



Red River Ramblings

The Monthly Newsletter of Red River Unitarian Universalists ♦ Denison TX ♦ Vol 21, No. 2 ♦ July 2019

Sunday, July 7, 2019 - 11:15 am

Children and Art

D. Scott Cooper, *preaching*

Stephen Sondheim's *Sunday in the Park with George* is a musical inspired by Seurat's painting *A Sunday Afternoon on the Island of La Grande Jatte*. In the second act, an elderly character, Marie, makes the observation, "There are only two worthwhile things to leave behind when you depart this world of ours: children and art."

Perhaps those valuables are two of the few things that also have the ability to change our worldview. How and why does our worldview transform over time, and how is that reflected in our ability to be a force for change and good in the world?

Scott is on the final stretch of a year-long Chaplaincy Residency at Parkland Hospital in Dallas and has just begun preliminary fellowship as a UU minister. Scott graduated in 2016 with his Master of Divinity degree from Brite Divinity School and completed his Ministerial Internship at the Unitarian Universalist Society of Sacramento. Scott will begin serving the First UU Church of Houston as Assistant Minister for Congregational Life in September.

Sunday, July 14, 2019 - 11:15 am

Prophets and Priests

The Rev. Dr. Mark Y.A. Davies, *preaching*

Throughout the history of religious experience, there has been a tension between the prophetic and priestly functions of religion. Religion sometimes challenges the norms and practices of society and culture, and at times it reinforces the norms and practices of society and culture. What is the appropriate balance in this tension between calling for change and justice and contributing to order and stability?

Mark is the Wimberly Professor of Social and Ecological Ethics at Oklahoma City University where he has taught for 22 years. He is a United Methodist minister and holds a Ph.D. in Social Ethics, from Boston University.

Sunday, July 21, 2019 - 11:15 am

You Took Away My Childhood: Child Abuse, a Grayson County Epidemic

Crystal Hutchison, *speaking*

Child abuse comes in different forms: neglect; physical/emotional/sexual abuse; childhood experiences; shaken baby syndrome; domestic violence; trafficking & exploitation. On Sunday, our speaker will explain the depth of the epidemic that is currently effecting Grayson county, but it is no different in Bryan County. What our children are facing and how we can be part of the solution will help us better understand one of the most shameful experiences any child can have.

Originally from Abilene, Texas; Crystal attended Abilene Christian University followed by Texas Tech University School of Law. She practiced law in both Kentucky and Texas before moving to Sherman in 2013. Crystal joined the CASA Board of Directors in the spring of 2014, before becoming staff in 2017. Married to her husband Stephen for 11 years they were blessed to add a son James to their family in June of 2016.

Sunday, July 28, 2019 - 11:15 am

Promises to Keep and Miles to Go

The Worship Team, *leading*

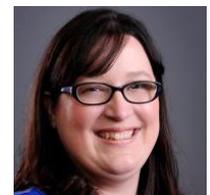
It was the youngest parent in our community who suggested we devote a Sunday morning to an exploration of parents, children, and liberal religion. Parenting is a lifelong commitment, filled with *promises to keep and miles to go*. Join us on this Parents Day as together we explore parenting philosophies and practices seen in cultures and religions around the world.



Scott Cooper



Mark Davies



Crystal Hutchison

Jim's Jabber



If you check out our website you will notice that we have made some changes to the HOME page plus a few other tweaks. On the HOME page the six information panels have been updated and three have been replaced with current and changing information. These 3 new panels are:

- **Wow:** Here you will find special information about an upcoming program or event, an invitation to participate in something special or a reminder of something important
- **Did You Know:** This panel is a feed from Harvard Square Library and shows "This Day in UU History" which is about people or events that occurred that impacted UU's.
- **Upcoming:** This panel show the next 6 events coming up. This includes upcoming morning assemblies, meetings and any other event that has been submitted to the church calendar. Click on the event and it takes you to more information about the event. [Got something for the calendar? Send it to news@redriveruu.org]

I find that I now go to the web site daily just to read the **Did You Know** column and quickly check the upcoming events. (See image below.)

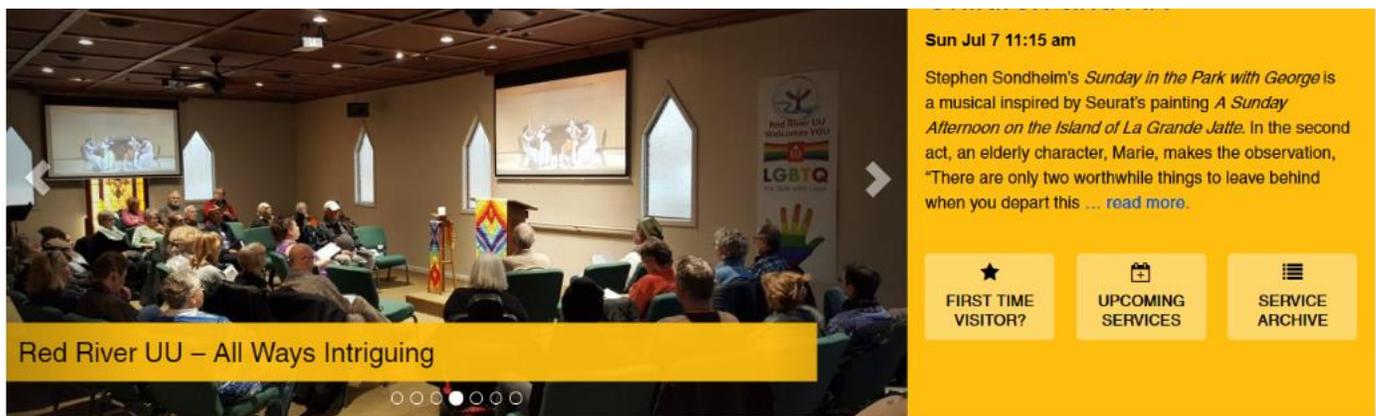
In the future we plan on adding a Member private area that requires a logon. This area will contain information for members only such as minutes of board meetings, a copy of the church phone directory. By the way, a new church directory is in

the making and once finished will be emailed to all members and friends. If there is anything you would be interested in seeing in this area let Marla or Doug or me know. In our May meeting the congregation approved our next year goals. Two of these goals are to find an Outreach Coordinator and RE Team leader. In reviewing all of our volunteer positions we also have other openings for volunteers. These are:

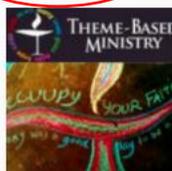
- **The Good Times Teams:** These people supply the food for Sunday snacks. We have had a few people leave plus we could use more people. Speak with Marilyn if you'd like to join the good times team.
- **Greeters and Hosts:** Some Sundays we are shy of people to help with greeting members and visitors.
- **RE Team Leader:** This position has been open for a while and several people have helped out in this area to ensure that we have coverage should we have children on Sunday. With the remodeling going on to the 2nd floor and the addition of a nursery it is time to fill this position.
- **Outreach coordinator:** The Five Year Strategic Plan and the Board consider this to be a very important position for helping us achieve our future growth and success.

If any of you are interested in helping for any of these positions, please contact any Board member and we can fill you in on what the position requires and help you get started if you wish to volunteer. Not sure who's on the board - check out a picture of the board on the bulletin board outside the chapel.

Jim

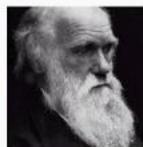


Wow!



No. We Are Not Starting Theme Based Ministry!
A growing approach to UU worship is a concept called Theme Based Ministry. It involved creating a year's worth of monthly themes on one topic. When you read this month's *Red River Ramblings*, you might think our worship team is

Did You Know?



This Day in Unitarian Universalist History July 1
by Frank Schulman on July 1, 2019 at 5:38 pm
1858 – Charles Darwin presented his paper The Origin

of Species to the Linnaean Society in London. He was descended from Unitarian families on both

Upcoming...

- **"Early Christianity," A Great Courses Series**
07/07/19, 10:00 am - 10:45 am
Barton Parlor, Red River Unitarian Universalists
- **Morning Assembly**
07/07/19, 11:15 am - 12:15 pm
in the chapel
- **Share The Bowl Sunday**
07/14/19, All Day

Moveable Feast

Movable Feast chalice circle will do "small-group dinners" again in July, with Feasts to be hosted by Amy Hoffman-Shehan on July 20 at 5:00 p.m. and Carolyn and Bruce Cameron on July 11 at 6:00 p.m., both events to be at Red River UU Church.

Amy's dinner will feature make-it-yourself pizzas (gluten-free crusts already prepared, lots of fixin's to choose from for toppings)

The Cameron's' dinner will feature a catered meal that will be "convenient for most special diets," Carolyn says.

If more than 16 people sign up for the July dinners, the Fearless Feast Facilitators will see about adding a third Feast in July.

The small-group dinners are designed to include no more than eight people at each one, making for easy conversation. But we don't wish to exclude anyone who wishes to take part.

If you wish to participate in July, please reply to marionh3719@gmail.com (note new email address), stating your preference of the two events (if you have one). However, the FFFs reserve the right to assign people to Feasts to keep the numbers even.

Good Times Teams - update

Marilyn Alexander is pleased to report that we have several people who have volunteered to help fill out our teams. This sharing of food together following the Sunday assembly is an important social event that allows us to visit informally and get to know each other better and introduce ourselves and welcome visitors. This helps us grow our church community.

I have rebalanced the teams as shown below. If you find errors or would like your name added to a team, please get in touch with me at galex@chero-keecomm.com or 580-980-1267.

We could still use additional team members.

1st Sunday Team

- Diana Bickham
- Jim Holmes
- Dick & Carol Powell
- Doug Strong

2nd Sunday Team

- Jack Bolerjack
- Lynn Cates
- Marion & Elbert Hill
- Amy Hoffman-Shehan

3rd Sunday

- Marilyn Alexander
- Ronda DeCaire
- Karen Droegemeier
- Robert & Lanan Shelton

4th Sunday

- Kelly, David & Ellie Dyer
- Tommi Homuth
- Sabra Jones
- Helen Schulze

Setting Things Up Prior to 11:15

- Set out plates, forks, napkins,
- Set out food that can be set out at this time
- Make iced tea or lemonade (2 packets per 1/2 gallon pitcher)
- Check to see that there is enough coffee made
- Slice cheese
- Prep any items so they will be ready to set out quickly

Afterwards

- Clear the table, send leftovers home, or cover and put in refrigerator (Leftovers are no good 7 days later – Discard or take home). Don't leave anything on the counters for the mice to eat!
- Wash tables
- Vacuum floors with portable vacuum behind kitchen door (insert charged battery from charger and return it to the charger when done)
- Rinse dishes and load dishwasher
- Clean out coffee makers and unplug them
- Wash counter tops
- Run garbage disposal with ample amount of water running
- Empty trash and recycle and take to outside bins behind church (no loose trash in the outside trash bin or the city won't pick up)
- Check to see that all dirty dishes are in the dishwasher
- Select Heated Wash and Start If you open the dishwasher after it has started, you must press START again, otherwise, we will have dirty dishes the next Sunday.
- Turn off all lights and ceiling fans
- Check to see that upper lobby front door is locked.

General Assembly Report

Marion and Elbert Hill attended the UU General Assembly in Spokane, WA, June 19-23, the 15th consecutive GA they have been to, and report that it was an enjoyable, educational one. The UU denomination has historically been largely "white," but is intentionally transitioning to more diversity in its leadership and programs and more focus on embracing and seeking justice for marginalized groups. The Unitarian Universalist Association currently has its first female president, and the two previous presidents were the first African American and the first Latino to hold that office. The choices of speakers and worship leaders in GA sessions, the topics of GA workshops, and even—gasp—the music at GA services now reflect this intention to expand what the denomination can be and who it serves.

Marion attended two workshops that especially excited her. One was about a "radical" approach to membership, which flips the usual approach of churches (welcoming individuals as members and THEN involving them in church offices and activities) to the opposite (getting visitors fully involved and THEN welcoming them as members). As membership chair, she'll be discussing this approach with the membership team and with the church board, to determine whether this is an approach that will work at Red River UU.

The other workshop (which Elbert also attended and liked) was about a new film, "American Heretics: The Politics of the Gospel," which focuses on two churches in conservative Oklahoma that take a more liberal approach to theology, diversity in church membership, and style of worship than do most churches in the state. The two churches featured are Mayflower Congregational Church (a United Church of Christ congregation in Oklahoma City) and All Souls Unitarian Church in Tulsa. These two congregations are challenging the way that deeply rooted Christian doctrine is presented by fundamentalist churches in Oklahoma.

Presenters of the workshop included Rev. Marlin Lavanhar, senior minister at All Souls, who took the innovative and risky step in 2008 of inviting Rev. Carlton Pearson, an icon among African-American church leaders, to regularly hold services at All Souls, services that now attract many African-Americans to the church. The film, done by Emmy-Award-winning documentary producers Jeanine and Catherine Butler, will be released soon in theaters and to churches. Ideally, it will be seen in the north Texas area. Perhaps at Red River UU?

Another Note from G.A.

The call to be transformed.

Many Unitarian Universalists are also discussing the distribution of a controversial new book at GA by the minister of the Spokane congregation. The Gadfly Papers: Three Inconvenient Essays by One Pesky Minister, by Todd Eklof, quickly provoked denunciations by several hundred ministers, by DRUUMM (an organization of people of color), and by the leadership of LREDA (the professional organization of religious educators). See news coverage of the controversy and links to the letters from these groups in our Media Roundup.

UU bloggers have responded to the book and the controversy about it in a variety of ways. Cynthia Cane urges UUs to read *The Gadfly Papers* (A Jersey Girl in Kentucky, 6.26.19). Chris Rothbauer explains why they distrust Eklof's accounts of recent events (*Medium*, 6.25.19). Scott Wells reads the book and observes, "I think both Eklof and his accusers suffer that common affliction of wanting to be right more than being successful" (Rev. Scott Wells, 6.25.19). Theresa I. Soto says it's a "racist book," "full of hate, including transphobia, ableism, and sexism" (*Medium*, 6.24.19). Erik Walker Wikstrom signed the open letter from white UU ministers criticizing the book, but says he plans to read it "because as a person who identifies as white I think it is incumbent upon me to know what other white folks are saying, what 'case' they're making to push back against the call to be transformed in and through the work of transforming our society." (*A Minister's Musings*, 6.25.19).

Welcoming Congregation

We are pleased about the outcome of the annual congregational meeting, where those who attended and participated by proxy voted unanimously to become an official welcoming congregation of the Unitarian Universalist Association.

The Welcoming Congregation Committee participated in the first ever Grayson County Pride Festival on June 8. We had a booth where we handed out bookmarks, Earth Day shopping bags and recycling guides. We spoke to attendees about our congregation and the vote to become an official welcoming congregation of the UUA.

Our next meeting will be **Sunday, July 7 at 1:00** at church. We are flexible and adapt to other uses of the building before deciding on our meeting space. We will discuss our booth at the Pride festival, review the last version of the application to the UUA for status as a Welcoming Congregation, and make specific plans for support groups we will sponsor.

Treasurer's Report

In the month of May, we had total receipts of \$2,259.11. Expenses for the month totaled \$2,701.81, leaving an excess of expenditures over receipts for the month of May of \$442.70.

As of May 31, 2019, we had \$7,696.59 available in checking, a total of \$66,958.18 in all savings accounts and a total of \$14,644.91 in Certificates of Deposit.

All bank accounts have been reconciled with no exceptions noted.

Dick Powell, *treasurer*

July Birthdays

- 🎂 July 10 - David Dyer
- 🎂 July 13 - Linn Cates
- 🎂 July 14 - Robert Shelton
- 🎂 July 26 - Scott Bowie

Are you a July baby, but don't see your big day listed? You can be! Just add yourself by sending your birthday to news@redriveruu.org

A Fledgling Choir

The choir will perform on July 14. We'll practice on Sun, July 7 at 12:45 and rehearse on the 14th at 10:00.

Calling everyone who enjoys singing, come join our fledgling choir.

Keep the enthusiasm growing, listen to those around you and corner them if they sing on key!

Water Communion



A reminder if you're venturing away, to bring home a small container of water for our annual water communion ceremony, which will be on August 25. Time was, when the world used film, that film canisters were the perfect container. Gone are those perfect containers, as now, everyone has a camera on their phone. So, remember to take a picture of where you would have brought your water and save it for our ever-adjusting way of celebrating water communion.

A New Church Directory



It has been long enough that we need an updated directory. During July, please look for an email asking for your current contact information along with what your current church involvement is so we can get a

new directory ready.

Not currently in our directory? We list all members and any friends who would like to be included. If you'd like to be added, send your contact info to:

[Directory \(at\) redriveruu.org](mailto:Directory(at)redriveruu.org)

You can also send it via the message tab on the church app.

Include your contact info

- Name
- Address
- Cell (and land line if you still have one)
- Email

Our directory also has an area to list your interest, hobbies, etc.

Also, an area where we list, you're your employment, or if retired, what your work was.

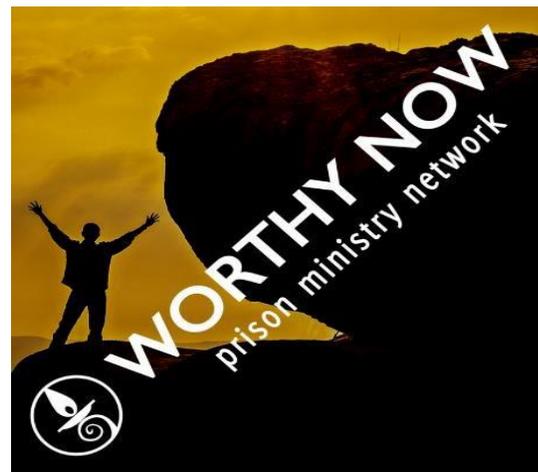
Earth Day Planning

The Earth Day Festival Planning Committee met May 14 to evaluate the 2019 festival and make plans for 2020. We decided to have a booth at the Sherman Arts Festival in September to assist Sherman residents with registration in the city's recycling program. Our recycling guide has proven to be extremely popular. We will reprint it without the information specific to the festival and hand it out at Arts Fest.

We are on break for the months of June and July. We will meet next on August 13 at 6:30 pm in the chapel.

Not at Some Future Time

Worthy Now is a ministry of our largest UU congregation, Church of the Larger Fellowship. (CLF) More than a thousand, a third of the membership, are currently incarcerated, with a hundred people right here in the six North Texas prisons. One of CLF's programs resembles the Adult Religious Education classes in our own congregations. This lifeline costs about \$150 a person per year, which is of course not possible on prison wages; other members and friends contribute. We at NTUUC want to help and will match the first \$5000 contributed by North Texans, however each congregation wants to collect their funds – through Share the Plate offerings, individual donations, or in the regular budget.



Worthy Now is a liberal religious coalition powered by the Church of the Larger Fellowship, and we invite people on both sides of prison walls into beloved community.

Our dream is for all people who are imprisoned to know they are inherently worthy of love and justice - and for them to have access to religious freedom. This means all are worthy of love, respect, and support right now—**not at some future time when we are better people, but as we are**. We are committed to strengthening our Unitarian Universalist (UU) First Principle with this declaration.

The Worthy Now Prison Ministry Network goes deeper than mission work. Our call is to build relationships in an inclusive, justice-seeking community that makes liberal religious values accessible to people who are incarcerated.

Will you be part of this vital and life-saving ministry?

Tap or click on the donate button, or copy and paste this URL:

app.etapestry.com/onlineforms/ChurchoftheLargerFellowship/worthynow.html.

DONATE NOW 

To learn more, here's an article in the [UU World](#). You might also visit WorthyNow.org.

Please contact any of us with your questions and join us in this important work.

- [Daniel Polk](#), NTUUC Staff 469-682-8870
- [David Pollard](#), NTUUC President
- [Rev Meg Riley](#), CLF Senior Minister
- [Rev Dr. Rodney Lemery](#), Worthy Now Director

We need you to be part of this life-changing and live-saving ministry! Will you join us?



CLF is a congregation without walls, connecting people all over the world for spiritual growth, worship, learning, and mutual support. CLF's [Quest for Meaning](#) site engages people of all ages and stages in Unitarian Universalism, and its many [ministries](#) nurture depth and meaning in places as diverse as family dinner tables, prison cells, and military mess halls. Visit [Quest for Meaning](#) and see for yourself how [Church of the Larger Fellowship](#) brings Unitarian Universalism home, where ever we are.



North Texas Unitarian Universalist Congregations

4015 Normandy Avenue, Dallas, Texas 75205-1750 469.682.8870 NTUUC.org

Leaders

Board of Trustees

Jim Holmes, *President*
Lisa Cates, *Vice President*
Dick Powell, *Treasurer*
David Dyer, *Secretary*
Sabra Jones, *Trustee*
Helen Schulze, *Past President*

Committee on Ministry:

Dan Althoff, Elbert Hill, Marla Loturco

Nominating:

David Dyer, L.D. Clark, Amy Hoffman-Shehan

Team Leaders/Members:

Adult Forum: *Sabra*
Aesthetics: *Carol, Doug, Joyce*
Caring Circle: *Kelly*
Communications: *Doug*
Endowment: *Carolyn, Dick, Doug*
Facilities:
Finance:
Grounds: *Marilyn*
Long Range Planning: *Jim, Marilyn, Robert, Ronda*
Membership: *Marion*
NTUUC Rep: *Marla*
RE Team: *Linn, Tommi*
Safe Congregation Panel: *Dan*
Social Action: *Rebecca*
Worship: *Doug, Marla, Rebecca, Robert, Tommi*

Circles & Interest Groups

Church activities are open to everyone. Contact the facilitator if you wish more information.

EARTH DAY PLANNING COMMITTEE ~ the group is responsible for the creation, each year, of the Texoma Earth Day Festival. All who enjoy planning a large-scale community event are invited to learn more. During the Festival many church members and friends volunteer to help. Next Meeting, July 14th @ 6:30 - in the chapel Amy Hoffman-Shehan, *facilitator*

FLEDGLING CHOIR ~ a small group of people who like to sing and are hoping to encourage other singers to join us. When we rehearse, it is Sunday after the assembly. If you enjoy singing, join us on July 7th @ 12:45 and again on July 14th at 10:00 (because we're singing on the 14th.)

MEDITATION ~ current on hiatus until further notice.

WEB OF LIFE MONARCH WAYSTATION ~ a new group in the planning stages right now, to tenderly love our monarch waystation and to help spawn more gardens at other churches or various locations. More as the summer wanes into autumn.

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- Website: redriveruu.org
- Facebook: [RedRiverUnitarianUniversalist-Church](https://www.facebook.com/RedRiverUnitarianUniversalist-Church)
- Mobile App: 'RedRiverUU' free from the [Apps Store](#) and [Google Play](#).
- [Calendar here](#)

