



Red River Ramblings

The Monthly Newsletter of Red River Unitarian Universalists ♦ Denison TX ♦ Vol 22, No. 1 ♦ April 2020

SUNDAY, APRIL 5, 2020 Join us at 11:15 am via Zoom: Meeting ID 822 69 7618

“MOUNTAIN-CLIMBING FOR UU’s”

Marion Moore Hill, *speaking*

Conservative columnist David Brooks’ non-political book *The Second-Mountain: The Quest for a Moral Life* is a thoughtful exploration of what it means to live a meaningful life. Why do some people seem to radiate joy, know why they were put on earth, and follow a different path than the world around them says they should? Brooks says it’s because they’re climbing a second mountain, one different from the mountain most people climb and that they themselves may have climbed earlier in life, one leading to financial success and making one’s mark in the world.

Church member Marion Hill considers how Brooks’ thought-provoking book relates to UU values and practices. Do the 7 UU principles lead one up the second mountain? Or are there important differences in the two paths?

SUNDAY, APRIL 12, 2020 Join us at 11:15 am on Zoom: Meeting ID: 530 65 9162

“A FLOWER COMMUNION AND JESUS, TOO”

The Worship Team, *leading*

“A Flower Communion and Jesus, too.” Today is the day we honor two elements of our Unitarian heritage—Flower Communion and Easter. Originally created by Czech Unitarian minister Norbert Capek, Flower Communion celebrates both nature and community. Recalling that Unitarians were originally Christian, we also look at Jesus this Easter Sunday from a modern UU perspective, which is both respectful and rational by watching a homily by Connie Simon, from the Unitarian Society of Germantown, Philadelphia, PA. Flower Communion via Zoom??? How’s that possible? Simple, everyone who has a video connection is encouraged to get a flower and be ready to share it with everyone as part of the morning. Special music by Ellie Dyer.

SUNDAY, APRIL 19, 2020 Join us online via Zoom starting at 11:15 am via Zoom ID: 243 53 0135

“CREATIVE, INTENTIONAL, AND RESILIENT COMMUNITY”

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

How can communities find ways to be closer in spirit in the midst of our physical distance? What can we learn from communities throughout history and around the world that have found ways to stay in relationship and find resilience in times of extreme challenge and difficulty?

SUNDAY, APRIL 26, 2020 Join us at 11:15 am on Zoom: Meeting ID: 623 83 5430

“A STRANGER TO MYSELF: LIVING WITH AN INVISIBLE DISABILITY.”

Dr. Virginia A. Parrish, *speaking*

In June 1982 I underwent a right frontal-temporal craniotomy for a congenital aneurysm just off the right internal carotid artery. The aneurysm ruptured just after the neurosurgeon had it sighted. Although I survived the event and although I could walk, talk and function in a somewhat normal fashion, I was changed, different in ways that I continue to discover even now after all these years. For me long-term memories are elusive, moving behind a veil that I cannot touch, cannot relive. Several years ago and courtesy of a Facebook mem, I learn the Welsh have a word for what I feel at times, *hiraeth*.

Speaker’s biographical information available on our website > [Upcoming Morning Assemblies](#).

Jim's Jabber



One of my favorite hippie bands from the 70's was the Grateful Dead. In their hit song "Truckin," is the line, "What a long, strange trip it's been." Today they would be singing "What a long, strange trip it will be." We are facing lots of uncertainty with our future before things settle down and we get back to our new normal. Hang in there,

call a friend, work on your personal to do list, practice relaxation and breathing techniques, follow on-line exercise and yoga classes, and avoid crowds. A good starting point could be to [watch](#) Tashi Nyima's remarks he gave on March 22 on meditation. (I can insert the link!- yes)

The Board has been in communication via email and has made three important decisions:

1. The church will continue to be closed until further notice.
2. Our Stewardship Campaign will be postponed until May
3. Our Spring Congregational Meeting, scheduled for May 17 will be held in June.

We held our last three Sunday morning assemblies via Zoom and with the help of Marla, Doug, Dan, and Don we made it work. This is new to us too, so we are experimenting with streaming the best experience possible over the internet. The last two were done completely as different formats and I expect future Sunday assemblies will settle into a format that will feel comfortable and familiar. We had 15 viewers on March 15 and 22, March 22 and 14 on March 29. If you have a smart device that you can watch YouTube on, then you can do video Zoom. You can always Zoom the audio on any device.

The church now has an official Zoom business account, so if any committees or teams want to use it for their meetings, contact Doug (news@redriveruu.org) or me (president@redriveruu.org). The Board used Zoom for our March board meeting and it was very successful. Our church community needs to keep connected, especially now. If each of us reach out to two other members or friends of Red River UU each week, our community will be stronger. Send texts, emails, phone calls. It will help us all. Also, if you want to get together with people on video and would like to use the church Zoom account, contact us and we will set you up.

Hang in there everyone, call a friend, stay safe, stay healthy and keep on "Truckin."

Jim

Changes in Worship

All faith communities world-wide have been thrown into a tailspin because of the Corona virus. Our thanks to all who have been supportive as we learn on the run how to worship online. Things have improved over the last three weeks, but glitches still happen. The Team unanimously supported two ideas that we think will be meaningful for our congregation.

We agreed that each Team member will select one full-length worship service from another UU congregation which will comprise our four morning assemblies during May. Most of our congregation has never experienced a UU worship anywhere except at RedRiverUU. We hope people will join the May morning assemblies to experience how other UU congregations "do worship."

The other idea is a way more personal approach to connecting during each assembly. The Team agreed to temporarily reinstitute a practice that many UU congregation once did - verbal joys and concerns. We ceased the practice when the joys and concerns began to be longer than the sermon! Starting on Easter we will weave a time for anyone to share a joy or concern with all who have joined the assembly. It is easy to do - just "raise your hand" (a description of how to do it is in the How To Join A Zoom Meeting article.) We each will be able to hear, and those with video access can see the person speaking.

Our April speakers will be addressing the congregation from the chapel, except Mark Davies, who we decided should speak from his home in Oklahoma City. We feel we have solved one major drawback to online worship - the lack of music.

No one knows how long social distancing will keep us apart from one another. The worship team is committed to an ongoing and hopefully rewarding Sunday morning assemblies. We trust y'all will join us via Zoom each Sunday @ 11:15.

Welcoming Committee



The LGBTQ welcoming committee meeting on Sunday, April 5 @ 1 pm via Zoom. The meeting ID is 895 792 310. All committee members are requested to join the meeting.

A Special Plea

Our attention is so fully on the Covid-19 threat these days that it's easy to forget that human beings still have other concerns. People in the Red River UU congregation may require help getting medications and/or food, getting to a doctor's appointment, or taking care of other needs. We don't currently have a "formal" caring committee, but perhaps it's time to get one going again.

We need a coordinator, someone who can match needs with potential sources of help. This can be someone who's "stuck at home" now, but who can communicate by phone and email to organize responses. If you're able and willing to take on this function, please get in touch with Marion (580-924-7715 or [email](mailto:marion@redriveruu.org)).

Also needed are volunteers who can offer various services during this time of "social distancing," or who have ideas about how needs can be met. For example, a church member needed someone to pick up a prescription today. Dick Powell learned of two pharmacies in the area that would deliver to her home, and she transferred her prescription from her original pharmacy to one of those, so she received delivery of her medication.

That's the sort of thinking and planning that's invaluable now. If you can offer a ride to someone for a medical appointment, or you have a suggestion for how someone's need might be met with the necessarily limited abilities of most of us to get out in public, please pass these on.

We will get through this scary time. It's what human beings do. And we need to do it together.

Church Finances & Covid 19

Recently the finance committee felt it prudent to take a close and serious look at where we stand with expenses and revenue. The pandemic has caused a major downturn in the stock market as well as many people either being laid off from their work or put on reduced income.

We looked at our expense items for the remainder of the fiscal year - through June 30 - to identify those expenses that could be reduced or cut. Most of our budget items are fixed (insurance, loan repayment, utilities etc.), but we identified areas where we can save.

Our analysis is showing that although our expenses are tracking close to our budget expectations, our pledge income, on the other hand, is a bit behind for

our 2019-2020 budget year, largely because we cannot take a weekly offering.

For those who faithfully put your donations and pledge payments in the bowl on Sunday, it would be helpful if you could mail a check to the church PO address (PO Box 1806, Denison 75021-1806) or use your bank's bill pay option and have them send the check.

Our individual commitments are a promise, not a bill. If your financial situation indicates you need to make an adjustment on the balance of your pledge to the 2019-2020 Stewardship Campaign, please don't hesitate to contact Dick Powell (treasurer@redriveruu.org). We each must do what's right for our family first. Together we will succeed as a community.

Take Care and Stay Safe,

Jim Holmes

Treasurer's Report

In the month of February, we had total receipts of \$9,368.00, which included our NTUUC Grant of \$5,200.00. Expenses for the month totaled \$5,300.74, which included \$898.00 spent on building improvements. The result was an excess of receipts over expenditures for the month of February of \$4,067.26.

Please note that I always report the results of operations on the cash basis. However, in my report to the Board in February, I erroneously reported a year-to-date (thru 1/31/20) excess of receipts over expenses of \$15,254.36. This figure included \$15,302 of pledges made, but not yet received in cash. This is due to the fact that the bookkeeper we are using on a test basis records pledges in the general ledger as a receivable and I failed to catch this fact when I prepared my report.

As of February 29, 2020, we had \$11,003.20 available in checking, a total of \$66,983.22 in all savings accounts and a total of \$14,645.47 in Certificates of Deposit.

Dick Powell, *treasurer*

Do You "do" OneNote

The worship team keeps a log of all our morning assemblies in a OneNote account. The 2020 Worship log has disappeared along with the One Note administrative access. If you know *anything* about how it could be retrieved please contact [us](mailto:us@redriveruu.org).

How to join a Zoom meeting

These instructions should work for any smart phone, tablet, windows pc, or Mac pc. If you can watch and hear YouTube videos on your device then your device will work on Zoom. Follow these steps to join a Zoom meeting:

1. You will receive a link **and a password** to the Zoom meeting from the Meeting Host or the worship team
2. Click on the link. When Zoom asks for the password, type in the 6 digit password.
3. If you are on a phone or tablet and don't have the Zoom App installed, you will be asked to install the App. Accept this install. If you are on a Mac or pc, Zoom will come up in your browser.
4. Once the App is ready or the browser is ready, Zoom will ask if you want to "join with video", answer yes or click depending on your device.
5. A Zoom window will appear. You should be able to see the Host plus others that have joined this meeting. You may see a pop up that asks, "to hear others please join with audio". Click "call using internet audio".
6. If you can't see yourself or hear, click on the Zoom window. A toolbar should appear along the bottom of the window. In the lower left of the window on the toolbar you will see an icon for a microphone and a movie camera. If there is a red line through either of these click on the icon to activate the microphone and camera on your device. You should now be able to see yourself and hear what's going on.
7. Other icons on the bottom toolbar are:
 - a. Share contents: this is used to share/show documents, videos, and other content on your screen so others may see it. Usually this is used by the meeting host.
 - b. Participants: this will show a list of others who are logged in. If you click on their name you can send a chat message to just them.
 - c. More: has several options. These are the useful ones:
 - i. Chat: send a chat message to everyone or a specific attendee
 - ii. Virtual background: you can select a jpeg photo on your device to replace your background with that picture. No need to clean house!
 - iii. **Raise hand. A red hand will show on your video window that all see. For some meetings the meeting host may put everyone on mute (too many people trying to talk at the same time is not good). The meeting host can unmute specific attendees, so a raised hand identifies you as wanting to talk.**
8. In the upper right corner of the main Zoom window is a "Leave Meeting" option. Click on this and confirm to leave the meeting. The meeting host will also end the meeting when it is over, and this will also disconnect you.

Shameless Commerce Dept.



A new challenge for those of us at home. Our newsletter is thin, and some of us don't have a lot to do.

I developed a new pattern for a chalice t-shirt this last week and have decided to put it out there as available for purchase. It will be available in red in any size t-shirt. Please contact me if you are interested for more details.

Now we don't necessarily want to change our newsletter to be an online ad, however, we do want to give an outlet for our creativity. How about it - anyone else have something they developed, whether you want to sell it or not - please share so we might know what is happening in other people's lives as well as our own.

Marla

April Birthdays



07 - Bruce Cameron
18 - Carol Powell
18 - Jolene Whitten
28 - Bill Mory

Our Leaders

Board of Trustees

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

Committee on Ministry:

Dan Althoff, Elbert Hill, Marla Loturco

Nominating:

Kelly Cofield 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: Jim (until we find someone)
Finance: Jim, Dick, Doug
Grounds: Marilyn
Long Range Planning: Jim, Marilyn, Robert, Ronda
Membership: Marion
NTUUC Rep: Marla
RE Team: Tommi
Safe Congregation Panel: Dan
Social Action:
Welcoming Congregation:
Worship: Adrian, Doug, Marla, Dan, Robert

Contact Us

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

How to reach us:

- Phone: 903.231.3232
- [Email](#)
- [Website](#)
- [Facebook](#)
- [Mobile App](#)
- [Calendar](#)

Heretic of the week:

Ellen G. White

In each week's issue of [The Catholic Herald](#) author Charles Coulombe writes a column called *Heretic of the Week*. His *Heretics ~ Our Heroes!*



The 1830s were a tempestuous time for American Protestantism, from the fires of the Second Great Awakening to the ongoing march of Unitarianism.

Adding to the general excitement, a self-described biblical prophet, William Miller, came up with two dates for Doomsday in that fraught decade. When neither eventuated, Miller declared himself a failure,

and retired from the prophecy business. His followers were much dismayed by this "Great Disappointment". Many returned to the denominations from which they had come. Many more joined the Shakers.

But a remnant retained the faith in Miller that Miller himself lacked. At the head of many of these emerged Ellen G. White (1827-1915), a native of Maine. Shortly after Miller's second debacle in 1844, she received the first of more than 2,000 visitations she claimed to have from Christ. She was able to inspire many of the remaining "Adventists" (as Miller's remaining followers called themselves) with a new vision.

Her ongoing revelations formed the basis of the doctrine upon which she and her husband, James, founded the Seventh-day Adventist Church (so-called because White claimed that Christ wanted to be worshipped on the Jewish Sabbath). These doctrines included the revival of Jewish dietary customs (although most Adventists are vegetarian today); identification of the pope as Antichrist; three separate Divine Persons rather than the orthodox doctrine of Trinity; and several other unique teachings.

For the most part, Adventists are conscientious objectors, but they have specialised in medical roles during wartime. Similarly, the denomination has a generous commitment to hospitals and schools – and were great practitioners of racial equality. Their technological savvy must be balanced against the proof asserted of the papacy's diabolical nature – that the (non-existent) inscription on the papal tiara adds up to 666 in Hebrew letters.