



# Red River Ramblings



April 2016  
Volume 13  
Issue 10

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## Where spiritually curious, independent thinkers gather

Sunday, April 3, 2016

**Take A Break from Worship ...  
BUT ... Come to Church Anyway!**  
*The Entire Congregation, even you!*

Tell anyone, "I'm going to church," and they will rightly assume you'll be worshipping. For just this Sunday there will be no meditation, adult forum or worship at church since the chapel is being renovated.

But come to church anyway,, let's worship by working – an opportunity for us to collectively spruce up the place. So "*carpe diem*", everyone. Let's "*seize the day*." The building will be open from 10 am –1 pm. Come and help as long as you want. Details on page 3.

Refreshments: A-G

Sunday, April 10, 2016

**A Fine Frenzy**

The Rev. Annie Forester, *preaching*

Shakespeare said that when a writer creates a poem, it is in a 'fine frenzy' that it is done. What kind of fine frenzy does it take then to create a life, a theology, a world view or a happiness? You have to admit that Unitarian Universalists are expected to be more creative than most since most of us subscribe to the "*no one is going to tell me what to believe*" school of religion. Might I make some suggestions?

Refreshments: H

Sunday, April 17, 2016



**The Great Reveal**

Come and Celebrate  
our newly updated chapel  
Music, Singing, Rejoicing  
and

Flower Communion\*

11:15 am ~ *sharp*

\*Please remember to bring a flower!

Refreshments: I-R

Sunday, April 24, 2016

**Passover:**

**One of the 3 Jewish Festivals\***

Lara Rivera, *speaking*

The Passover; a lifetime of Jewish memories walking in the footsteps of the prophet Moses. Join Lara Rivera as she shares the story of the Exodus, the impact of Passover on her life, and celebrate with us as we keep the two biblical mitzvot required for this eight day festival.

\*The other two festivals are [Sukkot](#), and [Shavu'ot](#).

Refreshments: S-Z

Red River Unitarian Universalist Church ◆ Denison, TX

*A sanctuary for religious liberals celebrating compassion, diversity and spiritual growth.*

## Dan's Dispatch



As I write, the renovations on the chapel are just getting underway. These improvements were made possible, in part, by a grant from North Texas UU Congregations and we are grateful to them for this and all the previous grants that have added so much to our common life.

It seems very appropriate to me that our chapel is getting this special attention. The glue that holds any faith community together, perhaps more so than any single item, is the time we spend together on Sunday mornings. Whether we choose to call what we do in that space “worship,” or a “service,” or a “program” makes little difference to me; I’ve used all three words interchangeably to refer to the same activity! And because that space is central and so important to us as a congregation, it should ideally reflect the best in us. The choices we have made in and for that space are intended to show off the best in ourselves to ourselves – and especially to other people who may find and visit us.

As our “old” chapel has always been, our “new” chapel will be flexible in its configuration and ori-

entation. This is very much in keeping with the variety of Sunday experiences we pride ourselves on offering. For beyond the attractive exterior of our building, which presents the public face of Red River Unitarian Universalist Church, we will find in the newly updated chapel the public heart of Red River. In this heart beat the rhythms of justice, peace, love, compassion, and understanding. The other day I was commenting to some other members about Red River UU. I said that there’s no church—indeed, no other place—in Texoma that’s anything quite like us. I believe what I said, and I said that with no small amount of pride and satisfaction, a very forgivable peccadillo.

Whether we have on any given Sunday a dramatic staged reading, a concert, a “traditional” service, or even a cabaret, the variety expresses the diversity of the human condition and with our very human concerns. But the message is essentially the same: *Come, come, whoever you are...Ours is no caravan of despair, come, yet again, come.*

So come again, and bring your friends for a beautiful space, a beautiful experience, and beautiful people.

See you soon in church!

Dan

## Come To Church Anyway!

**Sunday, April 3<sup>rd</sup> from 10 am – 1 pm** - Since the chapel is off-limits due to the construction, it seemed like a fine time to do some spring cleaning. We need this, folks!



The hall closet outside the Emerson Room is worse than Fibber McGee’s.

There’s some touch up painting needed on the third floor, the basement is in disarray and the garages are a mess.

And do we *really* need 4 coffee carafes that haven’t been used in years along with 2 dead coffee makers in the Soul Café? Those

who like to work outside, the options are plentiful: pick up limbs & sticks & pecans. There’s always trash in

the alley.

It is time for an all out assault!

Then there’s the church office which has become Dumping Ground No. 1 to hide stuff.

Since it is the first Sunday of the month, those whose last names are from A-G are encouraged to bring refreshments to ward off hunger pangs.



## Chalice Circle Updates

**The Green Team** is fast approaching this year's Earth Day Festival, on April 23. The team will be meeting at Amy Hoffman-Shehan's home in Sherman on April 4<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> at 6 pm.

**Booked For Lunch** gathers on Thursday, April 14 at 1 PM in the Emerson room. Open to book lovers everywhere who always enjoy hearing what others are reading and sharing their own literary exploits.

**Moveable Feast:** In April the feast will be hosted by Marilyn Alexander and Ronda DeCaire, on Sat. Apr 16 at 5:30 P.M. at Marilyn's Ranch in Colbert. The deadline to RSVP is April 12<sup>th</sup> to galex [at] cherokeecomm.com.

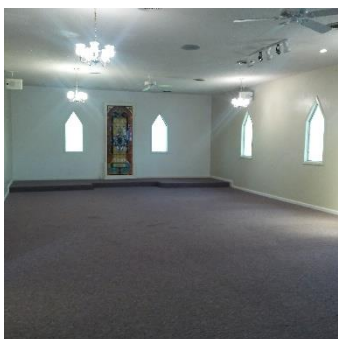
**UU Jam** will not meet in April or May. The group will return in June to Keep The Music Playing!

## Some Exciting News

**Ellie Dyer** is heading to Norman, OK on April 7<sup>th</sup> to participate in the State Finals for Academic Competition. While she will be participating with the 7<sup>th</sup> grade team, she was selected to be an alternate for the 8<sup>th</sup> grade team. Go Ellie!

**Maura Sheehan** has been accepted to participate in two separate internships this summer. In June she will attend a program by ACLU at Georgetown University in Washington DC and then in July she will participate in a Duke University internship in Rainforest Biology and Spanish in Costa Rica for two weeks. Enjoy, Maura!

## It took just 27 minutes



After the Easter Sunday concert with Cornell Kinderknecht we were faced with the challenge of removing *everything* from the chapel. In a virtual whirlwind of coordinated effort the 50 chairs along with the pulpit, AV equipment, banners, keyboard, hymnals,

chancel table, and assorted things vanished from the chapel. It might have taken a bit longer if the meditation group hadn't done a moving meditation by packing the hymnals and moving some furniture before anyone else arrived.

## Board Bits

The Board of Trustees met on March 13, 2016. Highlights of the meeting:

- Agreed to pay our congregation's annual dues to the TX UU Justice Ministry (TxUUJM) at \$2.00/member
- Approved TxUUJM's request for congregations to show support in the campaign to "Let's Tell The Supreme Court to Rule With Empathy, Justice and Compassion!" as it relates to SCOTUS current consideration to overturn the TX court decision to close most abortion clinics in the state, leaving only 10 open (and only in the Dallas/Houston/Austin/San Antonio areas).
- Annual Stewardship Appeal: Agreed that we will again skip face-to-face soliciting in favor of a written appeal to the congregation. Agreed pledge Sunday will be April 17<sup>th</sup> as part of the Great Reveal of the new chapel ceiling project.
- David Roth Concert: Agreed that while we would enjoy hosting David Roth again, his available date of Monday, June 27<sup>th</sup> probably would not result in a financial success. Previous concerts hosted by Red River have not drawn even a minimum audience.
- Welcoming Kids to church: We are struggling to get people willing to agree to lead an activity for kids. Articles and announcements have failed to recruit people. Perhaps more people would volunteer if we have a series of One-Hour activities with cliff notes that a volunteer can grab and use with children. Dan agreed to prepare materials of activities that we can show the congregation.
- Bylaw Revisions: At the Fall 2015 Congregation meeting, The congregation recommended that the board review the bylaws with a hope to simplifying them and to bring revisions to the Spring 2016 Meeting. Agreed to meet and prepare the revised bylaws in time to include in the meeting packet.
- Secular Home School: A group of parents who collectively home school contacted us asking if they could use the church for certain activities. The board agreed to contact the group feeling their goals are ones that we can easily embrace. Sadly the group has not responded to our outreach after their initial inquiry. Agreed to put the item on hold until we hear from the group.
- Budget Approvals: Agreed that all expenses from the renovation fund must have prior board approval.



## Showing Support

After things on March 20<sup>th</sup> folks gathered in front of the church holding signs supporting a women's right to choose.



The picture became part of the "Texas Unitarian Universalist Justice Ministry" face book page:



Well done everyone!

## Stewardship Campaign

The annual Stewardship Campaign starts this month. Nobody supports our operating budget except ourselves and in order to know what our financial abilities will be for the next fiscal year, we need to know what our income will be before the Spring 2016 Meeting. Look for details on how you can complete a pledge to the church coming your way later in April. The drive ends on April 24 so there will be enough time for the Board to create next year's operating budget.

## Hymnal Amnesty Begins

When we moved into our church building on September 19, 2011, we brought 72 hymnals with us. However, only 44 hymnals were cleared out of the chapel on Easter.

Often someone borrows a hymnal when working on a service, or to get a reading for a wedding or party, or just to look through the book. It is a splendid reference.

If you think you may have borrowed a hymnal for whatever reason in the last four plus years, please take a gander through your library. Look for the grey cover with silver printing on the spine.

Should you find one, return it. You will receive neither fine nor scolding. In fact you can set it on a table when no one is looking, if you want. Total amnesty for all!

## Revised Draft Bylaws

The Spring 2016 Congregational Meeting is May 15<sup>th</sup> and during the meeting we will consider adopting a set of revised bylaws. All members will receive a copy as part of the packet of documents for the meeting.

Anyone who wishes to review the draft bylaws may do so as there is a copy posted on the bulletin board outside the Soul Café.

## Thinking of Joining Red River?

Membership in the congregation is accomplished by signing the membership book. If you wish to join the church and vote at the Spring 2016 meeting, the bylaws state that you must join 30 days prior to the meeting. Since the meeting is scheduled for May 15, you must join by April 15<sup>th</sup> – an easy date to remember! Speak with Marion Hill should you wish to join.

## Harmony House Concert

Songs that heal the soul with Laurie McClain



On Sunday, April 24, '16, Harmony House Concerts will host Nashville singer-songwriter Laurie McClain from 4-6 p.m. Laurie tours nationally on the folk/Americana concert circuit, and occasionally tours internationally. Her original songs are messages of hope for a weary

world. Laurie will play two 45-minute sets with a 30-minute intermission for guests to mingle and to enjoy bottomless cups of coffee, tea, or punches and snacks. Reservations are \$15 per person, payable in advance or at the door. To prepay, make your check to Laurie McClain and mail to Faye Wedell; P.O. Box 812; Bonham, TX 75418, to be received no later than April 20<sup>th</sup>. Details about the concert [here](#).

## Leaders

### Board of Trustees

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

## Treasurer's Report

In the month of February, we had income of \$3,940 from general operations. After operations expense of \$1,775 for the month, we had a net income from operations of \$2,196.

In February we received a donation of \$200 for renovations. We spent \$8,358 for supplies for the new ceiling, remodel for the upstairs bathroom, and lights for the front porch. The renovation expenditures leave us with \$1,715 in the renovation fund. We also received \$120 toward a new microphone. We purchased the new equipment at a cost of \$347. In addition, we received a donation of \$50 for the Wi-Fi fund.

For the year to date period, we had a net income of \$13,735 from operations. Those included restricted amounts of \$6,477. The total change in cash for the month was an increase of \$6,198.

As of the end of February, we had total cash of \$67,412 and our debt totaled \$28,035.

In February, we donated \$83 from the Share the Plate program to the Earth Day Festival.

## Chalice Circles / Interest Groups ~ open to all

**BOOKED FOR LUNCH**, an informal book discussion group which usually meets the second Thursday of the month at 1:00 p.m. in the Emerson Room, on April 14<sup>th</sup>. Facilitator Carole Harner.

**GREEN TEAM**, is gearing up for the 8<sup>th</sup> Annual Earth Day Festival (on Apr 23) so the Team will meet on April 7<sup>th</sup> and again on the 21<sup>st</sup> at 6 pm in Amy Hoffman-Shehan's home. Facilitator: Amy Hoffman-Shehan.

**MOVEABLE FEAST**, a Cooking and/or Eating Circle meets monthly. In April the Feasters meet for dinner at Marilyn Alexander's ranch. Details on page 3

**UU JAM**, an acoustic music circle for musicians, singers & music loving listeners usually meets the last Saturday of the month @ 3 pm, in the Chapel. However, the group is on Spring Break for April and May. They return on June 25<sup>th</sup>. Facilitator: Jan Fletcher.

## Contact Us

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