

August 2016  
Vol. 14, Issue 2



♦  
New Tote  
Bags  
♦

♦  
Special  
Workshop  
on Aug 21  
♦

♦  
Digital  
Suggestion  
Box  
♦

♦  
Lunch time  
Moveable  
Feast  
♦

♦  
And More!

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

# Red River Ramblings

## Grow your Soul & Serve the World

**Sunday, August 7, 2016**

### What Is The Meaning of Life

Rev. Dr. Don Fielding, *speaking*

A discussion of what some others have called "The Meaning of Life" and some food for thought about Life's meaning.

Refreshments A-G

**Sunday, August 14, 2016**

### Faith, Hope and Authenticity

Stephanie Mott, *speaking*

Stephanie shares her journey of trying to conform to societal expectations while denying her authentic self, then learning that faith, hope and authenticity are not mutually exclusive.



*Stephanie Mott, LMSW lives in Topeka, Kansas. She is employed as a Contract Mental Health Clinician at Valeo Behavioral Healthcare. She also serves on the Board of Trustees of Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Topeka as president-elect. She is the Founder and Director of the Transgender Faith Tour and President/Executive Director of Kansas Statewide Transgender Education Project. She has provided nearly 400 workshops and presentations related to gender identity in venues from college classes to mental health centers to jails, prisons and hospitals. She is currently serving as the community liaison for transgender inmates with the Shawnee County (Kansas) Jail.*

Refreshments H

**Sunday, August 21, 2016**

### Both / And?

Joe Jordan, *speaking*

We live in a world of increasing complexity, both technological and ethical. It is often difficult to navigate our choices, both social and

political. How can we, as people whose highest calling is to service, be both compassionate and pragmatic?



*Joe Jordan is an English teacher at Bonham High School and a recent member of Red River UU. He and his wife Keller transplanted to North Texas from California three years ago and share a home in Sherman with two quirky cats.*

Refreshments I-R

**Sunday, August 28, 2016**

### Ingathering Sunday, with Water Communion

The Worship Team, *leading*

Time was UU churches closed for the summer and people would return to ingather on the Sunday after Labor Day. Traditions linger, and while we don't close during the summer, we celebrate an ingathering anyhow.



In 1980 at the first UU Women & Religion Continental Convocation, Carolyn McDade and Lucille Longview invited women to bring water from home. The idea spread and today nearly all UU congregations celebrate water communion at an "ingathering"-generally in early fall. It is important for us to keep this ritual, and to remember that, as with much else in UUism, it arose out of feminism, which is why we're taking a slightly different approach to our annual water communion ritual on Sunday.

Refreshments S-Z

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

**Red River  
Unitarian Universalist  
Church, Denison, TX**

# A Workshop for Our Church Committees

As a lay-led congregation, we depend only on ourselves for everything that happens under our roof—from our Sunday services and programming, to raising our own funds and deciding how and where to spend them, to welcoming our new members into the church's life and supporting veteran stalwart members at the same time. Being lay-led offers many opportunities to choose our direction, but it also asks a little something of us as individual members of a community. At our last congregational meeting in May, we voted to reduce the number of committees we need to run our affairs. Three of the regular operating committees are the Worship Committee (or Team), the Membership Committee, and the Finance/Endowment Committee. The membership on those committees comes from member volunteers, although they are officially "appointed" by the Board of Trustees—and the Board of Trustees is very eager to "appoint" volunteers!

In addition to those three volunteer Committees, there are two Committees that are directly elected by the congregation. Those are the Committee on Ministry and the Nominating Committee. Those two Committees have individual descriptions in the Bylaws about their composition and role in the church. The Nominating Committee's role is fairly straightforward and limited. And we know that the Committee on Ministry is intended to oversee all our church's ministries. But what are our ministries? How should they be overseen? How should we evaluate

them? How should we report to the larger church about them?

Although the committee names give an idea of what they're about, most of the details are not found in the Bylaws, so it's up to us to give them a more definite shape and direction. Fortunately for us, we have an existing Policy and Procedures Manual that we can use as a starting point – we don't have to reinvent the wheel and we can build upon work that has already been done.

There is a role each one of us can play as we chart the direction of our small but mighty congregation. So if you are already a member of, or if you are interested in finding out about any of the following:

- ❖ Nominating Committee
- ❖ Committee on Ministry
- ❖ Worship Committee
- ❖ Membership Committee
- ❖ Finance/Endowment Committee

please join us after church on Sunday, August 21st, from 1:00 to 3:30 p.m. as the Board hosts a Special All Committees Workshop. We will explore together how our church committees can work to build an even stronger and more vital liberal religious community for ourselves and for our part of the world that needs our unique voice.

Oh, and more one thing. Rumor has it that there will be things to eat and drink, too!

## The UU Flaming Chalice

A flame within a chalice is a primary symbol of the Unitarian Universalist faith tradition. Many of our congregations kindle a flaming chalice in gatherings and worships and feature the chalice symbol prominently.

[Hans Deutsch](#), an Austrian artist, first brought together the chalice and the flame as a Unitarian symbol during his work with the Unitarian Service Committee during World War II. To Deutsch, the image had connotations of sacrifice and love. The flaming chalice is the official symbol of the Unitarian Universalist Service Committee and the Unitarian Universalist Association. Officially or unofficially, it functions as a logo for hundreds of congregations. Perhaps most importantly, it has become a focal point for worship. No one meaning or interpretation is official. The flaming chalice, like our faith, stands open to receive new truths that pass the tests of reason, justice, and compassion. Many UU find comfort in seeing the light of reason, the warmth of community, and the flame of hope in the use of the flaming chalice.

Our chalice logo was created just for us. The river, in two shades of blue, are the letters "R R" and the top of the chalice contains the two letters "U U". We added the two interlocking circles which traditionally have represented the consolidation of the American Unitarian Association and the Universalist Church of America back in 1961. The image, to the right-without the circles, shows the detail of why the logo looks the way it does.



## What the Board did in July

Here's highlights of the July 10<sup>th</sup> board meeting:

- ❖ Welcomes Kelly Cofield-Dyer to the board as the church treasurer
- ❖ Agreed to host a Sunday afternoon gathering for those who currently serve on the three elected committees and the three standing committee to brainstorm ways of enhancing church life
- ❖ Approved hosting the 2017 Small Church Conference for congregations in North Texas - sometime next spring
- ❖ Agreed to set up an electronic suggestion box where people can email suggestions about church life, activities, programs and outreach projects - or anything else!
- ❖ Listen to ideas brought to the board by a young visitor who suggested we post who is on the Board, offer a visitor packet of materials; reach out to those who self identify as agnostic, atheists, free-thinkers, or 'nones'
- ❖ Agreed to Appeal to the City of Denison to ask why we are charged for refuse services but are not permitted to use them

## Treasurer's Report

In the month of June, we had income of \$2,984 from general operations. After operations expense of \$1,816 for the month, we had a net income from operations of \$1,169.

In June, we received a donation of \$5,000 for new carpet. We spent \$1,102 of our renovation fund for renovating the upstairs and new tile for the entry foyer. We spent \$68 from our Wi-Fi fund leaving us with a balance of \$1,042 in that fund.

For the year to date period, we had a net income of \$10,831 from operations. Those included restricted amounts of \$5,738. The total change in cash for the month was a decrease of \$4,495.

As of the end of June, we had total cash of \$67,149 and our debt totaled \$26,945.

In June, we donated \$131 from the Share the Plate program to the Earth Day Festival

## UU Jam - Same day, new time

UUJAM had been meeting the last Saturday of each month in the chapel. Starting this month, rather than meeting in the afternoon, we will meet from 6 - 8 pm. Hopefully, this time will be more convenient for folks as afternoon times were not bringing out more than the same 4 or 5.

If you like to perform, sing or just listen to some great acoustic sounds, please come support this chalice circle. We really need to see a good group to keep this going.

Any questions, contact Jan Fletcher.

*P.S. A note from your editor: I attended at the last JAM. Three guitars, one banjo, and a keyboard provided the music. I was introduced to songs I'd never heard and enjoyed each one. I also was surprised how easily some of the lyrics, for the songs I recall, came flooding back to my mind as we sang. When I confessed the last popular song I remember was Debbie Reynolds singing Tammy - everyone instantly began singing it. What a nostalgia moment! UU Jam is a terrific way to spend an informal (and free) musical event. Hope to see you there on Aug 27<sup>th</sup>.*

## Habitat Volunteers Say Thanx

Red River provided lunch to the volunteers building the current Habitat For Humanity house (in Sherman) twice during July - on July 2nd and again on the 30th.. Thanks to those who made it possible: Lanan and Robert Shelton; Marla Loturco; Doug Strong; Donna Toerper; Dan Althoff; Marion and Elbert Hill; Marilyn Alexander; and Amy Hoffman-Shehan.

If you missed out and want to be part of the next community outreach project - you're in luck! (See below.)

## Dinner for Grayson Shelter

Red River participates with other churches and provides dinner about four times a year for the residents at the Grayson Shelter. Our next opportunity is Thursday, August 4. Some who prepare the meal and wish to do so, are invited to stay and eat with the residents. Marion Hill is coordinating the menu and if you want to be part of the Shelter Crew for the Aug 4 dinner, please email her [here](#)



## Moveable Feast - Aug 11<sup>th</sup>

It's hot, humid and sticky! So the August Moveable Feast will be a cool summer potluck lunch in the Barton Parlor and Emerson Room (now nice and cool thanks to the new AC unit) on Thursday, August 11 at 1:30 pm. We won't have a hard-and-fast theme but generally focus on summertime veggies and fruits.

## Digital Suggestion Box

Got an idea, suggestion, a grumble? Share it in a flash, just email suggestion @ rruu.org. Feedback is important and making it easy helps everyone share thoughts when they happen.



# North Texas Unitarian Universalist Congregations

4015 Normandy Avenue, Dallas, Texas 75205-1750 469.682.8870 NTUUC.org

## Board Bits from the NTUUC July Board meeting:

- ❖ The committee structure has been revised, with more committee autonomy.
- ❖ We need a Chair for the Communications Committee
- ❖ We need members for both the Communications Committee and the Education Committee.
- ❖ There is a Free-Thinkers certification available from the Humanist UU website. <http://huumanists.org/programs/freethinker-friendly>
- ❖ Extended leadership will be offered four Saturdays by Southern Region. October 1, December 3, February 4, and April 1 [read details in the July *Red River Ramblings*]
- ❖ *Standing on the Side of Leadership* (SOTSOL) will be held in June 2017. (possibly June 10), This annual conference is a wonderful way to meet other UUs and learn more about Unitarian Universalism
- ❖ Registration Assistance Committee has funds available for assistance to various programs - apply on NTUUC website [NTUUC.org/RegistrationAssistance](http://NTUUC.org/RegistrationAssistance)

## What Other North TX UU congregations are doing:



**First Jefferson** (Ft Worth) – A new drumming circle

**Oak Cliff** – Change in the tax code almost meant **\$9000** in property taxes. Check your bylaws!

**Tyler** – This year's canvass was up by 10%!

**First Dallas** – Collected \$38,000 for fallen officers' fund.

**Denton** – Rev. Pamela Wat received a \$2000 Westwood grant; these are given to ministers with five or more years of experience who have brought an entrepreneurial spirit toward spreading the UU faith and nurturing congregations. *The Westwood Ministerial Aid Fund* was established by the Westwood Family, all of whose members were dedicated to successfully spreading the faith and nurturing Unitarian Universalist congregations.

**Westside** (Ft Worth) – Received a gift of \$150,000 to prepare for the departure of the Montessori school.

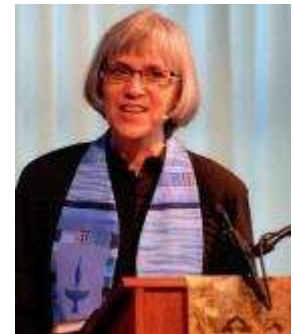
**Sacred Journey** (Garland) – Painting the sanctuary and laying a new floor.

**Horizon** (Carrollton) – TED Talks success for Adult RE

**Pathways** (Southlake) – A full sanctuary the past few weeks!

**Community** (Plano) – Working on re-certification for Welcoming Congregation

**And a warm welcome** to new ministers coming to congregations in North Texas: , Rev. Shari Woodbury (left below) at Westside UU Church in Ft Worth and Rev. Lora Brandis at Horizon UU Church in Carrollton.



## Hot off the press!

New Tote bags - smaller than the last batch (makes it easier to carry stuff) and with a new tag line. Since tote bags weren't in the budget ...

\$3.00 each (correct change appreciated)

or

Two for \$5.00

Available Sundays - at the AV desk



*Help Red River grow by sharing who we are every time you're out and about shopping.*



## Leaders

### Board of Trustees

Helen Schulze, *president*  
 Marla Loturco, *vice president*  
 Kelly Cofield-Dyer, *Treasurer*  
 Doug Strong, *Secretary*  
 Linda Tracy, *Trustee*  
 Dan Althoff, *Past President*

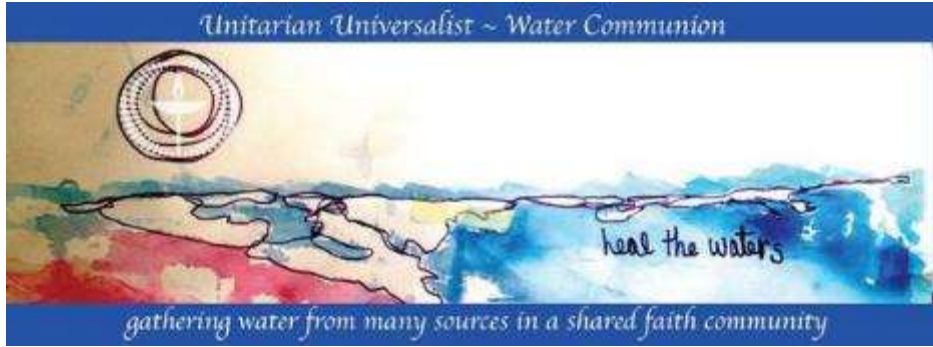
### Committee on Ministry:

Carole Harner, Gerry Shehan,  
 Robert Shelton

### Team Leaders/Members:

Adult Forum: *various members*  
 Building & Grounds: *Marilyn*  
 Communications: *Doug*  
 Finance:  
 Long Range Planning: *Amy,*  
*Marilyn*  
 Membership:  
 Nominations: *Elbert, Kat, Lanan*  
 NTUUC Rep: *Marla*  
 RE Team: *Dan, Tommi*  
 Safe Congregation Panel: *Dan*  
 Social Action:  
 Worship: *Dan, Doug, Jan,*  
*Marla, Robert*

## Remember the Water!



Everyone goes somewhere - be it across the street or the world. So, wherever you happen to go this summer, remember to bring back a small container of water for our **Annual Water Communion** service that will be on August 29<sup>th</sup>.

## 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. However, the group is on summer vacation until September. Facilitator Carole Harner.

**GREEN TEAM**, is taking a well deserved sabbatical for a while, in order to recuperate from creating another wonderful Texoma Earth Day Festival. Facilitator: Amy Hoffman-Shehan.

**MOVEABLE FEAST**, a Cooking and/or Eating Circle will gather for a summer pot-luck luncheon in the Barton Parlor and the Emerson Room on Thursday, August 11 @ 1:30 at church.. Facilitators: Elbert and Marion Hill.

**UU JAM**, an acoustic music circle for musicians, singers & music loving listeners usually meets the last Saturday of the month @ 6 pm, in the Chapel. In August that will be on Saturday, Aug 27<sup>th</sup>

## Contact Us

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 DENISON, TX 75021-1806



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