

2016
2015

Red River Ramblings



January 2016
Volume 13
Issue 7

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A Special
one-time
LOUD ENOUGH
FOR ALL
Appeal



Dan Althoff
Honored by
NTUUC



Special FREE
Stewardship
Workshop
Feb 6th



Fifth Sunday
In4Lunch
Potluck



Common Ground
Street Choir
Live Concert
just for us!

[Church calendar
for the next
30 days:](#)

Sunday, January 3, 2016

Starting the New Year with Thoughtfulness and Laughter

Marla Loturco, *speaking*

We carry on our Burning Bowl tradition this Sunday as a closing of the old year and beginning of the new. To this tradition we will add more about the spirituality of laughter and how it can help us.

Refreshments: A-G

Sunday, January 10, 2016

The John Dewey Experience: An instrumental blues in an optative mood

Dr. William Fridley, *speaking*

We'll be playing with John Dewey's 1927 masterpiece Art as Experience. Dewey referred to his brand of pragmatism as instrumentalism. We'll consider the uses and misuses of instruments and the excessive instrumentality in the curricular industrial complex. And, in an optative mood (a phrase used in Greek grammar to denote a longing, wishing, hopeful mood) we'll improvise on the professor as artist riff. I'll introduce you to the Personalized, Highly-Versatile, Neo-Retro Super Clickers!

Refreshments: H

Sunday, January 17, 2016

Revisiting the Four Agreements, Plus One

Dr. Dan Althoff, *speaking*

Nearly 20 years ago, The Four Agreements became an international best-seller. Claiming spiritual descent from the ancient Toltecs of Mexico, author

Miguel Ruiz distilled his acquired wisdom into four aphorisms he called "agreements." Now working with his son, Miguel Ruiz has recently named a fifth agreement. With a skeptical yet sympathetic eye, Dan Althoff looks at the "agreements" and the cottage industry they have spawned.

Refreshments: I-R

Sunday, January 24, 2016

How Can We Keep From Singing

The Common Ground Street Choir, *in concert*

The Common Ground Street Choir witnesses in song, singing for justice. In doing so, it follows a long tradition of the use of song in protests and at rallies – utilized by labor movements, suffragettes, and civil rights activists. During the service, we will take you on a little journey through protest in song and prose.

Refreshments: S-Z

Sunday, January 31, 2016

Listening to Martin: Lessons on Violence

The Rev. Jennifer Ryu, *video sermon*

While this sermon was originally written several years ago, it unfortunately still has immediate significance. As said about the video "In the shadow of last month's massacre in Newtown, thoughtful Americans are asking themselves hard questions about what this event says about who we are as a nation. One of those questions must be about our society's relationship to violence. This morning we honor the legacy of Martin Luther King, Jr. by recalling his appeal to non-violence."

5th Sunday In4Lunch Potluck

Morning Meditation – 9
Adult Forum – 10
Worship – 11:15
Conversations & Calories – 12:15

Red River Unitarian Universalist Church ◆ Denison, TX
We are a sanctuary for religious liberals celebrating compassion, diversity and spiritual growth.



Dan's Dispatch



The unexpectedly weird weather following Christmas reminds us how quickly circumstances beyond our control can change. Fortunately, though, most circumstances in most of our lives are indeed within our control.

As members of this community, we are able to determine for ourselves our direction and goals. As we enter a new year, I hope we will all take a moment to reflect upon the long-range goals we have set through our Board of Trustees.

In May of 2013, the Board set out a five-year plan with nine points:

1. Increase community projects from four to eight;
2. Develop Religious Education program for youth, with paid part-time Director, paid childcare in nursery, and average attendance of 20;
3. Growth in membership to 60 members;
4. Operate at a profit;
5. Attendance, including visitors and friends, to average 50 per week;
6. Worship services with three ordained or professional speakers per month;
7. Increase interest groups from five to eight;
8. Improve building and grounds; and
9. No minister planned in five years.

We are now just a bit beyond two and a half years into our five year plan; we have completed church years 2013-14, 2014-15 and we are a little more than halfway into church year 2015-16, so I see this a good time to pause and consider where we stand in relation to our stated goals. These are very optimistic and enthusiastic targets, and I think it's fair to say that we still have a great deal of work to do if we intend to meet them more completely than we have to date. Next month in this column, I will provide some figures to go along with these points.

As part of the trust you have placed in me as president of the Board of Trustees, I see it as my honored duty and privilege to recall what we have pledged to ourselves—covenanted with each other—to accomplish. That largely explains my ongoing interest—not to say “obsession!”—with the details of such things as our Safe Congregation Policy and our Bylaws.

As Unitarian Universalists, we typically place a very high value on words. As the old joke goes, Unitarian Universalists are often such bad singers because we read ahead to see if we agree with the lyrics!

This is a very good moment to see if we “agree with the lyrics” we ourselves have written. I hope you will share your observations, comments, or concerns with me or any Trustee about our Five Year Plan. And as always, you are invited and welcome to attend our monthly Board of Trustees meeting to share your thoughts about the congregation's governance and direction.

Best wishes to us all for a wonderful New Year 2016!

\$ay What? A *Special one-time Appeal*

We're blessed with a spiffy sound system, thanks to a special grant from NTUUC which includes wireless headsets that are nearly invisible to see but offer a crystal-clear sound reproduction. We own three headsets which you might think would satisfy all our needs.

The Worship Team is discovering that isn't the case. We need another headset. The Board of Trustees approved a Special “Loud Enough For All” Appeal on Sunday, January 10th to see if we can raise the \$450 needed to purchase one more headset and transmitter.

Please consider giving to the Special Appeal on Sunday, January 10, 2016. If you can't be at church that day, you can send your donation to the church, earmarked “Loud Enough” or click the “Special Appeal” icon and send an email indicating your Gift and someone will follow up with you.

We all deserve to understand what is said and acquiring a fourth headset will help bring the goal of *loud enough for all* a reality.

PS – January's Share the Plate will be on Jan 31st

Dan Althoff Honored with the 2016 Marty Robinson Volunteerism Award

For the seventh consecutive year, someone from our tiny congregation has been selected the "North Texas UU Church Volunteer of the Year." Our own Dan Althoff is so honored this year.



Dr. F. Daniel Althoff is a charter member of Red River and has been an active member ever since. During his first tenure as president, Dan challenged the Texas Comptroller who denied the church tax exemption status because our bylaws do not profess a belief in a supreme entity.

His insistence on defending Red River UU's status as a church in 2004 was important not only for the congregation but for all UU churches in Texas and beyond. Dan found a lawsuit appropriate for Red River UU to join, then located a sympathetic Texas attorney to represent the church pro bono, and the resulting victory not only provided validation and pride for Red River, but also brought favorable attention to Unitarian Universalism across Texas and nation-wide through the publicity generated by the Comptroller's ill-considered lawsuit (Google "Texas Unitarian Church denied exemption" for the fascinating history.)

Dan grew up a Catholic who appreciated the rituals and soaring religious music he encountered in that denomination. He calls on that background, plus his own experience of playing and writing music – including *Good Religion* which the choir at Community UU in Plano sang at our building dedication - to enrich worship activities at church as both pianist and member of the Worship Team. Dan's musical abilities are an added gift to the congregation which he freely shares many Sundays a year.

Last year Dan accepted the nomination to serve on the Board of Trustees. As church president, Dan employs his friendly, amiable disposition in maintaining good relations with NTUUC and UUA and leading the congregation in cooperating with the larger UU community.

He lives the UU Seven Principles, showing respect for all people of whatever background; demonstrating respect for the environment by assisting with Earth Day Texoma; employing the democratic process to right wrongs; and can always be counted on to help when needed – from painting walls to participating in area UU workshops and retreats.

Dan Althoff joins the ranks of Amy Hoffman-Shehan (2010); Marla Loturco (2011); Bruce Cameron (2012); Carolyn Cameron (2013); Marion Hill (2014) and Elbert Hill (2015) Marion Hill and Elbert Hill (previous honorees) and will be honored at the Annual NTUUC Awards Luncheon on Saturday, January 23, 2016 at the Oak Cliff UU Church.

Red River is the *only* UU congregation in North Texas to have a member received the Marty Robinson Volunteer Award every year since the award was created in 2010.

Everyone is invited to attend the luncheon. Tickets are \$18 and are available from our NTUUC representative – Marla Loturco.

Named after Marty Robinson, the award honors volunteerism which is at the heart of any religious community. Having first joined a Florida congregation, Marty Robinson became part of Jefferson Unitarian Church in the early 1970s, and headed up the RE program before moving to Germany. When she returned a few months later, she had to settle in Dallas - she said "she couldn't go back to Ft. Worth after they had given her such a big send-off!" Marty went on to serve as President of First Unitarian in Dallas, and in 1986 helped found Horizon Unitarian Universalist Church in Farmers Branch/Carrollton. She has been instrumental in its continued growth and success, serving in many capacities, including President and chair of Pastoral Caregivers. Marty has also served as President of SWUUC, (the SW District of the UUA) and Chair of Volunteers for the 1994 General Assembly in Ft. Worth.



Treasurer's Report

In the month of November, we had income of \$3,412 from general operations. After operations expense of \$1,457 for the month, we had a net income from operations of \$1,955.

In November we received generous donations of \$1,200 for the renovation fund and \$165 for the Wi-Fi Fund.

For the year to date period, we had a net income of \$11,272 from operations. Those included restricted amounts of \$9,550. The total change in cash for the month was a decrease of \$2728.

As of the end of November 2015, we had total cash of \$63,714 and our debt totaled \$29,114.

In November, we donated \$151 from the Share the Plate program to the Grayson County Shelter.

Robert Shelton, Treasurer

The Adult Forum ~ Thanks Gil!



Gil Alexander volunteered to lead the Adult Forum in September 2014 and has provided stimulating and rewarding forums. His leadership has

been a joy and it is with regret that he needs to resign his post. He is having some health issues which make it a challenge for him to continue. Gil's dedication to on-going learning has helped the congregation expand our understandings of religious history and astronomy.

January's Birthdays

09 – Kelly Cofield-Dyer



UUJam ~ New Date for January

UUJAM/FFMC is changing to a Sat or Sun afternoon this month to accommodate those with night vision problems.



If this tentative change the next 3 months helps improve attendance, I hope to continue the Chalice Circle. Let Jan know what times work best for you. The new time will be announced in the e-news.

In 4 Lunch ~ Sunday, Jan 31st



January has 5 Sundays! So our first 2016 5th Sunday **IN 4 LUNCH POTLUCK** will be Jan 31st. This potluck has a theme – perfect for a cold January morning:

Soups, Stews, Salads or anything you want to bring that warms one's heart on a cold day.

Booked for Lunch ~ Thursday, Jan 14th

Come share what you've been reading! Booked for Lunch meets in the Emerson Room on Thursday Jan 14th @ 1 pm. See you there!

Moveable Feast ~ Sat. Jan 9th

Feasters are heading to The Dock (41 Kemp Rd, Hendrix, OK) Seafood Restaurant for an early supper @ 4 pm on Sat. Jan 9th. Look for a map in the e-news.

**\$ave, \$unday Jan 10th for our \$pecial
"LOUD ENOUGH FOR ALL"
One-\$hot Appeal**

Activities for Youngsters ~ Every Sunday Morning

Sometimes kids don't want to sit through the service on Sunday. Thanks to a wonderful group of volunteers, young families can feel confident that their children won't have to sit uncomfortably through a service that appeals mostly to grown-ups. Our volunteers are parents themselves who understand the "squirm" factor that comes as standard equipment with many youngsters! We have an assortment of age appropriate activities and kids tell us they think the adult leaders are 'cool'. The morning greeter can guide you to the volunteer on duty for the morning.



Leaders

Board of Trustees

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

Committee on Ministry:

LD Clark, *Carole Harner, Gerry Shehan*

Team Leaders/Members:

Adult Forum:
 Building & Grounds: *Marilyn*
 Communications: *Doug*
 Finance:
 Good Times:
Carole, Marilyn & Marion
 Long Range Planning:
Amy, Gil, Marilyn
 Membership:
 Nominations: *Amy, Kat, Lanan*
 NTUUC Rep: *Marla*
 RE Team: *Dan, Tommi*
 Safe Congregation Panel: *Dan*
 Social Action: *Gil*
 Ways & Means:
 Worship:
Dan, Doug, Faye, Jan, Marla

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♦ ♦ ♦

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Phone: 903.231.3232

Web: www.rruu.org

E-News: announce[+suffix]*

Facebook:

RedRiverUnitarianUniversalistChurch

*Church email suffix: @rruu.org

Stewardship and UUs ~ A **free** workshop for Red River UUs

How to Think About It, How to Talk About It, How to Do It.

A workshop for anyone interested in the future of your congregation and Unitarian Universalism. Have You Ever Noticed? UU's can talk about anything with ease but MONEY. Let's break that cycle and talk about how resourcing what we love. Gather together to learn about money and stewardship, and the connection to our Mission and Vision.



Saturday, February 6, 2016

9:00am to 3:00pm

Coffee and Gathering 8:30-9:00am

Hosted by:

[Community Unitarian Universalist Church - Plano, Texas](#)

2875 East Parker Road, Plano, Texas 75074-7503

(972) 424-8989

Putting the STEWARD back in Stewardship and taking out the mystery and awkwardness:

- ✓ LEARN Unitarian Universalist stewardship perspectives
- ✓ LINK stewardship goals and programs to Mission & Vision
- ✓ REVIEW power tools & techniques for effective stewardship
- ✓ ASTER the key stewardship questions
- ✓ ENJOY a working lunch and small group discussions
- ✓ MEET and share ideas with other area UUs
- ✓ APPLY what is learned to your congregation's Next Steps

Special Focus:

- ✓ Stewardship Principles and Tools
- ✓ The Stewardship Questions We Usually Get Wrong
- ✓ Capital Campaigns and Debt – Planning for your Future



Presented by Stewardship for Us Consultant Bill Clontz

Chalice Circles / Interest Groups

BOOKED FOR LUNCH, an informal book discussion group which usually meets the second Thursday of the month at 12:30 p.m. in the Emerson Room, on January 14th. Facilitator Carole Harner.

GREEN TEAM, an Environmental Action Team. The Team will meet on Thursday, January 14th. at Amy Hoffman-Shehan's home. Check with Amy for the time. Facilitator: Amy Hoffman-Shehan.

MOVEABLE FEAST, a Cooking and/or Eating Circle meets monthly. Check the e-news for details of the next gathering. Facilitators: Elbert & Marion Hill.

UU JAM, an acoustic music circle for musicians, singers & music loving listeners. Is changing times this month. Check the e-news for the new day and time, which will be a Sat or Sun afternoon, to help those who resist driving in mid-winter nights. Facilitator: Jan Fletcher.