficult, situations. Yes, I know that I am biased, since she has been my wife now for

just over 49 years.

Marion is the fifth person from RRUU to receive the Marty Robinson Award since it began to be given five years ago. We have numerous wonderful, giving people in our congregation, and I expect many more individuals will be so recognized in coming years.

I have a lot of hope for the coming year. There must be a number of folk in southern Oklahoma and northern Texas who are turned off by traditional religion and would love to find a church like ours. How do we reach them? How do we let them know who we are and what we practice? If you have ideas about outreach, share them with me or another board member.

See you in church,

Elbert

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*"We have numerous wonderful, giving people in our congregation and I expect many more individuals will be so recognized in coming years."*



*In concert ~ at RRUU, Sun. morning, Jan 12<sup>th</sup>*

*Jim will be also singing on Sat. Jan 11<sup>th</sup> @ Community UU Church in Plano*

*For more information check out his website [Jim Scott Music](http://JimScottMusic.com)*

## Adult Forum ~ Sundays @ 10 AM

**Jan. 5** (p. 13-17) **Doing the right thing for the wrong reason...**...physician assisted suicide

**Jan. 12** **“Emerson, Thoreau, and the Transcendentalist Movement”** Professor Ashton Nichols, Dickinson College, from *The Great Courses*. (Lecture #1) Few movements in American social and intellectual history have been as influential as the ideas called Transcendentalism. The course will cover Ralph Waldo Emerson’s “Self-reliant soul” Henry David Thoreau’s “different drummer”, Emily Dickinson, Frederick Douglass and lectures about lesser known Americans. Religious dimensions and contributions to American politics and society, its effect on contemporary



America will be discussed. It will begin with the life and career of Ralph Waldo Emerson.

**Jan. 19** **The Roots of American Transcendentalism** (Lecture #2) an American attempt to produce a new philosophy that would serve a new nation.

**Jan. 26** **Emerson and the Idea of America...**(Lecture #3) his life and works helped produce a vision of America that is still with us today...self-reliance was a concept that summer up an entire philosophy of life.

## Marion Hill to be Honored ~ with the Marty Robinson Award on Jan 25<sup>th</sup>



Marion Hill is one of 34 charter members of our congregation and has, over the years, been a sterling inspiration by her continuous willingness to be of service. On Jan 25<sup>th</sup> she will become the fifth member of RRUU to receive

Marty Robinson Volunteerism Award at the annual NTUUC Awards Luncheon.

Marion has served on nearly every church committee—Treasurer, membership, finance, endowment, and shares her culinary skills by often providing mouth watering pies and cakes. Along with her husband, Elbert, she co-chairs our most popular Chalice Circle, The Moveable Feast and heads up our outreach project with the Grayson County Shelter. Marion is a member of the Green Team and has been a volunteer at all Texoma Earth Day Festivals. She also has led worship and the Adult Forum.

Marion has served on two search committees to find a permanent home for the church and was the organizer for the loan for our current building. She found members of the church willing to

make loans to the church and found the lawyers to write the paperwork. She has been an active supporter of UUSC, Chalice Lighters, UU-United Nations Office and for the last ten years been a delegate to General Assemblies along with participating in SWUUSI, District and NTUUC workshops and events.

Marion is a dedicated worker, and an inspirational leader. She is quietly efficient and inspires others to do their best by her example. She is a born moderator when issues arise and always looks at the good side of people. She truly lives our UU principles and her leadership, work and devotion has made a positive impact on Red River UU. As a published author, she also has written articles, reports and publicity pieces for local media outlets.

Marion takes her UU beliefs out into the world with her work in the Oklahoma Women’s Democrats, along with the Grayson County Shelter and the Texoma Earth Day Festival. She is brilliant, patient, encouraging, steadfast and an encouragement to all to live up to our beliefs.

Congratulations, Marion!

## Board Bits ~ from the December 2013 Board Meeting

The RRUU Board has changed its regular meeting time from the second Thursday to the third Thursday of each month. We will still meet at two o'clock at the church. Remember that anyone with a concern can attend and present that concern to the board. Time is always set aside each month near the beginning of each meeting to hear concerns of the congregation.

The board has applied for two grants from NTUUC (North Texas Unitarian Universalist Congregations, the regional cluster of UU churches of which RRUU is a member). One grant will

help with buying and installing heating and air-conditioning for the top floor of our building, which is needed to make that space useable year-round. Currently, we need to be able to use the upper-floor classrooms for our Children's R.E. classes, which are an important part of the program RRUU offers to families, but on some days North Texas temperatures don't cooperate.

The other grant request asks for funds to help provide music to enhance our worship services. We're lucky enough—and very grateful—to have several talented musicians in our congregation who provide

music some Sundays. But these folk often have other responsibilities that prevent their playing as often as congregants would like. Being able to hire others from outside our congregation from time to time will allow our Worship Team to add live music to our services more frequently.

We will learn at the NTUUC luncheon in January if either of our grants will be funded. Anyone interested in attending that luncheon is welcome, and encouraged, to attend. Details, including cost, will be in an upcoming e-news.

Elbert Hill,  
*president*

## Treasurer's Report ~ A Monthly Update on our Finances

In the month of November, we had income of \$2,368 from general operations. After operations expense of \$1,198 for the month, we had a net income from operations of \$1,170.

In November we had renovation expense of \$931 primarily for lighting and work on the stairs, but no renovation income. We also had grant expense of \$739 for worship and religious education.

For the year to date period of July 2013 through November 2013, we had net income of \$9,216 from operations, net expense from renovations of \$5,857, grant expense of \$3,927 and principal payments of \$1,964. The total change in cash for the year to date period was a decrease of \$2,532. This was lower than our budget primarily due to the window replacement project that was

funded by our renovation fund in savings.

As of the end of November 2013, we had cash of \$48,756 and debt of \$37,373. The cash amount includes \$487 reserved for renovations and \$6,369 reserved for grants.

In November we donated \$120 from the Share the Plate program to the Grayson County Shelter.

Carole Harner, Treasurer

**Calling All Activists!** RSVP at [ntuuc.org/socialaction](http://ntuuc.org/socialaction) so that we can plan for lunch. Thanks

**What?** A meeting to learn about the social justice and community service work of the North Texas UU congregations are doing, and what we want to accomplish.

**Why?** How we can be more effective working together?

**Who?** All in NTUUC interested in a stronger and more sustainable society.

**Where?** Community UU Church, Plano

**When?** January 11, 2014 9:30-3:30

Keynote: ***Flinging the Coin of Compassion*** with **Rev. Chuck Freeman** Executive Director, Texas UU Justice Ministry

## Children's Religious Education ~Exploring, Learning & Growing!

*RE members should meet in the dining room between 11 and 11:15 and we will be going upstairs at 11:15 to the Arts & Crafts room for the lesson and craft of the day.*

**Jan. 5** Students will read and lead discussion about the first two of the Seven Principles from *Everybody Is Important*. (Everyone is important and treat one another with respect.) Role play with decorated little faces on sticks. Draw pictures of #1 & #2. (Label with stickers.)

**Jan. 12** Students will read and lead discussion about principles three and four from *Everybody Is Important*. (How to be the best we can be and together we learn about the world and what is true.) Role play with decorated little faces on sticks or brain storm. Draw pictures of #3 & #4. (Stickers)

**Jan. 19** Students will read and discuss principles five, six and seven from *Everybody Is Important*. (Everyone has a right to be heard, together we work to a world that is peaceful and fair, and we respect the earth and all living things.) Draw #5-7 & label. One sheet of paper, one marker for each person. Draw a shape or object on your paper and pass it to the right. The next person draws another shape or object that touches the first one, continue around the table until everyone has drawn on each sheet. Discuss what you see in each drawing.

**Jan.26** Students will read *Reverence for Life* from *What if Nobody Forgave*, about Albert Schweitzer. Pretend you're creating a color book about Albert Schweitzer's life, for children. Make an outline drawing showing a part of this story and at the bottom write two sentences that describe what's happening in the picture.

Joyce Peak, D.R.E.



## 2013 in the Rearview ~by Don Mathis\*

*America may think our news was the worst,  
but tragedies elsewhere were always first.  
Paula Dean misspoke regarding race  
and Duck Dynasty star was nearly fired for his  
views on gays.  
But we haven't seen anything yet  
compared to North Korea's missile threat.  
We were angry as the trial of George Zimmerman  
as well as Jodi Arias who killed her boyfriend.  
The Boston bombers' stunt made us mad  
and the Naval Yard shooter left us sad.  
These deaths were senseless but still  
not as tragic as the Nairobi Mall 60 killed.  
The economy in Detroit fell through the floor  
but we barely noticed Syria's Civil War.  
An Oklahoma tornado left a mess to clean  
but nothing like the typhoon in the Philippines.  
We complain Russia doesn't respect gay men  
but glad they gave asylum to Edward Snowden.  
We acted all incensed at the Miley Cyrus twerk  
and oohed and awed at the royal birth.*

*Meanwhile the Asiana jet crashes and we take it in stride.  
Same goes for the victims of the Cleveland kidnapper and his  
suicide.  
Millions celebrated and millions were taken aback  
at the passing of the Affordable Health Care Act.  
At least we didn't have another federal shutdown miscarriage  
when the Supreme Court ruled in defense of gay marriage.  
He went from prison to president of South Africa  
and the world grieved the death of Nelson Mandela.  
We hold our breath as we all hope  
for positive changes from the new pope.  
The era will soon be 2014 in age  
and we remove another calendar page.*

\*Don is very involved in the poetry community in Bexar County. He is a founding member of the San Antonio Poetry Fair. His poetry has been published in anthologies and periodicals and has appeared on local TV and national radio. Before moving from Sherman to San Antonio, he was an active member of RRUU.



## Worship Feedback Survey ~ A Summary

The Worship Team reports that 25 people took the survey and reviewed both the statistical information and each optional comment offered. The percentages listed in the following summary are the sum total of those who answered each question as either “*Very Important*” or “*A nice plus for the morning*”. Those whose responses were “*Neutral*” were excluded from the summary.

The most important part of the service for everyone (100% said this) is the *Sermon/Remarks/Talk*. The topics people most enjoy are *Philosophical Questions* (92%). The other topics which ranked high are *Ethical Question* (84%), with *Spirituality; Church Members Speaking*; and *Relationship Issues* next (80% for each), followed with *Credo Statements* and *the Human Condition* (76% for each).

The *Candles of Community; Opening Thought; Offertory Music* and *Extinguishing the Chalice* are ranked high by over 90%. Eighty per cent like the *Prelude, Chalice Lighting; Spoken Affirmation, Offering* and the *Closing Words*.

The popularity of the *hymns* indicate that 64% enjoy *The First Hymn*; 56% the second and only 36% like *The Third Hymn*. *Responsive Readings* are less important (36%) while 68% would enjoy more variety in the Order of Things.

The Rituals and Celebrations that ranked the highest by over 80% included *Musical Programs; New Member Recognition; Water and Flower Communion*. While 44% never look for *Easter*, several said they enjoyed last year’s Flute concert (and the Worship Team has already booked Cornell Kinderknecht for Easter 2014). The speakers people most enjoyed were the Revs. Christine Tata, Doug Strong and Don Fielding.

The top ranking reason people come was “*Learning Something*” (100%) followed with “*Intellectual Stimulation*” “*Seeing Friends*” “*The Speaker*” and “*Supporting the Church*” (96% for each).

Most of those who replied to the survey indicated that they attend 3 or more Sundays a month (92%). 72% said they have never leave the service feeling sorry they came while 80% reported they leave the church uplifted and glad they came 4 or more Sundays a month.

Over the next several months the Worship Team plans on incorporating the information culled from the survey. The raw data for each question is posted on the bulletin board outside the chapel for everyone to peruse.

## Sunday Speakers ~ A Sneak Peak

Some of the speakers the Worship Team has scheduled this spring include

- Dr. Jacqueline M. Moore, professor of History, Austin College
- Dr. Melanie Harris, professor of Religion & Ethics, Texas Christian University
- Singer Andrew McKnight
- Ashley Earls, Director Grayson County Shelter
- Dr. Rachel Tudor, Collin County College
- Dr. Jim Chastain, President of Final Exit (Death with Dignity)
- Flutist Cornell Kinderknecht
- Dr. Susan Gore, UU Seminary student
- Marion Hill & Elbert Hill

WORD FIND - COVENANT

B	M	A	I	O	E	X	P	E	R	I	E	N	C	E	X	S
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O	S	V	E	O	A	S	E	X	I	L	Y	C	L	Z	P	O
I	A	B	C	E	Y	C	Z	C	T	T	L	M	O	N	P	I
T	R	E	C	N	O	I	S	S	I	M	S	D	V	Y	A	T
A	T	I	O	N	N	A	C	R	P	T	I	H	E	P	R	C
G	B	A	M	Y	G	I	G	B	W	E	C	X	R	T	T	A
E	M	O	M	W	E	E	S	T	Q	E	U	A	S	T	I	R
R	N	P	U	I	T	C	C	S	T	E	W	D	R	P	C	E
G	E	I	N	N	A	Q	U	A	Z	B	P	X	T	P	I	T
N	S	N	I	S	D	U	R	S	R	N	O	I	P	C	P	N
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C	X	O	Y	Y	P	E	R	E	G	A	R	D	C	T	T	C
B	N	N	T	E	T	B	V	I	S	I	O	N	C	T	I	P
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L	A	U	G	H	A	T	C	E	P	S	E	R	E	W	N	V

- ACCEPT
- BOUNDARIES
- CARE
- COMMUNITY
- CONGREGATION
- EXPERIENCE
- INTEGRITY
- INTERACTIONS
- LAUGH
- LOVE
- MISSION
- OPINION
- PARTICIPATION
- PRACTICE
- POSITIVE
- REGARD
- RESPECT
- SEPARATE
- VISION

Happy Hunting!

The answer will be posted on the bulletin board outside the chapel on February 1st

## Leadership

### Board of Trustees

Elbert Hill, *president*  
 Gil Alexander, *vice president*  
 Carole Harner, *Treasurer*  
 Doug Strong, *Secretary*  
 Paula Blackshear, *Trustee*  
 Marla Loturco, *Past President*

### Committee on Ministry:

Gerry Shehan, Peter Schulze

### Team Leaders or Team:

**Adult Forum:** *Joyce*

**Aesthetics Team:**

*Bruce, Joyce, Maura, Paula*

**Building/Grounds:** *Marilyn*

**Communications:** *Doug*

**Chalice coordinator:** *Open*

**DRE:** *Joyce*

**Finance/Endowment:** *Dan*

**Good Times:** *Carole,*

*Marilyn & Marion*

**Long Range Planning:**

*Amy, Gil, Marilyn*

**Membership:** *Marion*

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

**NTUUC Rep:** *Marla*

**Safe Congregation Panel:**

*Elbert*

**Social Action:** *Gil*

**Ways & Means:** *Open*

**Worship:**

*Dan, Doug, Faye, Marla*

## Out To Lunch ~ Jan. 12<sup>th</sup>

We'll kick off the New Year by enjoying brunch at Fulbelli's restaurant, located in the historic Kelly Square, 115 S. Travis St in Sherman.

The brunch menu runs from \$8. Upward and if you haven't eaten at Fulbelli's, it has a delightful, quiet atmosphere and excellent food. Our reservation is for 12:45 PM and everyone is invited to join in. We each pay our own fare.



## Moveable Feast ~ Returning in February

The Moveable Feast co-coordinators are asking for your suggestions and ideas as they plan for the 2014 monthly gatherings. In the past, the Feasters have met in homes, restaurants, and even in the Chapel at church. They have gone on food outings visiting various markets. If you have any thoughts or dreams send them to Marion and Elbert Hill [here](#).

## Chalice Circles/Interest Groups ~ for us all!

**GREEN TEAM**, an Environmental Action Circle usually meets on Thursday evenings @ 7:30 PM. The next meeting Jan 19th. Watch for details in the E-News  
 Facilitator: Amy Hoffman-Shehan.

**MOVEABLE FEAST**, a Cooking and/or Eating Circle is taking January off. Check the February *Red River Ramblings* for upcoming Feasts. Facilitators: Elbert & Marion Hill.

**OMMMM...** Meditation Group, meets the last Sunday of each month @12:35 in the Chapel, however they are on hiatus until Mar 30, 2014.. Open to all who wish to learn more about meditation and to participate in meditating. Facilitator: Paula Blackshear.

**BOOKED FOR LUNCH**, is an informal book discussion group is also taking a winter break but will meet in the Barton Parlor on March 20th. Join in the conversation. Facilitator Carole Harner.

**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 above for details. Email announcements@rruu.org if you have a restaurant suggestion.

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RedRiverUnitarianUniversalist  
 Church (all one word)

