In this issue:

Help set up on Aug 8th for the Wide Awake Worship Conference

> WARNING: Old Church Emails will bounce!

Adult Forum explores ancient religions

Get Out The Vote - A New Project

Annual School Supply Drive runs thru August

Five Sundays of Thought Provoking sermons

Church calendar for the next 30 days:





Sunday, August 3 2014 - 11:15 am

Free and Liberal with Five Smooth Stones

D. Scott Cooper, preaching

Twenty years ago Unitarian Universalism lost its most influential theologian of the 20th Century. Join us to hear what made James Luther Adams unique, which of his concepts still captures the imagination of UUs, and how these ideas might inform our lives even today.

Sunday, August 10, 1024 - 11:15 am

Standing at the Bar of Reason Standing on the Side of Love

The Rev. Kenn Gordon Hurto, preaching

The Rev. Kenn Gordon Hurto is the Congregational Life Staff Member and Lead Executive for the Southern Region of the UUA. It is a pleasure to welcome him to our pulpit.

Sunday, August 17, 2014 - 11:15 am

Why Religion is Still Necessary

Dr. Elbert Hill, speaking

In a sermon postponed from April 13 (because of a pesky triple-bypass surgery two days before), Dr. Elbert Hill discusses "Why Religion Is Still Necessary." Based on the Rev. Dr. Galen Guengerich's recent book God Revised: How Religion Must Evolve in a Scientific Age, the talk will explore the author's insistence that, even though the traditional idea of a supernatural God no longer works in the age of science, the concept of God, redefined, still holds meaning for seekers today. In fact, Guengerich argues, religion is especially necessary in an increasingly dangerous modern world, uniting people in community, grounding their morality, not insulting their intelligence, and engaging them "with a world that still holds more mystery than answers."

Sunday, August 24 2014 - 11:15 am

My Near Life Experience

Peter Nichols, speaking

In which I explain how 2 months in the Parkland Burn Ward and later another 2 months in the Parkland Infectious Diseases Ward were the best thing that ever happened to me!

But wait! There's more!

I will share what Carl Jung and I discussed while dining at a wonderful Mexican place in Lakewood that doesn't exist and do some explorations of the after death state and the nature of love.

Sunday, August 31, 1024 - 11:15 am

Come To Church Anyway!

The Rev. Doug Strong, preaching

Two unrelated things crossed my desk this week which have given me pause for thought (and a sermon). First an article about a woman who called her UU church and politely said, "Can you tell me what the topic is this morning?" Turns out the minister had picked up the call and she replied, "Uh-oh...The topic is, "COME TO CHURCH ANYWAY!" Come no matter what the topic is, because your church needs you and you need your church, and it doesn't matter what the preacher's going to say!" The minister then confessed that her topic was "On Resilience." Then later in the same day I asked my colleague Kenn Hurto for a blurb about his sermon (on Aug 10th) to put in the newsletter, he answered, "I don't do sermon blurbs, the titles are all you get."

Does the tipping point for staying home or coming to church rest on the topic or a newsletter blurb? Seriously? This Sunday is a personal milestone for me. The title is all you get. Come to church anyway.

Red River Unitarian Universalist Church • Denison, TX

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



Dan's Dispatch

Happy August!

Although the summer months may have fewer church-related activities than at other times of the year, that doesn't mean that work and planning come to a stand-still! As a newly

elected president of a UU congregation, I was eligible to participate in a Presidents' Convocation to learn about the district, the new Southern region, and to explore modes of church growth above and beyond membership numbers and Sunday attendance. I took part in the Dallas edition of four region-wide Presidents' Convocations; other Convocations took place in Birmingham (AL), Orlando (FL), and Richmond (VA).

Beginning the evening of Friday, July 11 and ending the morning of Sunday, July 13, new presidents from all over the Southwestern district came together for a time of fellowship, sharing, and learning. The Convocation was led by UU regional staffer, the Rev. Susan Smith (formerly our district executive), and Mark Anderson, president of the Southwestern District Board. It was also particularly helpful for me to be able to visit and chat at length with Daniel Polk, Executive Director of our local cluster of sister churches, North Texas Unitarian Universalist Congregations.

The Saturday workshop focused on growth, but as I said, it wasn't just a "numbers game." In fact, I would say that the workshop spoke more about how to be a better—and not just a larger—congregation. Numbers were hardly discussed at all!

There were two aspects of the Convocation workshop that stood out to me. We spoke and read about maturational growth, which is defined by using a couple of questions: If a visitor were to come back a year from now, would you (or would I) be a better UU? And how would somebody know that?

We also discussed what they called incarnational growth, or how we embody UU values and principles. An easy guide to knowing what that is would be to ask the people around us: If I were to go next door and ask about our church, what would people say about us?

The areas of "maturational" and "incarnational" growth apply to every congregation of any denomination, and I happen to think that those two aspects are among our strongest. I believe that our strong maturational and incarnational growth can be our catalyst and springboard for numerical growth. Please feel free to present your ideas of how we can all become better UUs and a better-known neighborhood church!

Faithfully, Dan

The Adult Forum ~ Sundays from 10 - 11 AM.

Our Adult Forum gives folks an opportunity to examine and develop their own religious philosophy. Great discussions ensue following the development of weekly topics. Although there is a "leader" of these discussions there is no prescriptive message that one feels compelled to follow.

The current study involves a video course that is part of a comprehensive group of lectures known collectively as "The Great Courses". In the present series *Religions of the Axial Age* Dr. Mark W. Muesse, Chair of the Department of Religious Studies, Rhodes College, Memphis, TN, describes the Axial Age as that period between 800 BCE and 200 BCE. During that period many of the world's primary religions had their beginnings. This course follows the writings and development of those early religious philosophers as they contemplated man's place on this

earth and in the hereafter. Dr. Muesse focuses his discussions around the geographic areas of Eastern China, Central Asia, and Southern Asia. He ignores the trans-Mediterranean area it is discussed in another set of lectures. The lectures also make no mention of what might have been occurring in the western hemisphere at the same time.

The course begins with an analysis of an ancient philosopher, Zoroaster, who may have lived as many as 200 years before the period in question, but whom laid the foundation for a religious philosophy that inspired generations. He was instrumental in his thoughts regarding an apocalyptic day of judgment, the notion of a savior, and a devil. These notions have had profound implications to today's religions.

We invite any person who is curious as to the beginnings of religious thought to join us each Sunday as we explore.

Treasurer's Report ~ For June 2014

In the month of June, we had income of \$2,307 from general operations. After operations expense of \$1,485 for the month, we had a net income from operations of \$822.

In June, we spent \$422 on renovations to install wire panels to keep kids off the roof, repair porch posts, repair back door and paint. In addition, we had other grant expense of \$324 for worship and religious education.

For the year to date period of July 2013 through June 2014, we had net income of \$15,033 from operations, net expense from renovations of \$9,577, net grant expense of \$7,018 and principal payments of \$3,967. The total change in cash for the year to date period was a decrease of \$5,529. Operations expense was lower than budget for the year to date period, but that was offset by higher renovation expense.

As of the end of June 2014, we had cash of \$45,759 and debt of \$35,370. The cash amount includes \$567 reserved for renovations and \$3,340 reserved for grants.

In June we donated \$73 from the Share the Plate program to the Earth Day Festival.

Robert Shelton, Treasurer

The workshop is coming ~ can you spare 2 hours?



We have 25 people, representing 9 UU congregations, registered for the upcoming workshop on worship which Dr. Christine Tata is leading on Saturday, August 9th. The materials have been ordered, the menu selected, the name badges created. What we need is your help on Friday afternoon, Aug 8th from 3 - 6 PM

Those who enjoy cleaning ...

 The Chapel, Barton Parlor and Emerson room need a semi-serious cleaning so we'll shine when folks arrive on Saturday morning

Those who enjoy food preparation

- We need salad veggies sliced for the lunch
- Various fruits cut and combined for the lunch

Those who like organizing

- The printed information needs to be bound into booklets
- The registration materials need to be set out

Those who are willing to do anything

Get Out The Vote ~ A new outreach project!

It is no secret that a huge number of people in Texoma follow Bart Simpson's example of being proud that he doesn't vote. The next general election is November 4th and a conversation has started at church about the possibility of starting a Voter Registration Drive - in both Oklahoma and Texas.

This effort has been given a boost when we learned that the UUA Fund for Social Responsibility is offering grants (up to \$500) to launch a Get Out The Vote drive.

To that end, we're applying and hope that there will be RRUU'ers who will agree to become voter registrars and help. One UU congregation in Austin opens their doors every Saturday morning for anyone who wants to register.

The first goal is to get 100% of the congregation to register to vote. Then we can reach out to community groups, campuses, public events etc.

In our grant we are asking for funds for a pop up tent and for one or two banners. We have two different concepts for banners. Which do you think would be most effective in getting someone to come over to a table and register?

With the election just 95 days away, this is a short-term Community Outreach Project. If you want more information, speak with either Doug Strong or Gil Alexander.





Out To Lunch ~ Sunday, August 10th

This month Out To Lunch is heading to Palio's Pizza Café, in Sherman Town Center - next door to Best Buy. They won "Best Pizza in Texoma" several years in a row and they have lots of pasta; gluten free options and a couple of vegetarian things.

We will gather after things on Aug 10th around 12:40 PM.

Our monthly sojourns to local eateries is an terrific way to meet others from church, enjoy good food, engage in lively conversations and have fun. Everyone is invited (we each pay our own fare).

See you there!



Water, water ~ Going Away? Bring Home Water!



If you're going on vacation, our an adventure, or just getting away for a few days don't forget to bring home a small amount of water from your journey - be it a few miles away or around the world! Our annual Water Communion Service will be Sunday, September 14th.

Board Bits ~ from the June Board of Trustees meeting

The Board Meeting on July 10 was the first meeting of the new fiscal and church year 2014-2015. It seemed a good time for that reason to step back a bit and examine the goals and promises we had set for ourselves at the beginning of the previous church year, 2013-2014.

The Board took a look at the existing Board Covenant. The Board considered it to be solid, but there was a suggestion to add a promise of attendance at major church functions. Dan will submit a draft proposal for an updated Board Covenant prior to the Board Meeting on August 14.

The Board then reflected on the nine stated goals of the Five Year Plan for years 2013-2017. At the beginning of only the second year of the plan, we were all pleased to see that some of the goals had already been met. We have met or exceeded the goals of increasing the number of service projects; operating at a (small) profit; having three ordained or professional speakers during the month, provided we count video recordings as professional speakers; and improving building and grounds.

We saw clearly that we still have challenges ahead in fulfilling our targets of enhancing enrollment for youth Religious Education; increasing our overall membership; upping weekly attendance to an average of 50; and increasing the number of interest groups (Chalice circles). The Board also acknowledged that a Five Year Plan is a dynamic document, and that planning for the next five-year cycle will need to begin in year three of the current plan, i.e. beginning in 2015-2016. The ninth item on the current Five Year Plan states simply that there is no plan within this period to call a minister, so that point does not count as either "accomplished" or "pending."

As part of this Meeting's focus on reflection and self-assessment, Dan committed to review the current bylaws to determine the status of committees, Chalice Circles, interest groups, and teams that are not currently active due to various good reasons. He will forward his findings and recommendations to the Board on how to address those dormant groups prior to the August meeting.

In other business:

- Gil announced that there will be a Lobby Day in Austin for the Texas UU Justice Ministry on January 20, 2015 to speak to legislators on inequality of income; women's reproductive rights; voting rights; and immigration.
- Marilyn announced that eight fans had been distributed to neighbors.
- Robert and Lanan Shelton are participating in this year's Dwight Brown Leadership Experience (DBLE), August 3-8, at Texas Woman's University in Denton.

Dan

Sunday Speakers ~ for the month of August

Aug 3: D. Scott Cooper has been an active member of the First Unitarian Church of Dallas for nearly fifteen years. Poised to begin his third year of seminary at Brite Divinity School, Scott will do his Year of Supervised Ministry at the First Street Methodist Mission in Ft. Worth. Scott recently received the Walker Ministerial Scholarship for students preparing for the preaching ministry. Scott lives in Oak Cliff with his husband Conrad and stepson Harrison.

Aug 10: The Rev. Kenn Gordon Hurto is the Congregational Life Staff Member and Lead Executive for the Southern Region of the UUA. He is a graduate of the Divinity School at Harvard University. For over 40 years, he has served Unitarian Universalist congregations in Indiana and Iowa, Wyoming, northern Virginia, and Pennsylvania, with consulting resident ministries in *New* Zealand and Australia. Prior to joining the field staff, Kenn served as the senior minister to our congregation in Fort Myers, Florida. For his years of service, Kenn is recognized and widely sought after for his expertise in family systems theory, congregational and leadership development. Kenn lives in Fort Myers with his partner, Jeannie Kelly. He is an avid scuba diver, long distance cyclist, and skier.

Aug 17: Dr Elbert Hill retired nearly eight years ago as Professor of English from Southeastern Oklahoma State University in Durant. A specialist in children's literature and Native American literature, Dr. Hill had taught nearly 40 years at SOSU and authored numerous academic papers for scholarly journals. A charter member of Red River Unitarian Universalist Church and currently the past president of the congregation, he occasionally also fills the pulpit (in nostalgia for his youthful ambition of being a Southern Baptist minister?). With wife Marion, he facilitates Movable Feast Chalice Circle

Aug 24: Peter Nichols By way of an introduction, Peter writes, "In 2004 at the ripe old age of 57 I decided I would get a doctorate in clinical psychology which will take me another two and a half years at which time I will be 65. In my increasingly professional opinion, what the hell was I thinking? I currently practice massage and body work therapies in both Dallas and Texoma. I will soon be licensed to do chemical dependency counseling and hope to work with families of addicts

Aug 31: The Rev. Doug Strong co-founded RRUU while serving the Plano UU congregation. After his retirement 11 years ago, he decided to move to Sherman and is an active lay member of our congregation.

New Rules for Church Email ~ Did you forget?

Last month we published a list of new church email addresses. Change comes slowly and after a month many people are still using the old email addresses. Effective in August, *the old email addresses will be discontinued*. Since many are having trouble remembering the new addresses, here is a helpful list of the most common church emails. You may want to print the entire list from the July newsletter as a reference for all church emails. Remember, to fool the software that hunts up emails to spam, you need to combine a prefix (i.e. xxx) plus the suffix (@rruu.org) to make the entire email address (i.e. xxx@rruu.org)

	RECEPIENT:	PREFIX:		
If you wa	ou want to reach church leaders			
	Board of Trustees	rruuboard		
	President of the Congregation	president		
	Vice president	vicepresident		
	Treasurer	treasurer		
	Secretary	secretary		
	Director of Religious Education	dre		

@rruu.org

If you want to submit something to the E-news, or the Newsletter, or the church Calender:

Church Calendar	calendar	
Charen Calendar	Calcillaai	
E-news	announce	erruu.org
Newsletter	news	

If you want to reach various committees; Chalice Circles; or interest groups

Adult Forum	adultforum
Aesthetics Committee	aesthetics
Booked for Lunch group	bookclub
Buildings & Grounds committee	building
Committee on Ministry	CoM
Finance Committee	finance
Good Times Team	goodtimesteam
Green Team	greenteam
Meditation Group	meditation
Membership Team	membership
Moveable Feast Chalice Circle	feast
Nominating Committee	nominations
Social Action Team	socact
Worship Team	worshipteam

@rruu.org

If you need help, you can email: info [plus suffix]

Moveable Feast ~ Tapas in Durant on August 14th

The August Moveable Feast will be at the home of William and Carolyn Fridley, 624 West Elm Street in Durant. From Texas, travel north on US 75 N/US 69 N. Take the US 70 exit (toward Durant/Lake Texoma). Turn left (east) onto Main Street (also known as US 70 E). Turn left (north) on 7th Avenue. There are 3 or four stop signs before coming to Elm Street. Our house is on the north east corner of 7th Avenue and W. Elm, and is two story, red brick. There is no parking on Elm Street, but there is street parking on 7th Avenue. About the feast, Carolyn writes:

One of our favorite feasts that we hosted several years ago had a <u>Tapas</u> theme. It was so much fun, William and I would like to repeat that theme. As you may have already read in the hyperlink, Tapas are simply snacks. Although the concept originated in Spain, the food itself doesn't have to be Spanish. A more familiar reference to tapas, perhaps, is <u>hors d'oeuvres</u>. We're asking that you bring

your favorite tapa to share! Any "finger food" qualifies as a tapa - you can't get it wrong. You might wonder, "Can I get full on tapas?" The answer: You betcha! As you know, our feasters are excellent cooks, and it's easy to make a meal by sampling everyone's contributions.

Please let me know if you will able to attend (Carolyn's e-mail: okiebeachgirl [at] yahoo.com) so we will have a place for everyone at the table(s). It's not necessary to let me know what you are going to bring, we will leave it to the universe to provide variety (again, it's hard to get this wrong). In addition to making a tapas ourselves, we'll provide dessert, homemade lemonade, iced tea, and coffee. Please feel free to bring any other beverages you'd like.

We're looking forward to a fun food experience! Hope to see you at our home for the August feast!

School Supplies ~ Our annual collection starts August 3rd

Guess What! Those lazy, hazy, crazy days of summer are about to disappear; to be replaced with crossing guards and kids heading back to school, on Monday, Sept 2nd.

We will again be collecting school supplies for Terrell Elementary School, which is only 5 blocks from church.

There are 477 students at Terrell, K - 5th grade. What to donate? Here is a list of suggestions:

(NOTE: This is *not* from Terrell School, but a generic list of what elementary students generally need.)

Kindergarten needs: 2 Primary pencils; 2 Writing Pads; 1 large bottle of Elmer's Glue; 2 box of Primary Crayons (8); 1 large box of tissues; Primary Scissors

First Grade: 1 package -No. 2 pencils; 2 box of Crayons (8); 1 markers (8-washable); 2 large box of tissues; 4 writing pads (Grades 1-2); 2 spiral notebooks (70-100 pg); 3 composition books (black/white); 2 pocket folders; 1 scissors (blunt tip); 1 zippered pencil pouch; 1 4 oz Elmer's glue

Second Grade: 2 packs - No. 2 pencils; 1 box of Crayons (16); 1 markers (8-washable); 1 set colored pencils (8); 2 large box of tissues; 4 pocket folders; 1 3-ring binder; 4 composition books (black/white); 2 pk -200 sheet looseleaf paper; 1 scissors (blunt tip)

Third Grade: 2 package -No. 2 pencils; 1 box of Crayons (16); 1 markers (8-washable); 1 set colored pencils (8); 2 red pens; 4 pocket folders; 4 composition books



Terrell Elementary School

230 W. Martin Luther King St.

(black/white); 2 pk - 200 sheet loose-leaf paper; 1 3-ring binder; 1 scissors (blunt); 1 ruler (12 inch/metric); 1 Elmer's glue - 4 oz.; 1 pack - 3x5 index cards; 1 zippered pencil pouch; 2 large box of tissues

Fourth Grade: 1 scissors (Fiskars); 1 3-ring binder; 3 pk - 200 sheet loose-leaf paper (standard rule); 4 pocket folders - three prong; 2 composition books (black/white); 2 glue sticks; 3 packs - No. 2 pencils (no mechanical); 1 pack - red pens; 2 packs - blue or black pens (erasable); 1 box of Crayons (16); 1 ruler (12 inch/metric); 1 pack erasers; 1 pack colored pencil (8); 1 zippered pencil pouch; 2 packs 3x5 index cards; 1 large box of tissues

Fifth Grade: 1 box of Crayons (24); 1 pack colored pencil (8); 3 packs - No. 2 pencils (no mechanical); 1 hand pencil sharpener; 1 pack erasers; 4 glue sticks; 1 high lighter 1 scissors (Fiskars); 2 packs - blue or black pens (erasable); 1 pack - red pens; 2 composition books (black/white); 5 pocket folders - three prong; 1 three-ring binder; 2 pkg. of dividers; 4 pk - 200 sheet loose-leaf paper (standard rule); 2 pack 3x5 index cards; 1 3x5 file box; 1 clear protractor; 1 ruler (12 inch/metric); 1 four-function calculator; 1 pocket dictionary & thesaurus; 1 zippered pencil pouch; 1 large box of tissues

You can leave your donations in the basket outside the Chapel.

Leadership

Board of Trustees

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

Committee on Ministry:

Carole Harner, Gerry Shehan, Peter Schulze

Team Leaders/Members:

Adult Forum: *Joyce* Aesthetics Team: Bruce, Joyce, Maura, Paula Building & Grounds: Marilyn Communications: Doug Chalice coordinator: Open DRE: Joyce Finance: Dan Good Times: Carole, Marilyn & Marion Long Range Planning: Amy, Gil, Marilyn

Nominations: Helen, L.D., Marla NTUUC Rep: Marla Safe Congregation Panel: Dan Social Action: Gil

Membership: Marion

Ways & Means: Open Worship: Dan, Doug, Faye, Marla

Contact Us

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How to reach us:

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Facebook: RedRiverUnitarianUniversalistChurch

UU World Magazine ~ Digital subscription

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- UU World Digital provides a digital replica of the print magazine, customized for your browser, desktop, or tablet. It includes high-resolution versions of all art and advertising from the print magazine, so you can enjoy the articles in their original context.
- UU World's website, uuworld.org, presents most articles and some of the art and photography from the quarterly print magazine, and offers expanded news coverage, online-only columns and articles, and weekly blog updates.
- With a UU World Digital subscription, you can access the complete magazine from any web browser, download it to your computer, or read it using custom apps for your Android, Kindle Fire, or iPad tablets. Browse a sample edition.



- Add a digital subscription to your existing print subscription for only \$4.99. If you wish to replace your print subscription with a digital subscription, please email us after completing your digital subscription; you will remain eligible for the discounted rate as long as your membership remains active, and you may always reactivate your print subscription.
- Sign up for a digital-only subscription for \$9.99.

Chalice Circles & Interest Groups ~ Join In!

GREEN TEAM, an Environmental Action Circle usually meets on Thursday evenings @ 7:30 PM. Next meeting TBA at Amy Hoffman-Shehan's house. Facilitator: Amy Hoffman-Shehan.

MOVEABLE FEAST, a Cooking and/or Eating Circle will be meeting on A. Details on page 7

OMMMM... Meditation Group, meets the last Sunday of each month @12:35 in the Chapel. They are currently on hiatus for the summer. Open to all who wish to learn more about meditation and to participate in meditating. Facilitator: Paula Blackshear.

BOOKED FOR LUNCH, is an informal book discussion group meeting in the Barton Parlor on the second Thursday of the month. They are currently on hiatus for the summer. Join in the conversation. Facilitator Carole Harner.

OUT TO LUNCH, One Sunday a month after things we go out for a Dutch-treat lunch. There is no agenda, no reports, no minutes - just everyone heading out and breaking bread together. This month OTL will meet on July 13. See details on page 4. Email an**nounce** [+suffix] if you have a restaurant suggestion.