

Red River Ramblings



March 2015
Volume 12
Issue 9

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Marion & Elbert Hill receive the Bruce Cameron Distinguished Service Award

Two Special Sunday morning Concerts

Appreciation Dinner ~ A Huge Success

Echoes of Selma Gathering

TX UUs Day at the Legislature

Church calendar for the next 30 days:



Sunday mornings ~for musing and music

Sunday, March 1, 2015

Embracing Our Whole Story

UU Singer Andrew McKnight, in concert

Exactly 364 days ago, on what we hoped would be a pleasant morning listening to Andrew McKnight sing, we all stayed home to avoid the ice! Andrew is going to try again to visit RRUU. Of his service, Andrew reminds us that we are indeed the sum of many parts; not all of them are so attractive to us. Yet as Andrew often jests self-deprecatingly, "If we don't have a laugh at our-selves every now and then we're missing a mighty big source of humor!" During the morning Andrew will weave humorous and poignant moments together in a beautiful tapestry, helping to appreciate our perceived faults as gifts as well as our talents.

(Continue on page 2)

Refreshments: A-G

Sunday, March 8, 2015

The Silence of God

The Rev. Dr. Don Fielding, *speaking*

March 8th will be Rev. Fielding's third Sunrise Reflection inspired by the thought of Chet Raymo. There will be two main focuses in this Reflection: one will be the utter silence of our universe, the other will be a discussion of its likely destiny. Together these two topics at least hint at what our proper role in this cosmos might / ought to be. Come and be a part of the community that contemplates such effects.

Refreshments: H

Sunday, March 15, 2015

A Priest from Boston

The Rev. Doug Strong, *preaching*

He was young. He was committed. He answered the call. He went to Selma. He was murdered. Fifty years ago today, President Johnson invoked his memory when he delivered a draft of the Voting Rights Act to Congress. Also on this day 50 years ago, Martin Luther King eulogized him at a ceremony at

Brown's Chapel in Selma: "He symbolizes the forces of good will in our nation. He demonstrated the conscience of the nation. He was an attorney for the defense of the innocent in the court of world opinion. He was a witness to the truth that men of different races and classes might live, eat, and work together as brothers."

He was not, however, "A priest from Boston" (as claimed in the film *Selma*), he was a Unitarian Universalist minister! A morning to learn about a couple of UUs - one lay, one clergy - who made a difference during the March on Selma (and to set the record straight).

Refreshments: Out to Lunch Bunch

Sunday, March 23, 2015

Six Impossible Things Before Breakfast

The Rev. Dr. Christine Tata, *preaching*

With this Sunday's sermon the Rev. Dr. Christine Tata will explore our sense of wonder and how it is affected by today's seemingly miraculous innovations: Telepathy ... teleportation ... time travel -- with so many science fiction miracles coming true, what remains to be held in awe? Join Dr. Tata for some ideas.

Refreshments: I-RR

Sunday, March 23, 2015

The Return of Folk Music

Adler & Herne, In Concert

From Texas' upper east side in the rural arts hamlet of Winnsboro, award-winning performing songwriters Lynn Adler and Lindy Hearne (self-proclaimed "organic song farmers") tour nationally, serving up seasoned original songs mixed with fresh harvests of homegrown music in a spirited and soulful genre they define simply as "Texas Folk," with subtle jazz and blues overtones. In concert, they blend their voices and instruments in a spirited signature sound that reflects their true second-nature return to

(Continued on page 2)

Refreshments: S-Z

Morning Meditation: 9

Adult Forum: 10

Worship: 11:15

Fellowship Gathering:

12:15

Red River Unitarian Universalist Church ♦ Denison, TX

We are a sanctuary for religious liberals celebrating compassion, diversity and spiritual growth.



Dan's Dispatch

Did you know that March is American Red Cross Month as well as Women's History Month? I know we all have our pet charities, and the American Red Cross happens to be one of mine. By happy coincidence, the founder of the American Red Cross was also a woman and a Universalist. Although she was never formally a member of the Universalist Church of America, Clara Barton did identify her beliefs with those of her parents who were members and raised her in the church. And speaking of the Universalist Church in another tip of the hat to Women's History Month, Olympia Brown was ordained in the Universalist Church in 1863, thereby becoming one of the very first women ordained to ministry in the United States. By 1920, the Universalist Church had a total of 88 ordained women ministers, the most among all denominations in the U.S. at the time. It's now hard to imagine a time when women were precluded from serving as ministers. Nowadays, just over

half of all ordained ministers in the UUA are women!

As March arrives, my mind turns to thoughts of spring and spring projects. Spring flowers and spring cleaning. Bright, warm days and cool nights. And a renewed spring in the step, if you'll allow me the play on words. I think of our upcoming pledge drive, our Texoma Earth Day event, our Board's spring retreat, the congregational yard sale, and I even look forward to the congregational meeting in May. And as odd as it may seem, I find the prospect of all of those invigorating. There's always something to do, and I am so grateful for the selfless effort that so many make, day in and day out, to keep this little oasis of liberal religious thought alive and kicking in Texoma.

My thanks to you all.

Dan

Sunday mornings continued



March 23rd - continued

folk music. The two met in Nashville while on solo musical journeys. Years later their paths merged in Texas, where they formed the duo **Adler & Hearne**, along with their indie label Spring Hollow Records.

Adler & Hearne's music has grown deep roots in the sandy soil and piney woods of their Spring Hollow Organic Song Farm, in Winnsboro, TX. The duo's musical formative years share common experiences in folk, gospel and classical music - organic influences that inform their singing and songwriting. But the subject matter of their songs knows no bounds, nor does their musical style. Their live sets range from crooning songs of love and longing, losing and finding - to covering touchy subjects with unexpected musical overtones - to camping it up with modern day spirituals steeped in dry wit.

NOTE: Adler & Herne will be in concert at Harmony House, Bonham Sunday evening, March 29th. Tickets @ 903-583-2661.

March 1st - continued

Stretching across the landscape of American folk music is a highway paved by Guthrie and Dylan... now Virginia native **Andrew McKnight** takes his turn smoothing down the blacktop.



Since permanently leaving his corporate environmental engineering career in 1996, award-winning folk and Americana artist Andrew McKnight's musical journey has traced over half a million miles of blue highways, and earned him a wealth of critical acclaim and enthusiastic fans for his captivating performances. In addition to his passion for community causes, he is a longtime advocate for preserving American landscapes and heritage. Several of McKnight's songs are rooted in Appalachian history and culture.

NOTE: Andrew will be in concert at Harmony House in Bonham on Saturday evening, February 28th. Ticket info @ 903-583-2661

Board Bits

From February 19, 2015 meeting

- The Board interviewed a candidate and is proceeding on filling the DRE position. (An offer has since been made and we are waiting on the candidate's response.)
- A new RE Board will be formed to help the DRE. (The RE Board has since been formed. Thanks to Tommi Homuth and Carolyn Cameron for agreeing to serve; Dan Althoff is also serving.)
- Wi-Fi service for the church, funded in part by an NTUUC grant, will be installed shortly.
- New blinds have been installed in third-floor windows.
- Arrangements have been made to have the church cleaned twice a month. Special thanks to Marilyn and Gil Alexander for funding this.
- Advertising for RRUU continues in March in the Southeastern student newspaper.
- An updated Church Directory will be sent out shortly.
- We will request a recycle bin from the City of Denison, as the service is included in our monthly billing.

Treasurer's Report

In the month of January, we had income of \$2,914 from general operations. After operations expense of \$2,434 for the month, we had a net income from operations of \$480.

In January we received donations of \$376 to the endowment fund. In addition, we received an Earth Day grant from NTUUC of \$500. We also purchased and had installed new blinds with money from our renovation fund.

For the year to date period of January 2014, we had net income of \$21,026 from operations and net expenses of \$16,039. The total change in cash for the year to date period was a decrease of \$4,985.

As of the end of January, 2015, we had total cash of \$48,153 and debt of \$32,228. The cash amount includes \$4,633 reserved for grants. In January we donated \$170 from the Share the Plate program to the Grayson County Shelter.

Robert Shelton, treasurer

Booked for Lunch ~ Mar 12th

This month, Booked for Lunch, our informal gathering of book lovers, will meet in the Barton Parlor on Thursday, Mar. 12th at 1 pm. It is a fine format to learn about books others found worthwhile and to share what you're reading. Snacks will be served. Do come!

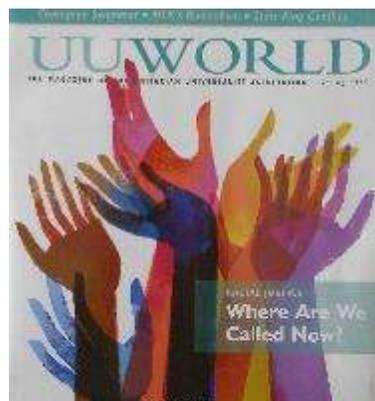
Green Team meets twice in Mar.

In order to assure that every possible details have been covered, the Green Team will meet on Wednesday, March 11 and again on Thursday, March 26 at Amy Hoffman-Shehan's home starting at 7 pm. There is still an amazing number of things to work out before the April 25th Texoma Earth Day Festival. If you didn't know it, the Festival, which our tiny congregation has created for the last 6 years, is gaining national attention. Come be a part of the effort. It is a clear expression and affirmation of our Seventh Principle.

New Church Directory

The 2015 RRUU Church Directory is available to all who wish to have a copy. In keeping with our Seventh Principle, the new directory comes in a digital format which people may keep readily available on the home screen of all their devices. A few printed copies are available at church.

Spring WORLD magazine



One of the great perks of church membership is receiving the WORLD magazine. The spring issue will be or just has arrived in your mail. In the current issue you'll find a series of informative and affirming articles.

Under the overarching theme *Where Are We Called Now* the emphasis is on the various ways UUs are called to speak out for racial equality and personal equity. It is a good read!

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The 2015 Appreciation Dinner

The snow held off, the temperature wasn't all that terrible which created a promising backdrop for this year's Appreciation Dinner. There were several notable highlights for the evening: food, fellowship and fun!

It is amazing how diverse the culinary delights were - from shrimp curry to cheese cakes, fettuccine alfredo to watermelon there was something for everyone. After lighting the chalice, everyone was invited to "introduce" their food offering with the "vegetarian briquette containing beef" creating smiles!



After dinner, everyone was invited to write down a list of things they appreciate about our church. The microphone was passed around as individuals read off their lists. Here's a sampling of what people expressed:

Jobs people do at RRUU that we appreciate:

- Adult Forum, both leadership and participation
- Bathrooms are clean
- Beautiful flowers around the building
- Board leadership
- Bringing great food on Sundays
- Building is well maintained and being improved
- Chalice Jewelry
- Committee on Ministry
- Congregation volunteers
- Elevator Fund started
- E-news and Newsletters which are wonderful
- Finance committee for overseeing our finances
- Good Friends
- Greeters
- Lawn & Grounds Maintenance
- Live music on Sunday
- Meditation on Sunday mornings
- Membership Team
- Nominating Team
- Order of Things – proud to have visitors see it
- Outreach programs and all who work on them
 - Bicycle program
 - Earth Day Festival
 - Shelter
 - Social Action
- People who bring supplies
- People who come early & leave late to open/close building
- People who help with the children
- People who help with the cleaning

- People who setup/cleanup after food on Sundays
- Potlucks & other meals together
- Sending welcome cards to visitors
- Sound system and those who run it.
- Sunday music choices, live and recorded
- Sunday services by a variety of individuals and topics
- The Building and all the people that make it possible
- Treasurer work
- Worship Team and all they do

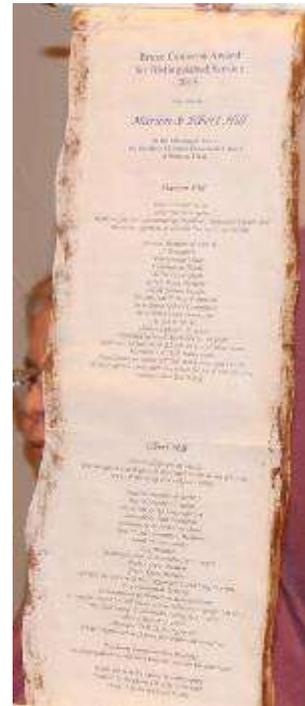
Other things we appreciate:

- Acceptance / Respectfulness of others and their beliefs & needs
- Comfortable chairs
- Conversations
- Diversity
- Everybody here
- Friendliness of everyone here
- Friends
- Happy, loving attitudes
- Joys & concerns (lighting candles)
- New Microphones
- Place to regroup & get myself going again
- Sense of Community
- Serenity I achieve being at RRUU
- Smiling Faces
- Those who think outside the box to see things differently Tolerance

The Bruce Cameron Distinguished Service Award went to Marion and Elbert Hill for their ongoing commitment to the church. Along with their awards and the now-traditional crowns, long scroll was unrolled



that listed the various jobs they have done for the church.



The evening concluded with the group reciting the words we say each week to extinguish our chalice followed by everyone chipping in to clean up - washing dishes, putting tables away and returning the Chapel for Sunday's special worship with singer Andrew McKnight.

UU Day at the Texas Legislature ~ a report from our only participant



A fun and interesting day was accomplished for most of us who attended the TXUJIM day at the Texas Legislature. I must admit, getting up at 3:30am to make it to Oak Cliff for the bus ride down to Austin was a challenge. The bed was much too warm and the house much too cold!

There were 36 Unitarian Universalists on the bus leaving Dallas. The children from Jefferson UU had prepared goodie bags for everyone with water, candy and other snacks. Others brought fruit, trail mix, donuts, water and lots of other goodies. We could have been stranded for several days with all of the food on that bus. Besides eating, Alan Lummus gave us a quick rundown on how to lobby, what to expect, what to say and what not to say. This proved very helpful later in the day. Also on the bus we practiced the songs from the Street Choir so we could sound good singing in the rotunda. Another bus came from Houston and there were over 100 UUs who participated in the activities.

Once we arrived in Austin the chaos began. The Governor was giving his State of the State address, there were lots of other groups there lobbying, it was amazing. I participated in four visits to Representatives and Senators. Two of them (not my own) had people on their staff meet with us and were very

gracious, making us feel welcome with good seating, offers of beverages, etc. They listed patiently to our positions, took notes, and answered our questions to the best of their ability. Then I visited my Senator, Craig Estes, who couldn't make time for any of his staff to visit with us so we dropped off our literature. This was followed by my Representative, Larry Phillips, who had one of his staff members meet with us but no chairs or refreshments were offered. We had to stand the entire time while the staff member sat and took some notes. Was sure glad I had seen other examples of meeting with constituents!

Other things on the agenda for the day included a Press Conference on the North Capitol Steps with other LBGTQ groups. It was very interesting to hear the speakers, watch the crowd reaction and carry a sign. They even saved the best speaker for last with lots of crowd participation. After that the Street Choir performed in the outside rotunda. Was fun to join in singing and the voices carried up and out so nicely. People would lean over from different levels to see what was going on.

The bus ride home was relaxing. We had dinner catered as burritos from Chipotles which we ate as we were leaving Austin. Then people chatted, slept, read as desired. I finally got home that night around 10:30 pm. It was a long but rewarding day.

One thing I learned from the day (besides all the tips about influencing your reps) – you have to have good knees if you want to make it anywhere in the capitol building on time. The elevators are REALLY SLOW!

Marla

Out To Lunch~ Sunday, March 15th

While the Moveable Feast has had a couple of dinners at Deviche's, we've never gone there for lunch. We will this month! The food is fantastic, the prices can fit any budget and everyone is invited to this Out to Lunch gathering.

Out to Lunch is our monthly adventure to break bread together while enjoying good food, fellowship and fun. We each pay our own fare.

Sunday, March 15th, 12:45 pm.

729 N 1st Ave, Durant, OK 74701 (580) 920-0115
Folks from Texas: How about carpooling to reduce our carbon footprint?



March for the Right To Vote Mar 6th

Leaders

Board of Trustees

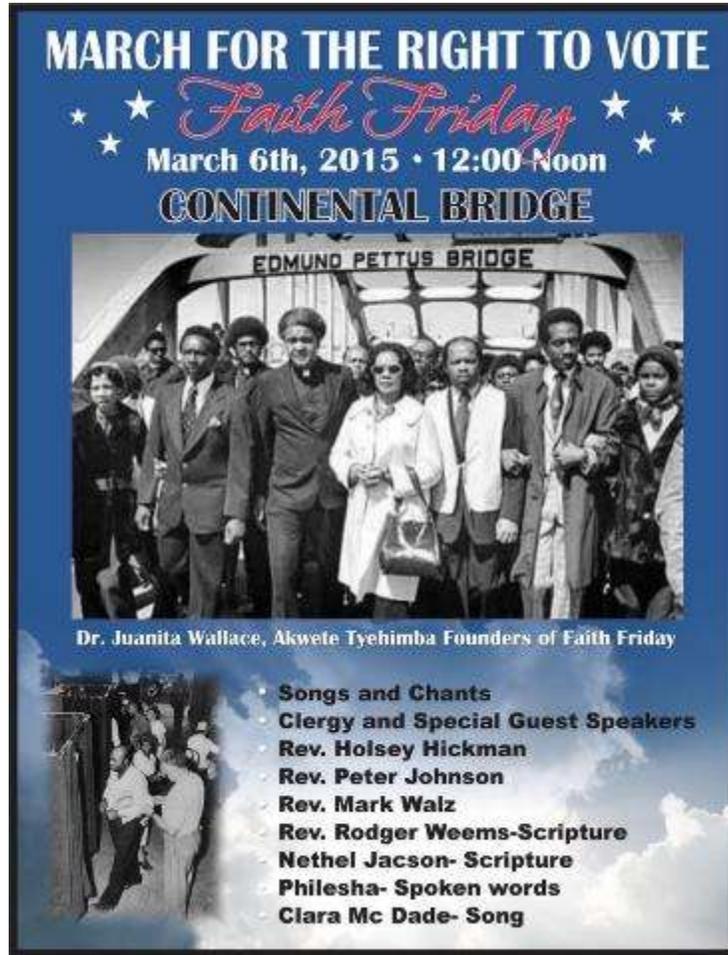
Dan Althoff, *president*
 Gil Alexander, *vice president*
 Robert Shelton, *Treasurer*
 Doug Strong, *Secretary*
 Paula Blackshear, *Trustee*
 Elbert Hill, *Past President*

Committee on Ministry:

Carole Harner, Gerry Shehan,
 Peter Schulze

Team Leaders/Members:

Adult Forum: *Gil*
 Aesthetics Team:
Bruce, Joyce, Maura, Paula
 Building & Grounds: *Marilyn*
 Communications: *Doug*
 Chalice coordinator: *Open*
 DRE:
 Finance: *Open*
 Good Times:
Carole, Marilyn & Marion
 Long Range Planning:
Amy, Gil, Marilyn
 Membership: *Marion*
 Nominations: *Helen, L.D., Marla*
 NTUUC Rep: *Marla*
 RE Board: *Carolyn, Dan, Tommi*
 Safe Congregation Panel: *Dan*
 Social Action: *Gil*
 Ways & Means: *Open*
 Worship:
Dan, Doug, Faye, Marla



Join other UUs as we remember the 50th anniversary of the March on Selma. This "Echo of Selma" will take place on Friday, March 6th on the Continental Bridge in Dallas. The plan is now to march to the middle of the pedestrian bridge where chairs, mike, and lectern will be set up. Event will happen there and we'll walk back to the west side.

There should be plenty of parking on Singleton, on the west end of the new arch bridge - just come west on Woodall-Rogers, or north/south on Beckley or Sylvan. And if you have not seen the Selma movie, please do so.

Chalice Circles / Interest Groups

GREEN TEAM, an Environmental Action Team. In March the Team will meet twice: Wed. March 11 and Thurs. March 26 Amy Hoffman-Shehan's house. Facilitator: Amy Hoffman-Shehan.

MOVEABLE FEAST, a Cooking and/or Eating Circle has not been decided for March.

BOOKED FOR LUNCH, is an informal book discussion group which usually meets the second Thursday of the month at 1 p.m. in the Barton Parlor. The next meeting is March 12. 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. This month Out to Lunch heads to Ceviche in Durant (see page 5). Email **announce** [+suffix]* if you have a restaurant suggestion.

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