



Red River Ramblings

News from Red River Unitarian Universalist Church Denison TX

Vol 20, No 3

July, 2017

Sunday July 2, 2017

Morning Assembly - 11:15 am



Immigrants, Pilgrims and Refugees

The Worship Team, *leading*

We often forget that the Native Peoples of North America were the First Americans. The rest of us, at some point, were immigrants, pilgrims or refugees who came from afar. On this Independence Day Sunday we will honor the First Americans and examine the attitudes many people hold about Immigrants, Pilgrims and Refugees.

Refreshments A-G (but not C)

Sunday, July 9, 2017

Morning Assembly - 11:15 am



ABC: It's Easy, and Fun!

Dr. William Fridley, *leading*

As a kid, I bought many Jackson 5 records, including ABC. Those records informed my early perceptions of love and life. The alphabet is a simple and powerful tool. We'll explore, make connections, and have some fun with the alphabet. A-B-C, 1-2-3, Do-Re-Mi, You and Me!

Refreshments H

Sunday, July 16, 2017

Morning Assembly - 11:15 am



Step by Step: The Ruby Bridges Suite

A special video program

Come celebrate the story of Ruby Bridges, the trailblazing African-American girl who, at age 6, integrated the New Orleans Public Schools in 1960. Pianist Darrell Grant's cantata features the choirs of All Souls, DC, and First UU, Nashville, a six-piece all-star jazz ensemble along with renowned vocalist Marilyn Keller.

Refreshments: I-R, plus C

Sunday, July 23, 2017

Morning Assembly - 11:15 am



Letting Go: Steps to Wholeness

The Rev. Thomas Squiers, *speaking*

I will discuss some steps one can take to declutter in one's life spiritually (within a UU context) so that one can begin experiencing a path to wholeness. Some techniques will also be presented that people across the spiritual spectrum - Humanist, Christian, Jewish, etc. - can appreciate

Refreshments S-Z

Sunday, July 30, 2017

Morning Assembly - 11:15 am



Of the Communion of Churches with One Another

Natalie Briscoe, *speaking*

Unitarian Universalism is often described as a religion of covenant, not creed. When an individual joins a congregation, what we really do is commit ourselves to walking in covenant with one another. Likewise, when a congregation chooses to join the Unitarian Universalist Association, that congregation chooses to walk in covenant with other congregations. But what, exactly, does that mean? And what's it all for, anyway? This service will lift up our shared values of love and justice and help us explore the ways in which we as a greater church community - that of the UUA - celebrate our connections to transform the world.

Refreshments: All Church Potluck

Every Sunday Morning

-  Meditation - 9
-  Adult Forum - 10
-  Morning Assembly - 11:15
-  Conversations & Calories - 12:15

Hello from Helen



Summertime, and perhaps, the living is easy. I was happy to see the large pile of fans in the back hallway-the annual fan drive is a nice memorial to Gil Alexander. Since

moving to Texas 24 years ago, I am very grateful for the gift of air conditioning at this time of year.

My family will be headed to the Northwest corner of the US in a week, and I imagine that many of us will be vacationing soon. Remember to think about collecting a sample of water while you are away, for our water communion service later this year!

This month I want to share with you the wording of a UU poster that I bought for my office-it has become an inspiration for a lot of interesting conversations I've had this month.

The poster says, in large letters,

**Love is Hard-
Do it Anyway**

then, it goes on to say this:

Love for people, especially those who are different from you. Love that says I see you as a person. Love that says "let your unique light shine in the world!" because each of our souls touches the divine mystery. Love that says we're on a journey together and my fate is tied up with yours. Love that grabs you and won't let go until your whole life is dedicated to standing on the side of love. Love that changes the world. Love is hard.

Not a bad set of words to take on vacation.

Have a wonderful summer!

Helen

From Harmony House Concerts

Kevin & Dustin Welsh, July 16 4-6 pm
Two dudes, father & son singing and pickin'
Detail about them is [here](#).

Annual Fan Drive

The Gil Alexander annual fan drive runs thru July 2:

The most needed are box fans. Available at Home Depot, Lowes, and Walmart for \$17.00.

Leave fans at church!



Last Call! Bring you fan on Sunday, July 2nd. If you forgot you can leave funds in the offering bowl and someone will rush to the store and make the purchase for you!

The Garage Clean Out

was a total wash out, as in a downpour highlighted with bouts of lighting and thunder. We sent a push message to our mobile app along with an email to members and friends. No one showed up, fortunately.

After consulting with our Grand Poohbah, she suggested waiting until October. Agreed! Details forthcoming as the leaves start to turn and fall.

Treasurer's Report

In the month of May, we had income from general operations of \$6,800.

After operations expense of \$3,074, we had a net profit of \$3,726.

Operations expense include water and waste of \$126, gas bill \$55, electric bill \$109, UUA donation of \$118, internet \$68 and building insurance \$196

In May, we donated \$24 from the Share the Plate program to the Grayson County Shelter.

As of May 31, we had \$11,641 available in checking.

Kelly Cofield,
Treasurer

Ministry for Earth:

A green team and An earth day planning committee

The Green Team: Early in our history a group of people at church wanted to get involved in matters ecological. They met and our Green Team was born. During the early years various projects were done, including creating a cloth tote bag - years before the notion of bringing one's own bag to the store was popular.



The first Earth Day Festival was April 18, 2009. The tag line read: *The 2009 Earth Day Festival is a community-wide, fun family event where ordinary people will learn practical things to reduce our impact on the earth and save money at the same time.*

The festival has expanded over the years and the more complex it has become, the more time has been required to make the day the success it is. One result is that the Green Team sole focus is the festival. There has been neither time nor energy to do other activities.

Following the votes at the Spring Congregational Meeting for us to start the process of becoming a UUA Welcoming Congregation and to be a Reproductive Justice Congregation, some people expressed a desire to be part of the Green Team, but want to focus their energies on projects and activities separate from the Earth Day Festival planning. There are those who wish to see us potentially do other projects (getting our building LEED certified; composting; recycling; rain barrel; raised community garden, etc.).

Earth Day Planning Committee: Starting last spring, the announcements submitted to the

newsletter and eNews about Green Team meetings used the wording "Green Team and Earth Day Planning Committee." That phrase held the seeds for a solution - two church groups working on Ministry for Earth programs. The Green Team and the Earth Day Planning Committee.

The board agreed that by having two separate avenues where people in the congregation can become involved in Green Sanctuary Programs, along with other environment activism without the significant time commitments required to create the Earth Day Festival, may well enhance the spiritual life of the congregation.

The board also agreed the commitment made by the congregation - including serving on the planning committee; volunteering during the festival; getting NTUUC involved and donating monthly during the Share the Plate Sunday - is a testament to the congregation's deep commitment to the success of the festival.

Board Bits *from the June 11 meeting*

During the June meeting the board:

- 🌱 presented Marla, Kelly and Doug with gifts in appreciation for their service as VP, treasurer and secretary
- 🌱 reviewed the necessary and complex process for the orderly transfer of financial matters to the new treasurer
- 🌱 discussed and approved the division of the Green Team and the earth day planning committee into two church programs
- 🌱 discussed and approved inviting Natalie Briscoe to lead a day-long training seminar for facilitators of small group ministry programs, following the highly successful A Call to Faith in Turbulent Times program
- 🌱 approved holding another Gil Alexander Memorial Fan Drive under Linda's leadership
- 🌱 Appointed Kelly Dyer and Megan Hutchinson co-chairs of the Caring Circle
- 🌱 Discussed Board Calendar for 2017-2018

New UU Gathering July 2nd



New to UU” an informal discussion, 12:45 to 1:30 p.m., on Sunday, July 2nd. If being part of a Unitarian Universalist congregation is a new experience for you,

or if you'd like to know more about the background of this small but feisty church and the UU denomination, here's an opportunity to learn. Red River charter members Marion Hill and Doug Strong will discuss the history and functioning of the UUA (Unitarian Universalist Association), will reminisce a bit about our congregation's beginnings and its eventful 20 years, and will welcome your questions.

Marion will also give a brief report of the General Assembly which was June 21-25 in New Orleans.

Earth Day Planning meeting

We will meet on Thursday, July 6th at 5 pm at church. During the meeting we will

1. decide on the theme of the 2018 festival
2. start looking at graphics for our posters, flyers and t-shirts
3. discuss our goals and needs for the QR codes at the festival
4. get updates on loading all the Earth Day files onto google drive

Caring Circle



There are times when things turn sour, when we feel alone, sad and need a little help from our friends.

The Caring Circle is the place where our collective legacy of caring resides. It is the hub where we connect immediate needs with help. Maybe a ride, perhaps a friendly call, or a meal, or someone to sit with you.

If you know someone who needs some temporary help, tell us (Meg or Kelly). Email “care (at) rruu.org” or leave a message on the church line 903.231.3232.

Green Team Meeting

The Green Team will meet on Wed. July 19th at 6:30 in the Emerson Room. The Green Team is an ecological chalice circle that chooses projects for the church to reflect a ministry for earth. In the past, the Green Team has done community outreach by Adopting a Highway; cleaning up a local park, etc. Some possible projects could be to get our church building LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) certified as a green sanctuary (yes, even old buildings can qualify); composting; having a rain barrel, along with expanding our recycling.

If Being Green is part of your home life, come make it part of your church life.

Chalice Circles & Interest Groups ~ open to all

BOOKED FOR FUN, an informal book discussion group which usually meets the second Friday of the month at 1:00 p.m. in the Emerson Room. The group is on their summer hiatus, luxuriating and relaxing - reading away the summer. They return in September. Facilitator Carole Harner.

EARTH DAY PLANNING COMMITTEE, is the reason Earth Day is in Texoma. The group meets throughout the year to plan the Festival. Opportunities for people to do a variety of tasks. The next meeting is Thursday, July 6th at 5 pm. Meeting in the Chapel. Facilitator: [Amy Hoffman-Shehan](#).

GREEN TEAM, our ecological interest group that works on ways our congregation can support a Ministry for Earth. We will meet on Wed. July 19th at 6:30 at church to explore projects for the upcoming year. Facilitator, TBA.

MOVEABLE FEAST, a Cooking and/or Eating Circle. Details for upcoming Feasts will be posted on the church mobile app and in the eNews. Deadline to sign up is Monday, June 5th by emailing [Marion](#). Facilitators: Elbert and Marion Hill.

Leaders

Board of Trustees

Helen Schulze, *President*
Linda Tracy, *Vice President*
Dick Powell, *Treasurer*
Megan Hutchinson, *Secretary*
Jim Holmes, *Trustee*
Dan Althoff, *Past President*

Committee on Ministry:

Carole Harner, Marla Loturco,
Robert Shelton

Team Leaders/Members:

Adult Forum: *various members*
Building & Grounds: *Marilyn*
Caring Circle: *Kelly and Megan*
Communications: *Doug*
Earth Day Planning: *Amy*
Finance:
Green Team:
Membership: *Marion*
Nominations: *David, Elbert,
Lanan*
NTUUC Rep: *Marla*
RE Team: *Dan, Tommi*
Safe Congregation Panel: *Dan*
Social Action:
Worship: *Angie, Doug, Marla,
Robert, Tommi*

Contact Us

Red River UU Church
515 North Burnett Ave
mail to:
PO BOX 1806
DENISON, TX 75021-1806



How to reach us:

Email: [info \(at\) rruu.org](mailto:info@rruu.org)

Phone: 903.231.3232

Web: www.rruu.org

E-News: [announce \(at\) rruu.org](mailto:announce@rruu.org)

Facebook: [RedRiverUnitarianUni-
versalistChurch](https://www.facebook.com/RedRiverUnitarianUniversalistChurch)

Our mobile App: free from the
[Apps Store](#) & [Google Play](#).

Pastoral Letter from the UUA President



My Fellow Unitarian Universalists,

I invite you to join me in continuing to hold in our hearts, in our thoughts, and in our prayers, our UUA staff colleagues, James Curran and Tim Byrne who are recovering after being attacked and robbed in New Orleans. Both are continuing to recover physically and to navigate the trauma of the event. James is back home in Boston. Tim remains hospitalized in New Orleans but is making steady progress each day. His doctors are cautiously optimistic about the prognosis for his recovery. We are profoundly grateful to the dedicated medical professionals who initially treated and continue to care for James and Tim.

We continue to send Tim and James and their partners and loved ones our positive thoughts, care, and support in this time. As the new President of the UUA, I am doing my best to be present to these staff members and to honor the time and space they need to attend to their recovery.

I also want to acknowledge the sorrow, fear, anger, and heartbreak of seeing a loved one, a member of our community, violently attacked. I have experienced all of these emotions in the last few days, as have so many of the UUA staff and wider UU community. Throughout the General Assembly, we reflected on the narratives and wider systems of oppression that perpetuate both systemic and personal violence. This week, those reflections became personal and proximate.

As I have listened to Unitarian Universalists reflect on this situation, I have been moved by the connections made to Bryan Stevenson's powerful message to us at General Assembly that "simply punishing the broken-walking away from them or hiding them from sight-only ensures that they remain broken and we do, too. There is no wholeness outside of our reciprocal humanity." May we hold the young adults who carried out the robbery, Rashaad Piper (20), Nicholas Polgowski (18), DeJuan Paul (18), and Joshua Simmons (18), with the universal love that we hold Tim Byrne and James Curran. This is so very important. Many voices have lifted up hope for a process of restorative justice.

These are our Unitarian Universalist values calling us to live in the reality of the heartbreak of our world, while remembering that no one is outside the circle of love - that compassion is always our guide, and that as a religious community, we seek the well-being of all people and the dismantlement of systems of oppression that undermine our collective humanity.

As President, I am waiting to make any official statements to New Orleans authorities in order to give our staff members time to be in the conversation. At the same time, I am encouraged by the local grassroots leadership of Unitarian Universalists in New Orleans, including the Center for Ethical Living and Social Justice Renewal (CELSJR) and their partners, to help us see both the proximate and larger realities and humanity of this incident. I ask for your patience in this time, and for your faithful presence as Unitarian Universalists.

In faith,

The Rev. Susan Frederick-Gray
president, Unitarian Universalist Association