

Red River Ramblings

VOLUME 4 ISSUE 11

NOVEMBER 2007

Red River Unitarian Universalist Church
...a home for religious liberals in Southern Oklahoma and North Texas

A Month of Sundays

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November 4

Megan Dalby-Jones

"Faith Beyond Belief"

We are a religion without a creed. Still, we are a people of faith. Too often, faith and belief are collapsed into one. As we sort through the differences between the two, Megan Dalby-Jones, last year's ministerial intern at Dallas' First Unitarian Church, invites you to come and reclaim our living faith.

November 11

Rev. Daniel Kanter

"Liberal in a Conservative Land"

What are the challenges of being a religious liberal in a conservative context, and what is there to do about it? Come hear the Rev. Daniel Kanter, who on October 28 was named the new Senior Minister of First Unitarian Church of Dallas, preach.

November 18

Rev. Christine Tata

"Gratitude for Real People"

We all may know people who seem to maintain an "attitude of gratitude" with ease and serenity, no matter what the circumstance - but what about the rest of us? Bills... stress... conflict... ambivalence... the nightly news -- these can all make gratitude seem irrelevant if not impossible. Let's come together and see if we can find a fresh approach to Thanksgiving.

November 25

Rev. Jennifer Innis

"To Be a Pilgrim"

It is said, "To be a pilgrim is to proclaim a song of hope, come wind and weather, to proclaim a song of faith, come lion or giant, discouragement or disaster." And yet to offer this degree of hope, we must let ourselves follow a faith that may lead us away from what we expect. What does it mean to be a liberal religious pilgrim?



Adult Religious Education & Young Religious UU 10:00am
Worship & Children's RE 11:15am

November 2007

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	

RRUU Board of Trustees will meet on Wednesday, November 8 at 7:15 PM at the church. Meetings are open and anyone may attend. To place an item on the agenda, contact the president, Kathleen Campbell, at 903-892-057

Daylight Savings Time—November 4

The time has come around again to “fall back”. November 4th, daylight saving time will be observed. In addition to changing our clocks, fire safety officials continue to encourage using the annual clock change as a reminder to check the batteries in our smoke and carbon monoxide detectors. Similar semiannual tasks some people do on the weekend of the clock change include inspecting their vehicle lights, updating their family disaster plans, checking storage areas for hazardous materials and reprogramming thermostats.

November Birthdays!



Claudette Galen 11/5
 Annabelle Dunn 11/6
 Laura Shehan 11/6
 Shann Schubert 11/6
 Dan Althoff 11/8
 Harley House 11/9

Hunter House 11/9
 Maura Shehan 11/13
 Doyle Adams 11/15
 Kris Riek 11/15
 Roger Gregory-Allen 11/15

Cylvia Lawrence 11/16
 Bernice Melvin 11/17
 Carolyn Cameron 11/18
 Peter Schulze 11/22
 Tristan Cates 11/22

Schedule of Events

Thursday Afternoons Being Peace
 12:15-1pm

Monday Evenings Being Peace
 6:30-7:15

- Nov 3 Memory Walk – Dallas Zoo
- Nov 3 Step It Up – Sneed Prairie
- Nov 4 Crop Walk – Collin County
- Nov 4 UUJam! 12:30
- Nov 8 “Buddhism & Psychology” (AC)
- Nov 8 Board Meeting 7:15
- Nov 8-10 Into the Woods (AC) 7:30
- Nov 9-11 SWUUC Fall Conference
- Nov 13 The Green Team 7:30
- Nov 18 A Moveable Feast 1:00
- Nov 18 Being Peace 6:30
- Nov 20 Evensong 7:30
- Nov 22 December Newsletter Deadline
- Nov 25 It Takes A Village 12:30
- Nov 29-Dec 1 A Christmas Carol (SOSU)
- Nov 30 The Reel Deal 7:20

This Month's Worship Leaders

Ms. Megan Dalby-Jones is a Ministerial Candidate, as recognized by the Ministerial Fellowship Committee of the Unitarian Universalist Association. A student at Meadville-Lombard Theological School in Chicago, one of our two Unitarian Universalist seminaries, she and her spouse, Kristi, came down to Texas in order for Megan to serve as the most recent Ministerial Intern at First Unitarian Church of Dallas. At the moment, the family is giving priority to Kristi's career, and so they plan to stay put geographically for the next few years. Megan is using that time to focus as much as possible on preaching, which she loves, by being a UU "circuit rider" on the weekends. She also has a "day job" at Borders Books.

The Rev. Jennifer Innis has served UU congregations in Illinois, Massachusetts, Maine, Alabama, and South Carolina. She currently serves as Consulting Minister for both RRUU and for the UU Fellowship of Midland, Texas. Jennifer was raised as a Unitarian Universalist, granted a Master of Divinity degree from Harvard Divinity School and ordained by the Unitarian Universalist Church of Worcester, Massachusetts. She now lives in Plano, Texas, with her spouse, the Rev. Patrick Price, minister of Community Unitarian Universalist Church. Jennifer has recently started taking piano lessons for the first time!

The Rev. Dr. Daniel Chesney Kanter received a B. A. in psychology and anthropology from the University of Vermont in 1989, a Master of Divinity from Starr King School for the Ministry in 1998, and a Doctor of Ministry from Perkins School of Theology/SMU last spring. He is a member of the Board of Trustees at Starr King and was called to serve as Minister at the First Unitarian Church of Dallas in 2003. On October 28, he was named Senior Minister of Dallas First Unitarian, one of the most prestigious pulpits in our denomination! Daniel has lived abroad and traveled in China, India, Israel, and Europe. He and his spouse have one daughter and live in Dallas.

The Rev. Christine Tata, who is currently working in Human Resources at UT Southwestern Medical Center, has enjoyed several other careers in her life: actor, playwright, proofreader, college professor and pastor. Ordained in the United Church of Christ, Christine's most recent ministry experience was as associate pastor for worship and spiritual development at Pathways Church, our Unitarian Universalist congregation in Southlake, Texas. She and her spouse, Chet, have a grown daughter who works in an art gallery in Austin and a son who is a pitcher in the Detroit Tigers organization. They make their home in Dallas, where Christine enjoys books and Boggle, science fiction and crossword puzzles, Dove chocolate and good strong coffee. Not necessarily in that order.

Caring News

This month the Caring Circle is on the prowl (with apologies to the Advertising Council of America)

When someone in our congregation is in need we're ready to respond with The Real Thing like food, transportation, shelter, visits, hugs, help. Emergencies happen for When It Rains It Pours and everyone wants No More Tears. We know He's not heavy, he's my brother. So, the Caring Circle is on the prowl for a Few Good Men and women who will Just Do It and Reach Out And Touch Someone to those in need.

We're on the prowl When you care enough to send the very best, we send a card to cheer someone up or Let your fingers do the walking and email a note that will Make my day.. We celebrate The Pause That Refreshes by popping in and visiting someone who is ill. What we do is neither complicated nor consuming for A Little Dab'll Do Ya.

We're on the prowl for some Finger-Lickin' Good simple meals to deliver to families and friends in their time of need since Nothin' Says Lovin' Like Somethin' From The Oven and once in a while You deserve a break today. We all know That When You're Here ... You're Family.

Celebrate the Moments of Your Life and get involved with the Caring team. It is fun because you can Be All That You Can Be. Its not hard work All You Add Is Love. It's a win-win thing for when you help another you help yourself, so Double Your Pleasure, Double Your Fun.

Some may think We Answer To A Higher Authority but really we do it Because You're Worth It. We're The Caring Circle Touching Lives, Improving Life. Come join us!

Can you hear me now? ...Good. Reach us easily at caring@rruu.org and share The Good News – offer to help.

The Caring Circle: Carolyn Cameron, Marion Hill, Scottie Johnson, Caleb Butler & Doug Strong

Rambling in the Community

Austin College is producing the Stephen Sondheim musical *Into the Woods* Nov. 8-10 at the Ida Green Theatre on the campus. Performances are at 7:30 each evening. Tickets (\$10) are available at the door. Sondheim's musical weaves together various fairy tales into a story about love, loss, and community. Costumes for the production are being designed by RRUU Board President Kathleen Campbell. The production is directed by AC theatre faculty member Kirk Everist, who is the husband of Rebecca Crystal, who recently led a service at RRUU.

Lecture at Austin College Nov 8th—"Buddhism & Psychology"

Austin College is hosting Dr. Harvey Aronson on November 8, 2007 at 11:00 am at the Wright Campus Center, Room 231. Dr. Aronson is a licensed psychotherapist in private practice, Buddhist meditation teacher, and translator of Buddhist texts. He is co-director of Dawn Mountain Research Institute for Tibetan Buddhist Studies in Houston, Texas with Professor Anne Klein from Rice University. Dr. Aronson has been a student of several prominent Buddhist teachers in India, Nepal and the U.S.

Author of several works on the interface of Buddhism and psychology including: *Buddhist Practice on Western Ground*, and *Love and Sympathy in Theravada Buddhism*

Sponsored by the Keck Foundation.

Contact Ivette Vargas (903) 813-2479

A Christmas Carol at Southeastern Oklahoma State University

November 29, 30 and December 1

SOSU

Charles Dickens: *A Christmas Carol*

1405 North 4th

Reservations are Required. Tickets are \$17 and \$20.

Durant, OK 74701

Time: 6:30 PM Dinner and 8:00 PM Performance

Phone: 1-800-435-1327 or 580-745-2000

Location: VPAC

Aid for California Fire Victims

Unitarian Universalist Association President William G. Sinkford is seeking aid for victims of California wild fires, which have displaced more than 500,000 people. In a letter dated October 25 Sinkford writes, "My heart goes out to those whose lives have been affected by the wildfires in Southern California. The extent of the devastation will not be fully known until the fires are extinguished, but it is already clear that the destruction is on a historic scale and that recovery will take many years."

Sinkford encourages donations to the Pacific Southwest District's Fire Relief Fund, which will disburse aid to UU congregations, UUs in need, community groups in relationship with UU congregations, and other groups supporting those most in need. To contribute to the fund online, please go to <http://tinyurl.com/ytfz3f>. Sinkford's complete letter, including a mailing address for donations, can be found at www.uua.org/news/newssubmissions/55955.shtml.

In addition, Rev. John Gibb Millspaugh and Rev. Sarah Gibb Millspaugh, residents of California in the fire-stricken area, have written a prayer, "In Times of Fire," which is available online:

<http://tinyurl.com/22jwms> .

Statement From UUA President Regarding Myanmar

Statement from the Rev. William Sinkford, President of the UUA, in Response to Recent Events in Myanmar

September 28, 2007

The people of Burma/Myanmar are in our thoughts and prayers. The images we've seen and the stories we've heard of the brave and inspirational witness offered by Buddhist religious leaders and citizens have touched our hearts and souls. Their peaceful protest against a cruel and repressive government is a notable moment in the multi-generational struggle for peace, liberty and justice in our world. The arrests, the killings, and all the forms of violence which they have suffered in response from the government are entirely unjustified. We stand in spiritual solidarity with the people of Burma as they risk their safety even as further governmental reprisals occur. We pray for their well-being, their vision, and their commitment.

We call upon United States government and the United Nations to pressure the government of Myanmar to refrain from violent responses and to release political prisoners, including Nobel Peace Prize recipient Aung San Suu Kyi, who has been under house arrest for nearly seventeen years. Unitarian Universalists are asked to engage in advocacy for the people of Burma with their elected representatives, and to hold the people of Burma in their thoughts and prayers during worship this weekend, and in the weeks to come.

Petitions for Peace

UUA President Sinkford Delivers Petitions for Peace

October 10, 2007

Just after 10:00 a.m. on Wednesday, October 10 2007, a delegation of clergy from the Unitarian Universalist Association of Congregations (UUA) and the United Church of Christ (UCC) delivered a combined total of more than 73,000 signed petitions for peace to Congressional leaders. The United Church of Christ, represented by Rev. John Thomas, General Minister and President, and Rev. Linda Jaramillo, Executive Minister for Justice Ministries, presented the 60,000 signatures they gathered over the last few months. Rev. William Sinkford, President of the Unitarian Universalist Association, presented the 13,006 signatures gathered by the UUA's Washington Office for Advocacy over the last three weeks.

The cover letter accompanying the petitions reads:

On September 6, I sent a message to every member of Congress saying, "Not another dollar. Not another life." Today, I have come to Washington personally—and I am not alone. Together with my colleagues... we are here with tens of thousands of signed petitions from members and friends of Unitarian Universalist and United Church of Christ congregations calling for an end to this war—and to the arrogant unilateralism that created it.

The 13,006 names on the following pages represent what is arguably the largest single advocacy action ever taken by Unitarian Universalists. That so many of us—with our colleagues in the United Church of Christ—have chosen this issue, at this time, demonstrates just how frustrated we are by the ongoing violence in Iraq and the lack of substantive policy change here at home.

I urge you, together with these thousands, to end the war in Iraq. The time has come for the United States, in the words of our petition, "to acknowledge failure and error... accept the futility of our current path... and seek new paths of peacemaking in the Middle East, through regional engagement and true multinational policing." It is time to change the mission.

In Faith,

William G. Sinkford

President

The petitions were delivered to representatives from Speaker of the House Nancy Pelosi, Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid, and House Republican Leader John Boehner. Staff from the UUA and UCC Washington offices will deliver the petitions to the office of Senate Republican Leader Mitch McConnell next week.

"All three offices seemed moved that religious organizations had not only gathered so many signatures, but had sent their leaders to Washington to deliver them. Whatever they may be hearing from other groups, they at least know there's a large religious constituency that wants to see more action to bring this war to an end," said President Sinkford, commenting on the morning's activities. "Equally as important, though, is what this effort has done within our community. I am reminded of words said of Eleanor Roosevelt, 'you have chosen to a light a candle rather than to curse the darkness.'

"This petition may not end the war, but by bringing our candles together, they certainly grow brighter. As I see that light growing, I pray for a rebirth of hope."

Our Unitarian Universalist Heritage...

Reinhold Niebuhr mused "Humor is a prelude to faith and Laughter is the beginning of prayer." Herewith ... preludes and prayers, UU style:

A little Unitarian Universalist girl was sitting on the curb in front of her house with a sad look on her face. An older lady happened upon her and asked her why she looked so sad. The girl replied, "My kitty cat died."

The older woman, trying to be helpful, said to the little girl, "I know you're sad, but right now your kitty cat is with Jesus."

The girl crinkled her nose for a second and replied, "What would Jesus want with a dead cat?"

Jesus said to them, "Who do you say that I am?" The Unitarian Universalist replied "You are the eschatological manifestation of the ground of our being, the kerygma of which we find the ultimate meaning in our interpersonal relationships." And Jesus said "What?"

At a Sunday morning service, in one of the oldest New England UU churches, a newcomer arrived, sat in the front pew and after every sentence the minister spoke, he would shout, "Amen! Halleluiah!"

This disturbed the other parishioners and the minister, and finally the elderly usher quietly walked down the aisle, leaned over and ask, "Excuse me sir, but ... but ... what ARE you doing?" Beaming in a wide smile, the man joyfully replied, "I've found religion, brother. I've found religion. Halleluiah."

"I'm delighted that you've found religion," whispered the usher, "but you didn't find it here!"

On her way to church one Sunday morning, the UU minister noticed a young child in the parking lot of the nearby Catholic church, with a box and a sign: "Free kittens, from a good Catholic family!" She smiled to herself, mentally wished the child good luck, and went on her way.

About the middle of the week, she saw the same child, with the same box, outside the Methodist church, this time with a sign that said, "Good Methodist kittens! Absolutely free!" Impressed with the child's tenacity, she went on into her board meeting.

Finally, the next Sunday, the child was in her Church's parking lot, with a new sign reading: "Unitarian Universalist kittens! Free to a good home!" This time she stopped to chat.

"Weren't you outside the Catholic church last Sunday?" "Yes."

"And on Wednesday, weren't these Methodist kittens?" "They sure were."

"Well, how come they're Unitarian Universalist kittens now?"

"Cause today their eyes are open!"

Q: What do you get when you cross a Unitarian Universalist with a Jehovah's Witness?

A: Someone who knocks on your door and asks you what you believe.

Q: What is a Unitarian Universalist?

A: Someone who believes in life before death.

"The General answers his own phone. Must be a Unitarian."

- Col. Sherman Potter, from an episode of M.A.S.H 4077

"The Unitarians don't want salvation, they want closure."

- Garrison Keillor

Social Action—"One More Step!"

The Social Action Committee met on October 21 to discuss projects for the coming year. Expenditures and projects from the previous year were discussed. The establishment of a long term activity calendar is a priority and is being developed. Although there is a need to be involved on the local, national, and international level, the general consensus is that we can have more effect and generate more interest by working on the local level. In addition to last year's projects, other suggestions were the establishment of scholarships for vocational nursing & UU students, aid to the women's crisis centers, and expanding projects into Bryan County.

We also discussed topics for a Social Action block during RE. John Ockels suggested exploring the cornerstones of intolerance - sexism, classism, racism, and ageism in four sessions. It was agreed that we would work to develop pertinent programs for each topic.

We still have a few T-shirts left at rock bottom prices. While they last, they will be on the Fair Trade coffee table.

The Collin County Crop Hunger Walk will be held November 4th at Russell Creek Park. Our fellow congregations at Horizon and CUUC will have contingents. They have extended a welcome to us to participate. More information can be found at the following link. Click on the State of Texas for a full list of fall and spring CROP activities. The establishment of a local program involving other churches in the community might be a long term goal to discuss.

<http://www.cropwalkonline.org>

Treasurer's Report

We have just completed the first quarter (July-September) of the 2007-8 fiscal year. Our total income for the quarter was \$15,587.50 (\$2,346.28 more than was budgeted); our total expense was \$11,468.55 (\$2,118.95 less than budgeted.); the net income (income less expense) was \$4,465.23. During the quarter you contributed \$376 more in pledges and \$812.50 more in weekly offerings (non-pledge plate offerings) than was budgeted. We also had \$1203 in other donations, including a gift of \$1000 by Carolyn and Bruce Cameron for DBLE scholarships. Last, but not least, our Net Worth (checking plus CD's and savings accounts) as of Oct. 11, 2007 was \$55,816.69. This includes \$7,251.60 in Grant Savings dedicated to our NTAUUS grants we have received for the minister's salary and for advertising. So, we are off to a good start financially this fiscal year.

Jim Johnson, Treasurer

Adult Religious Education

Nov 4: Introduction to and discussion of the "Awakening the Dreamer" seminar, led by Scottie Johnson. Claudette and John are participating in the four-day ATD Facilitator Training in Brenham this weekend in preparation to offer this class to RRUU members and the wider community. Additional information on the seminar may be found at www.awakeningthedreamer.org.

Nov 11: This week begins our five week continued consideration of Buddhism and our reading of Nolan Pliny Jacobson's book *Buddhism & the Contemporary World: Change and Self-Correction*, led by John Ockels. This week's session will focus on Chapter 3, "The Central Conception of Buddhism."

Nov 18: Continuing our ongoing study of Buddhism. This week we'll focus on Chapter 4 of Jacobson's book, "Nirvana: The Aesthetic Center of Life."

Nov 25: Continuing our ongoing study of Buddhism. This week we'll focus on Chapter 5 of Jacobson's book, "Freedom in the Buddhist Perspective."

RRUU Chalice Circles—Which Small Group Is Right For You?

Chalice Circles are small groups of people who meet regularly for the purpose of getting to know one another while learning, discussing, and acting on topics of common interest. All members and friends are welcome! If you are interested in attending a particular circle, contact Circle Coordinator, Scottie McIntyre Johnson (903-892-4751; scottieone@cableone.net).



BEING PEACE, A Mindfulness Meditation Circle (Afternoon Session) Facilitator: Nell Evans. Meets *every* Thursday afternoon from 12:15 to 1:00 p.m. @ the home of Nell Evans in Sherman. Note: We will NOT meet on Nov. 22.

BEING PEACE, A Mindfulness Meditation Circle. (Evening Session) Facilitator: Kathy Whisman. Meets *every* Monday evening from 6:30 to 7:15 p.m. @ the church. Special session for both Circles on Nov. 19 @ the home of Katie Plunkett in Denison.
NEW MEDITATORS WELCOME AT EITHER CIRCLE! JUST SHOW UP.



EVENSONG, A Circle for Sharing Our Stories. Facilitator: Scottie McIntyre Johnson. Meets the third Tuesday of the month from 7:30 p.m. to 9:30 p.m. @ various homes. Next meeting: Tues. Nov. 20 @ Scottie's home in Sherman. Topic: "Favorite Children's Books". Bring one or more picture books an/or poems written especially for children to read aloud. **NEW "EVENINGERS" ARE WELCOME!**



THE GREEN TEAM, An Environmental Action Circle. Facilitator: Linn Cates. Meets the second Tuesday of the month from 7:30 to 9:30. @ the home of Linn Cates in Sherman. Next meeting: Tues. Nov. 13. We have a lot going on, so this will be a working meeting.
ANYONE WHO LOVES OUR PLANET IS WELCOME!



IT TAKES A VILLAGE, A Circle of Parents Supporting Parents. Facilitator: Dianna Butler. Meets the last Sunday of each month, after church @ the church. Next meeting: Sun. Nov. 25. "Evensong for Families" topic: "Holidays & Birthdays". Draw and bring a picture of your family celebrating a holiday in your own special way. **FAMILIES WITH CHILDREN ALWAYS WELCOME!**



A MOVEABLE FEAST, A Cooking and Eating Circle. Facilitators: Elbert & Marion Hill. Meets at moveable times and moveable places! Next meeting: Sunday, Nov. 18 @ 1:00 P.M. @ the Fletcher's in Sherman. Bring beverages or a side dish that goes with hamburgers. We'll watch the Cowboys beat the Redskins!



RED RIVER EARTH SPIRIT, A Nature-Based Spirituality Circle. Facilitator: Penny Armstrong. Meets at various places on various dates but usually on a Friday. Next meeting: TBA.
NEW MEMBERS AND GUESTS WELCOME!

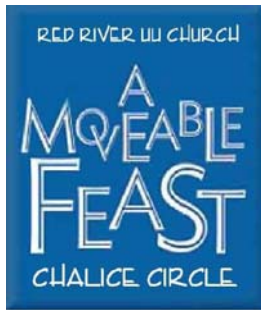


THE REEL DEAL, A Movie Watching Circle. Facilitator: Linda Woytaszyk. Usually meets the last Friday of the month from 7:20 to 10:00 @ the home of Linda Woytaszyk in Sherman. Next meeting: Nov. 30. Film: *Volver*. Popcorn is provided! Reel Deal will not meet in December but will resume again in January.
NEW MEMBERS & GUESTS ALWAYS WELCOME!



UUJAM! A Music-Making Circle. Facilitator: Jan Fletcher. Meets the first Sunday of the month after church @ the church. Next meeting: Nov. 4. Bring your own brown bag lunch, your musical instruments and a song to sing!
MUSICIANS AND LISTENERS ARE ALWAYS WELCOME!

Focus on A Moveable Feast



From times forgotten people have gathered to break bread, the most basic form of communion. Communion, from the Latin *communio* “mutual participation” is an act of sharing, an intimate fellowship. From communion comes communication and community, all three of which are celebrated monthly by a lively Chalice Circle in our congregation called A Moveable Feast.

The premise is uncomplicated. The group selects an evening, someone volunteers to host, a time is set, food appears and voilà – an evening of kindred spirits in which “a good time was had by all”.

Elbert and Marion Hill have coordinated A Moveable Feast since its inception five years ago and report that over the years the group has met in a variety of ways. The host might provide the entire meal, or the entrée and others bring the side dishes. Dinners can be in homes, at the church, and in local restaurants. There have also been a couple of field trips to Dallas to visit ethnic grocery shops and dine in off-beat restaurants. To spice up things, Feasters have enjoyed “themed” gatherings - an Indian dinner, a Asian

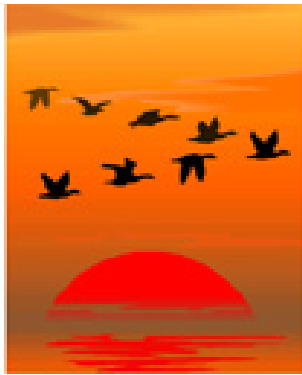
dinner - and to kick off the New Year, the January event will be a New Orleans dinner, which will be held at the church. One approach yet to be attempted is for the group to bring the ingredients and actually prepare a meal together and then feast.

What’s the best part of being a Feaster? It is a great way to meet and get to know people in the church and no one will ever be turned away. Newcomers to our congregation have found it a fun and festive introduction to our faith.

A Moveable Feast is now the largest Chalice Circle and growth is presenting some challenges. For some the group, often upwards of twenty souls, is too large for one family to host and going to a restaurant makes it difficult for people to socialize. No one is eager to divide the group because everyone enjoys being together in one large body, yet the logistics are becoming a bit unruly. In good UU fashion, the Feasters are exploring a variety of opportunities to find a solution that will work for everyone.

A Moveable Feast – UU communion at its best! Should your appetite lean towards becoming a Feaster, you need only call the Hills, or email AMoveableFeast@rruu.org.

Being Peace Meditation Circles Meet Together November 19th



Because one of the usual meeting days for the afternoon session of Being Peace Meditation Circle falls on Thanksgiving Day, the group will not meet on November 22. Instead, the afternoon and evening circles will meet together for a special combined session on Monday, November 19. We will gather at the church at 6:30 p.m. and caravan to the home of Katie Plunkett in Denison, who has created a special meditation room in her home. Everyone is invited and welcome!

Both Being Peace Circles gather weekly to practice 30 minutes of mindfulness meditation, a simple technique of clearing the mind by sitting in silence and stillness and focusing on one’s breath. Meditators may sit on the floor or in a chair, as they prefer. No special clothing is necessary, but wear something comfortable. Whether you’ve never tried meditation before or have been practicing for years, you are welcome to join either circle any time.

Being Peace meets weekly on Monday evenings from 6:30 to 7:15 at the church, and Thursday afternoons from 12:15 to 1:00 at the home of Nell Evans in Sherman. For more information, contact Chalice Circle Coordinator, Scottie McIntyre Johnson at 903-892-4751 or scottieone@cableone.net.

UUJam!! Revived!



One of RRUU’s favorite small groups, UUJAM!!, has been reorganized under the leadership a new facilitator, Jan Fletcher. This Chalice Circle for music makers and music lovers will meet on the first Sunday of each month at the church after church. The first meeting will be held on Nov. 4.

Bring a song or two to perform and/or something for a sing-a-long. You are welcome to bring music or songbooks, musical instruments, even recordings you’d like to share with the group. Any kind of music and any level of musical ability are welcome, including those who would just like to sit and listen. Also bring a brown bag lunch for yourself. We’ll get together as soon as we can after the Coffee Time, which follows the worship service. Y’all come!

A Walk on the Prairie: Step It Up 2007

Come enjoy either a guided or unguided stroll through Austin College's Sneed Prairie restoration site and hear local experts briefly speak on global climate change issues. You'll have a chance to ask questions!

Saturday, November 3, 2007, 2:00 – 4:00 pm

Friends and family welcome! Refreshments will be served. This event is held in conjunction with "Step It Up 2007", a National Day of Climate Action.
(www.stepitup2007.org)

Directions: Sneed Prairie is adjacent to Hagerman National Wildlife Refuge on Keyes Rd. From the intersection of Hwy 82 and Hwy 75 in Sherman, drive 9.7 miles west on Hwy 82 to Old Southmayd Rd. (Look for a sign indicating Hagerman Refuge to the north.) Turn north on Old Southmayd Rd and continue 1.2 miles to Keyes Rd. Turn west. Sneed Prairie is 0.6 miles down Keyes Rd. on the south side. There is a sign at the gate. Please drive up to the tower area.

Sponsored by the Austin College Center for Environmental Studies
and CORE (Citizens Organizing for Resources and Environment, www.texomacore.org)
For more information call 903-813-2246

OPERATION MEMORY WALK

Greater Dallas Chapter
Dallas Zoo
650 S. R.L. Thornton Freeway (I-35E)
Dallas, TX 75203
Saturday - November 3, 2007
3 Miles

Join us in taking steps to end Alzheimer's
Details of the walk and the way to register to be in it and on Dianna Niemann-Harris's team (Dianna's Dependents) is at the following URL
<http://memorywalk.kintera.org/faf/home/default.asp?ievent=228816>
You get a FREE day at the zoo, a chance to be a part of something important,
AND if you make and/or collect donations you will get a T-shirt too!



Southwestern Unitarian Universalist Fall Conference 2007

November 9 - 11, 2007



Doors Wide Open

Choose from 5 tracks:

- Lay Leader Faith Development
- The Membership Journey
- GROUNDWORK Anti-Racism Training
- Leadership Development Conference
- Multicultural Religious Education

*Glen Lake Camp & Retreat Center
Glen Rose, Texas*

This year's Fall Conference is arranged in five tracks; information on each track can be found in this brochure. For your convenience, Online registration is available at <http://www.formdesk.com/swuuc/FallConference2007>.

RRUU Board Meeting Highlights--October 11, 2007

Rather than a general summary, this month's board report will focus on four important actions taken at the October meeting of the RRUU Board of Trustees.

In-Kind Contributions

The board approved a new form (drafted by Dianna Butler and Jim Johnson) by which members can receive a receipt for donated goods. The form allows both the individual and the church to have a record of donations other than cash. Such a record is very important to establish both the true cost of our programs and the full extent of support provided by church members. Please see elsewhere in the newsletter a full explanation of this process.

RRUU BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Kathleen Campbell, President

Tom Rawson, Vice-president

Jim Johnson, Treasurer

Dianna Butler, David Lawrence,
Mary Larkin-Baker, John Ockels

Board Covenant

The Board of trustees approved the covenant that they created at the board workshop in September. This covenant will govern how we relate to each other as we work together for RRUU. The covenant states:

1. I will love our church and be positive and passionate about Unitarian Universalism.
2. I will only commit to things I feel qualified for and comfortable with and will follow through to the best of my ability, including asking for help.
3. I will do my best to attend all board functions.
4. I will honor and support the decisions of the board.
5. I will call forth, recognize and appreciate the gifts of others.
6. I will do my best to bring attention to voices not heard.
7. I will keep a sense of humor.
8. I will be an active and respectful speaker and listener and will be open to all ideas.
9. I will be mindful of others need to process

Communication Policy

The Board approved a policy that all communications concerning church business and activities be copied to our minister and to the president of the congregation. As we grow larger, it becomes increasingly important to make sure that church leaders know what is happening in various committees and chalice circles. It is especially important that we keep our minister informed about all church activities. Email communications can be sent to

revjennis@earthlink.net and

kcampbell@austincollege.edu. .

Safe Congregation Policy

The Board unanimously adopted a revised draft of a Safe Congregation Policy that had been discussed extensively at the September meeting. This policy will be posted on the church web site for review, and a series of open meetings will be scheduled at which members can discuss the policy with members of the committee and the Board of Trustees. This is a very important document for our congregation, and the Board encourages all members to take an active part in the review and adoption process. Please see the President's letter in this newsletter for a more detailed account of the development of the Safe Congregation Policy and the process we will use to move toward adoption by the congregation.

Open Letter from Board

As the Board of Directors of RRUU makes plans for growth, we would like your help. Currently many non-cash donations are made on a regular basis to the church that are not reported, but contribute greatly to our continued existence. We would like for our financial records to accurately reflect all these non-cash donations and all the materials and services they provide. Maintaining the most accurate financial records possible will assist the Board in their financial planning for the future. Documenting all of our non-cash donations will also demonstrate to any grantor and/or loan officer the true support our church receives from its members and friends.

We want you to help us track all of these generous donated items and services. Anytime you donate/purchase something for the church, if you still have the receipt, please circle the donated items on the receipt, put your name on the receipt if

you want the church to keep track of your donation, and drop it in the "Donated Items and Services Box" on the table in the foyer. If you don't have the receipt, please fill out a simple form located by the box with a description of the item(s) donated and the approximate value.

While the IRS does not allow individuals a deduction for the value of volunteer hours, we would still like a count of the volunteer hours donated to the church. Anytime, you volunteer your time at the Church, please drop in the donation box a quick record of your volunteer hours along with the date and your name or use a provided form.

We appreciate all you do for the church.

RRUU Board

Letter from the RRUU Board President

Well, I said in the last newsletter that October would be a busy and important month for RRUU, and it certainly has been. Our worship services have been excellent, and have highlighted both significant sources of our Unitarian Universalist faith and our own congregation's religious diversity. As I write this, I remember the excellent services based on the Jewish and Buddhist traditions and am looking forward to the month's final service, which will derive from the pagan tradition. We can be proud of our ability to honor such diverse beliefs and practices. And of course we have had our usual monthly round of movies, meals, and sharing in our various chalice circles, and Adult RE has completed an excellent-and very popular-series on Buddhism, led by Claudette Galen. Children's RE has begun its new curriculum, and our youth are meeting regularly. Members met to consider possibilities for social action work for this year, and we began the month with a church workday to spruce up the building and prepare the new RE room.

All of that might be enough for one month, but several other very important events occurred this month. I'd like to focus on two of them. First, at the October Board meeting, the Board of Trustees approved a draft of a safe congregation policy. During the summer, John Ockels worked with a committee consisting of Linda Woytaszyk and Tingey Tracz to research and write this policy for the church. The policy outlines a number of practices concerned with keeping our children safe during church activities, and includes processes for addressing concerns about behavior should any occur. During the summer and fall the committee, Rev. Innis, and the Board have worked to fine tune the details of the policy so that it carefully balances the need to protect our children, our firm belief in the worth and dignity of all individuals, and the legal and financial responsibilities of the church. The draft that the board approved will be posted on our web site, and during November and December, we will be scheduling a series of informational meetings at which members can discuss the policy with members of the committee and the Board. After these discussions, additional modifications may be made, and we will have the policy reviewed by a lawyer. Eventually, the finished document will be brought before the congregation for a vote. At that time, because of the necessity for careful wording, no additional changes will be made, so I urge you to become involved in the process by reading the document on line and attending one of the meetings. (If you cannot access the policy on line, contact John Ockels or me and we will make sure you have a copy to review.) Approving and implementing a safe congregation policy is an important part of our growth as a congregation. I want to personally thank the committee, the Board, and, particularly, John Ockels, for their tireless work on this important document.

Also part of our growth is the work we did at the congregational workshop led by our District Executive, Rev. Susan Smith, after the Association Sunday service on the 21st. Rev. Smith worked with us to clarify our relationship with our new minister by guiding us through a review of our history, sharing information about church structures, reviewing our understanding of the responsibilities of minister and congregation, and helping us voice our sense of what we need in order to go forward. Rev. Smith first asked the congregation to share our history, and many members contributed details of various significant events to build up a picture of where we have come from. She then explained four basic organizational structures (based on church size), and showed that we are a "family" church approaching a transition to being a "pastoral" church. In a family church, everyone knows everyone, and the church leadership is strongly influenced by its founders, the matriarchs and patriarchs who were instrumental in bringing the congregation together. The minister, if there is one, does not occupy a central place in the structure. As a congregation moves toward a regular attendance of about fifty (we are close to that now), the family structure becomes difficult to maintain and it will move toward a "pastoral" organization, in which the minister is at the center of the organizational structure. This is the direction we are moving, though it may take several years to make the full transition.

In the meantime, Rev. Smith helped us look at the responsibilities of the minister and the congregation during this time of transition. Since our minister is only quarter-time she cannot be expected to perform all of the functions that might be expected of a full-time minister in a pastoral church. At this time we have asked Jennifer to lead one worship service each month and to be present one other Sunday, at which time she may meet with a chalice circle or committee, or may be available for socializing or pastoral visits. We have also asked that she meet regularly with the Board, to advise especially on issues related to growth, and she works with other committees as needed and possible. For example, she advised the stewardship committee last year, met with the newly formed RE committee, and often attends meetings of the Committee on Ministry. She is also available for pastoral care in times of crisis or emergency. We have left great flexibility in our contract with her to allow for changes in our needs and fluctuations in her availability, since she also serves a congregation in Midland. As important as it is to understand Jennifer's responsibilities, it is also important that we understand our role. The congregation, in this arrangement, is responsible for all other worship services, for the general operations of the church (through the Board and various committees, for the basic communication of information about events, policies, etc., and for the day-to-day pastoral care of our members. And of course we all share the responsibility to be clear and consistent with our communication with each other. (As facilitate that, see the Board policy on communication in the Board highlights section of this newsletter.)

As the final piece of the workshop, Rev. Smith asked those present to state what they needed in order to effectively take care of their responsibilities. We generated the following list:

Share information; Be transparent; Act with respect for each other; Ask questions; Don't take things personally; No gossip; Learn about and utilize UUA connections and resources; Greet and visit with newcomers; Facilitate relationships

As you can see, this list is something like the covenant the Board of Trustees has created to govern our interactions, and I hope we will take these ideas and develop them into a covenant for our congregation. The Committee on Ministry is working on creating a process to help us do so. We took some important steps in that workshop toward understanding where we are and where we are going. At this time, I am looking forward to another powerful experience as we work with Carole Czujko on Friday and Saturday to further define where we are and what we can do to move forward toward a new church home. It will be an exciting ending to an exciting and busy month.

Kathleen Campbell

Denison Recycling!

People living outside the city of Denison will now be allowed to participate in the recycling program, thanks to an approval by the City Council Monday. The council not only approved another quarter on the calendar for the trial recycling program, but took the recommendation of the Keep Denison Beautiful Committee and voted to

permit non-residents of Denison to recycle at the Residential Collection Station in Denison at Munson Park.

Non-residents of Denison will be able to purchase coupons at the Denison Water Department for \$1. Each trip made to the recycling center will require a \$1 coupon. The trip is good

for an average load of 60-80 pounds of recyclables. If someone brings two or more times an average load, then the charge would be increased accordingly. Non-residents can buy whatever number of coupons they wish and then provide them to the RCS attendant to permit their drop-off.

Green Team Tips from October

10/7/07 *Use Compact Fluorescent Bulbs:*

Replace 3 frequently used light bulbs with compact fluorescent bulbs. Save 300 lbs. of carbon dioxide and \$60 per year.

10/14/07 *Inflate Your Tires*

Keep the tires on your car adequately inflated. Check them monthly. Save 250 lbs. of carbon dioxide and \$840 per year.

10/21/07 *Plant a Tree*

Trees suck up carbon dioxide and make clean air for us to breathe. Save 2,000 lbs. of carbon dioxide per year.

10/28/07 *Change Your Air Filter*

Check your car's air filter monthly. Save 800 lbs. of carbon dioxide and \$130 per year.

****Be sure to check the Green Team's bulletin board for a new tip weekly****

Building a Better World Shopping Guide

Money is power. And wherever large amounts of money collect, so also new centers of power form...As citizens, on average, we might vote once ever 4 years, if at all. As consumers, we vote every single day with the purest form of power: money... The average American family spends around \$18,000 each year on goods and services. Think of it as casting 18,000 votes every year for the kind of world you want to live in. - Excerpt from The Better World Shopping Guide by Ellis Jones, PhD.

This book is a comprehensive guide for the socially and environmentally responsible consumers, which grades companies by product category from A to F.

The Green Team has purchased enough of these books to give to each household in our congregation. If you can afford to donate \$10 to cover the cost of your book, we would appreciate it. If not, we still want your to have one of these books. Beginning in November, these books will be found on the Green Team table in the foyer along with a donation bucket.

And check out their website at www.betterworldshopper.org.

Let's all use this little book to take back our power!

Minister's Letter

On the Journey

In the spirit of the season, I offer a few thanks and some good news:

Thank you to everyone who participated in the visit with District Executive Susan Smith on October 21. Almost 30 people stayed for the conversation after service as we talked about the history of the congregation, the nature of different sizes of congregations, and how we share the various roles and tasks that let this congregation live and lively. Please see Kathleen Campbell's article for more information.

Thank you for your generous donations to Association Sunday on October 21. In the next couple of months, the Unitarian Universalist Association will let us know what we donated and updates on programs to come. I would like to share with you the latest information from the Unitarian Universalist Association:

Association Sunday and the related national advertising campaign were just the beginning of a new effort to not only get out the good word of our liberal tradition, but to help us give fresh energy to the Unitarian Universalist movement. For seekers who want a religious home guided by a

quest for truth and meaning, Unitarian Universalism is an exciting and relevant experience. Our caring, open-minded religious community encourages exploration of individual spiritual paths, wherever they lead.

We are proud to be promoting an examination of religion and spirituality in America today. As sponsors of an archive of religious articles on Time.com, available in late October, we will bring our liberal religious perspectives to the public discourse on faith and values in our society. The Time.com Custom Sponsored Archive will offer links to articles and essays authored by Unitarian Universalists on important topics including:

- * The Relationship Between Religion and Science
- * The Role of Religion in American Democracy
- * Religion, Morality, and Sexuality

Advertising in Time Magazine began with the October 15, 2007, issue and will continue over the next several months with ads and advertorials. Information on our national campaign is available along with answers to frequently asked questions. Watch our new DVD, "Voices of a Liberal

Faith—Unitarian Universalists," and share it with your friends on YouTube. (RRUUers: We are already using this new video as part of introducing the church to newcomers!) You can also see a new thirty-second ad on Unitarian Universalism (also available on YouTube), and view our new print advertisements, which are available for use in your local media or in your congregation. Be sure to look for the next Unitarian Universalist ads in Time Magazine in the issue dated November 4.

Now is a great time to share our faith with your family and friends and to help welcome newcomers to Unitarian Universalism and to Red River Unitarian Universalist Church. As we enter into the holiday season, this is the time when many of us most need to know where to turn for comfort, for cheer, and for spiritual and thoughtful company. Please join us – and invite those you meet along the way.

Namaste,

Jennifer

Where in the UU World is Rev Jennifer?

The best ways to contact me are by my cell phone: 972-639-7900 and by email: revjinnis@earthlink.net. My day off is Monday. I will return general calls or email after my day off is over. In case of emergency, I will respond as soon as possible.

When I am working with the Unitarian Universalist church at Midland I may take a little longer to return calls and email due to my responsibilities there. I ask that you let me know if a matter needs my immediate attention. For this month, I am in Midland during November 9-18. If you do not reach me directly, please let me know how to get in touch with you.

In addition to my time with Midland, I will be out of the state and available only by cell for emergencies during November 1-5.

Bowing to the light within,

Jennifer

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Denison, Texas 75021
Phone: 903-463-3399
E-mail: info@rruu.org

A home for religious liberals in
Southern Oklahoma and North
Texas

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Church Leadership

Minister

Reverend Jennifer Innis

Board of Trustees

Kathleen Campbell, President (2008)
Tom Rawson, Vice-president (2008)
Jim Johnson, Treasurer (2008)
Dianna Butler, Trustee-at-Large (2008)
David Lawrence, Trustee-at-Large (2008)
Mary Larkin-Baker, Trustee-at-Large (2009)
John Ockels, Trustee-at-Large (2009)

Team Leaders

Worship and Chalice Circles:
Scottie McIntyre Johnson
Adult Religious Education:
John Ockels
Children's Religious Education:
Linda Woytasczyk
Youth Advisors:
Viki Reeder & Roger Gregory-Allen
Social Action:
David Lawrence

Caring:
Carolyn Cameron
Hospitality:
Elbert & Marion Hill
Communications:
Kathleen Campbell
Historian:
Dianna Butler
Newsletter:
Lisa Cates
Website:
Nell Evans