



Red River Ramblings

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REMEMBER...

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



Meaningful and Spirited Sundays ~Each Week!

Celebrating Black History Month

Sunday, February 2, 2014

My Near Life Experience

Peter Nichols, *speaking*

In which I explain how 2 months in the Parkland Burn Ward and later another 2 months in the Parkland Infectious Diseases Ward were the best thing that ever happened to me! But wait! - There's more! I will share what Carl Jung and I discussed while dining at a wonderful Mexican place in Lakewood that doesn't exist and do some explorations of the after death state and the nature of love.

Sunday, February 9, 2014

Slave Religion

Dr. Jacqueline Moore, *Speaking*

What sort of religion did slaves practice and what did their masters want them to believe? This talk will look at the evolution of African American Christianity as well as the persistence of alternative African religious traditions in the slave quarters. While masters used Christianity to try to promote submissiveness, slaves used it for more subversive purposes. Religion was a source of comfort in dark times as well as way of maintaining cultural independence.

Adult Forum ~ 10:00

Worship ~ 11:15

Children's R.E. ~ 11:15

**Fellowship Gathering
12:15**

Sunday, February 16, 2014

The Six Americas - Where Do You Live?

The Rev. Doug Strong, *preaching*

This week-end is the *National Preach-In on Climate Change* and we will join some 1,500 congregations, reaching an estimated 500,000 people who will hear sermons on the topic of climate change.

In his State of the Union, President Obama stated, "*The debate is settled. Climate change is a fact.*" But Obama did not seize this opportunity, as he sometimes has before friendly audiences, to ridicule those who reject the scientific consensus as members of a latter-day Flat Earth Society. He never mentioned coal, or the Keystone XL pipeline, or wind power (which has lost its tax break).

There are six Americas in our nation – each filled with people who all think alike. In which America does the president live? In which America do you live?

NOTE: On Tuesday, Feb 18th we will screen the film *Chasing Ice*. Details on page 6.

Sunday, February 23, 2014

Empowered by Testimony, Coming to Voice, and Sharing Story

Rev. Dr. Melanie Harris, *speaking*

The talk features reflections from African American poets and pioneers of justice and offers models of spiritual practice that help nurture the spirit, and renew the soul. Dr. Harris shares information about the use of testimony in African American religious life, and presents helpful ways to encourage practitioners of all faiths and traditions to find courage to come to voice, share their own story and overcome by the power of testimony.



Elbert's Epistle ~ Update from the president

Congratulations to us!!!! At the NTUUC (North Texas Unitarian Universalist Congregations) Award Luncheon on January 25, RRUU received two grants: the first one for \$6,250 for putting heating/air conditioning in the top floor of our building; the other in the amount of \$1,200 for providing guest musicians at some of our services. Many thanks to Gil Alexander and Doug Strong for research into the cost of various HVAC systems. And even more thanks to Doug Strong for writing both grant proposals. I'm sure our upper floor will be much more useable if we don't have to freeze or swelter when trying to use it. Also, "live" music adds a lot to services.

One month of the new year is gone, and we are off to a good start. Attendance for the Jim Scott Sunday service was excellent, and the other Sundays have been up a bit as well from where we had been. Let's keep growing! Bring a friend to church with you next week, and the next, and the next, and so on.

Elsewhere in the newsletter, you'll find details about the Appreciation Dinner on February 27. Be sure to make plans to come. Since it will be catered this

year, we will need to know how many are coming, so be sure to get your name on the list.

Speaking of food, we had a good number (about 14) go to Fulbelli's restaurant in Sherman for the recent After-Church Lunch Bunch meal. This is an informal group—no dues, no registration, just participate when you like—that goes most months to one of the local restaurants for food and conversation (instead of having our usual after-service spread upstairs at the church). In March and May, we won't do ACLB since we'll have potlucks at the church instead. But do plan to join us for an ACLB meal, since this is a great way to get to know fellow congregants in an informal setting. Check the E-News for information on where and when we'll do ACLB in February and April.

See you in church,
Elbert

***We received \$6,200 to heat and cool
the Second Floor & \$1,200 to enhance
music during worship!***

Introducing our new visiting speakers ~ Bio Sketches

Sunday, February 2nd Peter Nichols

By way of an introduction, Peter writes, "In 2004 at the ripe old age of 57 I decided I would get a doctorate in clinical psychology which will take me another two and a half years at which time I will be 65. In my increasingly professional

opinion, what the hell was I thinking? I currently practice massage and body work therapies in both Dallas and Texoma. I will soon be licensed to do chemical dependency counseling and hope to work with families of addicts."



African American history. She is the author of several books including "Booker T. Washington, W. E. B. Du Bois, and the Struggle for Racial Uplift" and "Leading the Race: The Transformation of the Black Elite in the Nation's Capital, 1880-1920." She is also editor of Rowman & Littlefield's African American History Series.

Sunday, February 23rd Melanie Harris

Dr. Melanie L. Harris is Associate Professor of Religion and Ethics at Texas Christian University in Fort Worth, Texas where she teaches in the areas of Christian Social Ethics, Womanist Religious Thought, African



American Literature and Religion, and Media and Religion. Author of the book *Gifts of Virtue: Alice Walker and Womanist Ethics*. Dr. Harris's scholarship provides insight into ethical theory and by uplifting the moral practices and values of women. A former broadcast journalist, Dr. Harris worked as a television

[continued on page 3]

Sunday, February 9th Jacqueline Moore

Dr. Jacqueline Moore is Professor of History at Austin College where she teaches modern US history and Asian history. She writes on the turn of the century US with particular focus on





Adult Forum ~ Sundays @ 10 AM

Feb. 2 - Emerson and the Idea of America (Lecture #3 from The Great Courses) his life and works helped produce a vision of America that is still with us today...self-reliance was a concept that summed up an entire philosophy of life.

Feb. 9 - Emerson and Transcendentalism (Lecture #4 from The Great Courses) Emerson's first and greatest fear, the one that led directly to his need for a new way of thinking, was dogmatism in religion.

Feb. 16 - Emerson's Influence...(Lecture #5 from The Great Courses) Emerson's belief that spirit was imminent in matter and matter could and did reveal the spirit within created a problem in terms of the history of Judeo-Christianity.

Feb. 23 - (p. 18-20 BYOT) Responsibility...The Difficult Art of Doing Good. Ethical Show-and-Tell: Invite participants to share personal experiences or items from the news that concern ethical decision-making.

TX UU Justice Ministry ~ Bending Texas Toward Justice



TXUUJM takes positions that are consonant with the values expressed in UUA and General Assembly policy statements.

Our Texas UU voice has been missing on issues such as GLBT rights,

the environment, immigration, education, voting rights, healthcare, and many other issues that are considered both locally, and in the Texas Legislature and its committees.

It's time for Unitarian Universalists to speak out based on our liberal religious viewpoints.

TXUUJM will provide a vehicle for our congrega-

tions and the members of our association to make a difference in our state and to help those learning about Unitarian Universalism see the values for which we stand.

At the January Advisory Board's conference call a number of issues were discussed. Since there always are more issues than time, resources or energy for us to work on every issue that will come up at next year's 84th Legislative session, TXUUJM has to select the three most important issues to focus on.

The issues identified by TXUUJM include:

- Women's Reproductive Justice
- Medicaid Expansion/Affordable Care Act
- Voting Access
- Environmental/Water
- Immigration
- Sexual Orientation/Marriage Equality
- Prison Reform
- Income Inequality
- Education

Please take a few minutes and vote on which three issues you would like to see TXUUJM focus on. By clicking [here](#) you will open a brief one question survey, at SurveyMonkey.com where you can indicate the three issues you feel are the most important.

The deadline for voting is Saturday, February 15, 2014.

Dr Harris bio - Continued...

news producer and news writer for ABC, CBS and NBC news affiliates in Atlanta and Denver. She combines her experience in communications to lead workshops on church leadership and spiritual direction, and facilitates consultations engaging race, religion and pedagogy. An accomplished singer, Dr. Harris uses her classical vocal training to promote, multi-faith dialogue, compassion, peace and justice and preaches throughout the country as an ordained minister in the African Methodist Episcopal Church. Dr. Harris received her Doctor of Philosophy degree and Master's of Philosophy degree from Union Theological Seminary in New York City. She holds a Masters of Divinity degree from Liff School of theology in Denver, Colorado and a Bachelors of Arts degree from Spelman College in Atlanta, GA.

Board Bits ~ from the January 2014 Board Meeting

At the January board meeting, we heard from Treasurer Carole Harner that all of the “end of year” forms (W-2, 1099, pledge letters, etc.) have been sent out. Praise and gratitude were expressed by the board members for Carole’s exemplary ongoing work as treasurer.

The board decided to set the annual Appreciation Dinner on February 27, so that some could attend the SWUUC (Southwestern Unitarian Universalist Conference) Women’s Conference the weekend before.

The board learned that NTUUC (North Texas Unitarian Universalist Congregations) will hire someone to visit colleges in north Texas and southeastern

Oklahoma to help recruit students for our local churches. We also learned of other social action/justice issues that RRUU might work on with NTUUC.

Over the next few months, we will be studying RRUU’s past and present 5-year plans to see where we have met our goals and to decide ways to meet those we haven’t. Also, we might need to set some new goals.

Annual Appreciation Dinner ~ Thursday, February 27th

Lots of duties, some large and some small, must be done in order to help our church function. From making coffee or greeting congregants with a smile and a copy of the Order of Things, to preparing and delivering a worship service, it all matters. Once a year we get together for food and laughter and expressions of appreciation for all the contributions by members and friends that keep RRUU humming.

February 27 is the date of this year’s Appreciation Dinner. You may also hear it referred to as the annual Awards Dinner, since one important feature of the evening is awarding the Bruce Cameron Distinguished Service Award to a volunteer (possibly more than one) who has done outstanding service to the church during the past year. For any who may not know the award’s history, Bruce donated untold

amounts of time and expertise while we were remodeling our lovely old building, and in gratitude the church named this award for him.

This year, the “appreciation” part of the evening will be done a bit differently than in earlier years. We’re going to focus on the various jobs that are done and express gratitude for those who do them, with or without attaching a name to the job. (You may not know specifically who to thank for carrying out a certain task, but don’t let that stop you—say THANKS for taking care of it anyway!)

Also this year, you won’t even have to prepare food and bring it. Yes, UU’s love our potlucks, but the Appreciation Dinner is being

catered this year! Just bring yourselves, your good will, your sense of fun, and your gratitude.



Be sure to save this important date!

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

RE members should meet in the Emerson Room between 11 and 11:15 and we will be going upstairs at 11:15 to the Arts & Crafts room for lessons & crafts.

FEB. 2 "Reverence for Life" from What if Nobody Forgave (2003), 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 sentences that describe what's happening in the picture.

Feb. 9 "How's That for Being Different?" from What if Nobody Forgave (1999), about a dragon who can't make fire but does have another special talent. Discuss questions at the end of the story, then write and illustrate a comic strip showing someone who's different or extraordinary in some way and what challenges they face.

Feb. 16 (for older children) "John" from What if Nobody Forgave (1999), about a boy with cystic fibrosis who joins Boy Scouts,

becoming an Eagle Scout, then gives up scouting because of a difference in philosophy. Discuss questions, then write a song or a poem about a person or pet you've known who died and how you will remember him or her.

(for younger children) "The Dream Machine" from What if Nobody Forgave (1999), about the meaning of a boy's dream. Discuss questions and dreams. Take turns creating a story, going around the room adding to it. What does the dream the group made up mean? Illustrate it with a drawing and watercolors.

Feb. 23 "A Light in the Darkness" from What if Nobody Forgave (1999), about Hans Deutsch's creation of the symbol for Unitarian Universalism during WWII. Discuss questions to think about. [for older children: Write a haiku (5,8,5) entitled "Flaming Chalice" and for younger children: Design a symbol that represents you, your family or your congregation. Talk about the meanings of the colors you chose.]



Treasurer's Report ~ A Monthly Update on our Finances

In the month of December, we had income of \$2,917 from general operations. After operations expense of \$1,306 for the month, we had a net income from operations of \$1,611.

In December, there was no renovation income or expense. We had grant expense of \$901 for worship and religious education.

For the year to date period of July 2013 through December 2013, we had net income of \$10,874 from

operations, net expense from renovations of \$5,857, grant expense of \$4,828 and principal payments of \$1,964. The total change in cash for the year to date period was a decrease of \$1,775. 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 December 2013, we had cash of \$49,513 and debt

of \$37,373. The cash amount includes \$487 reserved for renovations and \$5,529 reserved for grants. In December we donated \$150 from the Share the Plate program to the Earth Day Festival and \$100 to the Grayson County Shelter.

All W-2s, 1099s, and annual contribution letters were mailed before the end of January.

Carole Harner, Treasurer



Ever wonder what it means to stand on the side of love?
Click on the image to the left and watch a 2 minute video!

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: *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 ~ How about El Salvadorian?

This month Out To Lunch - our no-agenda, after church culinary adventure where everyone is encouraged and invited to go Out To Lunch - is heading back to La Placita, a small place at 1015 W.Houston Street in Sherman. The food is great and very inexpensive. We each pay our own fare and gather around 12:45 PM.

Moveable Feast ~ Nothing better!

Moveable Feast is one of the church's most successful Chalice Circle. Nearly every month a spunky group of folk who love good food and good conversation gather to break bread together.

Newcomers are always welcome. While at press time a decision about what the Feasters will do in February was not finalized, you can check the weekly e-news or contact Elbert and Marion Hill, the co-facilitators.

Chalice Circles/Interest Groups ~ for you!

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

MOVEABLE FEAST, a Cooking and/or Eating Circle generally meets every month. Contact Facilitators: Elbert & Marion Hill to learn when the next Feast will be.

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 13th. 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)

