

In This Issue

Defying the Nazis:
The Sharps' War

Feedback from the special workshop

Red River's new smart phone app

New church directory coming

And More!

Red River Ramblings



September 2016
Volume 14
Issue 3

Grow your Soul & Serve the World

Sunday, September 4, 2016

As Soon As We Enter

Mr. Matt Pargeter-Villarreal, speaking

As UU's, we hold the first principle of *the inherent worth and dignity of every person* in high regard. This not only extends to what we talk about on Sundays, but every aspect of the church experience. This is especially true of how we welcome visitors to our church. This Sunday, our guest speaker will talk about this first principle and how it applies to the way in which we invite newcomers to join us to gather together in community.

Bio on page 4

Refreshments A-G

Sunday, September 11, 2016

One Hundred Years Hence

Rev. Annie Foerster, speaking

More than a hundred years ago, social reformer and Universalist Mary Livermore wrote a hymn by that name predicting that the Universalist faith would be the faith of the future. She also promised that blacks would be free, that women would be entitled to an education equal to men's, and that women would be able to vote. We are fortunate to have her wisdom and words passed down to us from her memoirs and her speeches. If you hold your heads just right and believe hard enough, we may be able to get her to speak to us in person.

Refreshments H

Sunday, September 18, 2016

Life Calls Us On

The Rev. Dr. William Sinkford, *speaking (video)*

Dr. Sinkford is the Senior Minister at the First Unitarian Church in Portland, OR and the former president of the UUA. This video message is the sermon he delivered at last June's General Assembly in Columbus. His remarks were powerful and are most timely as given the national temperament surrounding racial, gender, religious biases.

Refreshments I-R

Sunday, September 25, 2016

The Psychological Cost of Silence

Larry Bloomfield, speaking

Our speaker comes from the Brethren tradition. Of his remarks, he writes, "*No matter what your belief system(s) may be, no matter if you have one, or if it's a work in progress. Do we accept that we are placed on this planet, at this time, to remain silent in face of oppression, injustice and disenfranchisement of humanity?*"

Bio on page 4

Refreshments S-Z

Morning Meditation - 9

Adult Forum - 10

Worship - 11:15

Conversations & Calories - 12:15

Red River Unitarian Universalist Church ♦ Denison, TX

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

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



From The Prez

By the time you read this, families will be getting back into their school routines, and we will be anticipating the end of the summer heat. I will be learning about the duties that come with being the president of this lay led congregation.

This is an office I never expected to hold, and it has made me reflect on why I attend Red River. I feel very strongly that we need this oasis of free thought in our community, especially in light of the negative rhetoric that our presidential race confronts us. At the workshop meeting that was held on August 21st, I was shown that our mission statement is printed on the order of service every Sunday.

"We are a Sanctuary for Religious Liberals, Celebrating Compassion, Diversity and Spiritual Growth."

This is why I come here, and feel safe and accepted. We are a group of people dedicated to the idea that each of us has their own spiritual journey to make; each of us follows their own path, and can respect that another's path may be different. We have no creeds to accept, just a commitment to tolerance and spiritual exploration. Instead of fearing diversity, we celebrate it. As I say to my friends- "Texoma needs people like us!"

I encourage you to have a look at our website, if you haven't done so already. There you can find information about how we govern ourselves, what our policies and procedures are, and what the various committees do.

You may not be aware that there is time set aside at every Board Meeting for congregational concerns-If you wish to bring something up, you are welcome to attend. We will be meeting once a month, usually the second Sunday, after services. If you need support, The Committee on Ministry's members* will be happy to assist you and even go to the board meeting with you.

One of my goals is to prepare some educational materials for Children's RE for the weeks when we have children present in the congregation. I will have packets with 'do-it-yourself' lessons, so no preparations will be necessary for any adult who wishes to assist with minding the kids.

I am proud to be a member of this congregation, and I am willing to be President...whether or not I am qualified! Please don't hesitate to approach me if you have any questions or ideas.

Take care,

Helen

*Carole Harner, Elbert Hill, and Robert Shelton



Red River App is here!

Our new smart phone app is a handy way to keep current on what's happening at church. From the home screen you can navigate to

- About Us
- This Sunday
- Map
- Contact (with links to call, email, or visit the church web site)
- Connect to the church Facebook page
- See Church Calendar

It even comes with the church chalice as the icon for your home screen. The app is compatible with iOS (requires 7.0.1 or later); Android (requires 4.1.1 or later); and for other platforms (requires xHTML mobile browser).

Sorry, but it is not available on Google play or the App Store (because that would cost \$40 a month); you can easily download it from <https://redriveruu-church.appsme.com> or scan it with the QR code here:

To install the app you must first open **Chrome** browser, then copy and past the URL line (above) into **Chrome** to proceed.

The app is free and anyone who wants it can have it. As you use the app, send feedback, suggestions etc. to suggestions (at) rruu.org so we can tweak things to make it as useful as possible.



A New Church Directory

It is time for a new church directory. Coming this month to your inbox - if you are a member or an active friend of Red River - will be an email from Directory (at) rruu.org. It will list your current information from the church database. Please take a few minutes and look it over; make updates as needed and hit reply.



There will be a couple of questions that need to be answered so be sure and include your answers before replying.

Thanks, everyone. A second email will be sent to those who haven't replied to the first email. After that, those who have not replied will be left out of the next directory.

Austin College Fair



AUSTIN
COLLEGE

Each fall Austin College invited non-profit organizations to set up a table so students can learn about community groups of interest. Churches are always a part of this event.

This year's Non-Profit Fair will be Thursday, September 15th from 11:00 am to 1:00 pm. Red River will have two tables with an aim at highlighting our lay-led congregation and sharing news about our largest community outreach project, the Texoma Earth Day Festival. We will also have registrars available for anyone who has not registered to vote in the upcoming general election.

Want to share your enthusiasm for liberal religion in Texoma? For the Earth Day Festival? The two hours are an important way for us to meet current UU students along with others who may be interested in knowing about Red River.

Speak with Helen, Marla, Doug, Kelly, Linda or Dan (our faithful board members) if you can help.

What the Board did in August

Here's highlights of the July 10th board meeting:

- Thanked Dan Althoff for his 2 years as president and welcomed him to his new position as Past President
- Finalized plans for the August 21 workshop, including PowerPoint from Marla and Dan, discussion on implementing our 2016-2017 goals. Agreed to email everyone involved in our three standing committees:
 - Finance/Endowment
 - Worship
 - Membership

- Approved March 11, 2017 for our hosting the Small Church Conference, Dan, Marla and Doug appointed to the planning committee along with others who wish to help
- Discussed the 360 Circle Leadership Training program being offered jointly by UUA and All Souls, Tulsa. Agreed to consider participating after their pilot program completes.
- Learned the City of Denison will pick up both recycles and trash from us, rumors to the contrary proved unfounded

Special Workshop Report

On Sunday, August 21, approximately a dozen members of the congregation accepted the open invitation to join the first-ever "working lunch workshop" centering on the revised committee structure under the amended Bylaws.

Marla Loturco and Dan Althoff, with Doug Strong at the AV board, offered a PowerPoint overview and description of the committees. They noted that the committees were divided among those elected directly by the congregation and those overseen by the Board of Trustees.

The groups directly elected by the congregation are the Board of Trustees, the Committee on Ministry, and the Nominating Committee.

The standing committees that report to the Board of Trustees are the Worship Committee (usually referred to as the Worship Team), the Membership Committee, and the Finance/Endowment Committee.

While some committees, such as the Board of Trustees and the Worship Team, meet regularly, our conversations revealed that the duties and expectations for other committees were not widely known. Marla and Dan reminded those attending that much of the groundwork for the "lesser known" committees had already been laid out in the Policy & Procedures Manual, another church resource that is also little known!

Because it was a "first-ever" workshop on church committees, the agenda was fluid. The presentation led naturally into a discussion and brain-storming session on the role and function of the committees, particularly on those that are less well-known.

If you are interested in learning more about the committees that run our lay-led congregation, please speak to any member of the Board of Trustees, or you may consult the Bylaws and the Policies and Procedures of the church on our website. They are posted under Congregational Governance at <http://www.ruuu.org/congregationalGovernance.html>.

Looking Better and Better



The last part of the new carpet project has been completed and the difference is stunning, more comfortable to walk on and reduces the din of conversations during fellowship.

The old carpet was recycled and now graces, wall-to-wall, throughout the third floor (except for the Arts & Crafts room that already had a spiffy floor). With all the rooms repainted, the 3rd floor is worth the hike up the stairs to see.



Treasurer's Report

In the month of July, we had income of \$3,348 from general operations. After operations expense of \$3,539 for the month, we had a net income from operations of \$(191).

In July, we spent \$4,995 for new carpet. That leaves us with \$5 in the renovation fund.

For the year to date period, we had a net income of \$4,377 from operations. Those included restricted amounts of \$1,240 for RE Coordinator, \$2,036 for the elevator fund, \$250 for DBLE, and \$1,042 for the Wi-Fi fund. The total change in cash for the month was an increase of \$5,186.

As of the end of July, we had total cash of \$84,604 and our debt totaled \$25,844.

In July, we donated \$120 from the Share the Plate program to the Grayson County Shelter. Water and waste bill was \$159. Electric, gas and Cable One were paid in August.

Kelly Cofield, Treasurer

UU Jam

All music lovers - those who like to play acoustic instruments and those who like to listen - are invited to spend an evening enjoying music. The September UUJam meets on Saturday, September 24th from 6 - 8 pm in the Chapel.

Facilitator: Jan Fletcher

Booked For Lunch

Do you want to hear about new authors and interesting books? Come find out what everyone has been reading over the summer. The fun starts again on Friday, September 9, at 1pm at church. Open to book lovers everywhere. A snack will be provided.

Facilitator: Carole Harner

Green Team

The Green Team will meet Thursday, September 8 at 5:00 pm at the home of Amy Hoffman-Shehan to begin planning the 2017 Texoma Earth Day Festival.

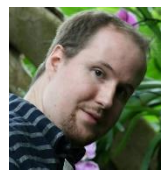
Facilitator: Amy Hoffman-Shehan

Moveable Feast

For September the Feasters are going to a local restaurant for a dutch-treat supper. The facilitators are scouring the area for some new or different place. Details will be in an upcoming Wednesday'

Facilitator: Marion and Elbert Hill

Our First Time Speakers



Matt Pargeter-Villarreal hales from San Antonio and is in his second year at Brite Divinity School in Ft. Worth, with a concentration in Sexual and Gender Justice. He is currently an Aspirant for Ordination with the Unitarian Universalist Association. He and his husband Fernando attend Horizon UU Church in Carrollton.



Larry Blumfield sent bullet style bio information. Born in Gary, IN; a BA, MS and a Bachelor of Divinity from Bethany Theological Seminary, a Brethren school; been employed by 3 Fortune 500 companies (doing something); has 5 children, 12 grand children and 3 great grand children. His guiding principle: *Find your gift and give it away.*

Leaders

Board of Trustees

Helen Schulze, *president*
 Marla Loturco, *vice president*
 Kelly Cofield, *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:
 Membership: *Marion*
 Nominations: *Elbert, Kat, Lanan*
 NTUUC Rep: *Marla*
 RE Team: *Dan, Tommi*
 Safe Congregation Panel: *Dan*
 Social Action:
 Worship: *Dan, Doug, Marla, Robert*

Contact Us

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 PO BOX 1806
 DENISON, TX 75021-1806

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How to reach us:

Email: [info\[+suffix\]*](mailto:info[+suffix]*)

Phone: 903.231.3232

Web: www.rruu.org

E-News: [announce\[+suffix\]*](mailto:announce[+suffix]*)

Facebook:

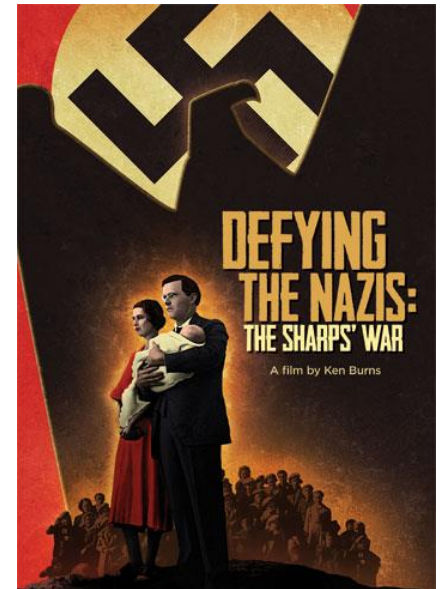
RedRiverUnitarianUniversalist-
 Church

***Church email suffix: @rruu.org**

DEFYING THE NAZIS: THE SHARPS' WAR

A NEW FILM BY KEN BURNS AND ARTEMIS
 JOUKOWSKY

DEFYING THE NAZIS: THE SHARPS' WAR, a new documentary co-directed by Ken Burns and Artemis Joukowsky about a little-known but important mission by an American minister and his wife to rescue refugees and dissidents in Europe before and after the start of World War II, will air on **September 20 at 8 PM** on both KERA and OETA.



DEFYING THE NAZIS is cinematically told through the letters and journals of the Sharps, with Tom Hanks as the voice of Waitstill and Marina Goldman as the voice of Martha. It features firsthand interviews with the now adult children whom the Sharps saved, as well as leading historians, authors and Holocaust scholars, including William Schulz, Deborah Dwork, Modecai Paldiel, Ghanda DiFiglia and Yehuda Bauer.

The Rev. Waitstill Sharp and his wife Martha answered a call from the American Unitarian Association asking if they would travel to Czechoslovakia to help provide relief to people trying to escape Nazi persecution. They were invited to take part in "the first intervention against evil by the denomination to be started immediately overseas." "The mission would involve secretly helping Jews, refugees and dissidents to escape the expanding Nazi threat in Europe. If they were discovered, they would face imprisonment, probable torture and death. Seventeen other members of the church had declined. With two young children at home, the Sharps accepted. They expected to be gone for several months.

Instead, their mission would last almost two years.

"The Sharps' early grasp of the true nature of the Nazi threat and their willingness to leave the safety of America and take action to help endangered refugees was a rare act at a time of widespread indifference," said Sara J. Bloomfield, director, United States Holocaust Memorial Museum. "Their courage and sacrifice should inspire us to reflect deeply on our own responsibilities in a world that also faces many challenges."

"The Sharps' story is inspiring modern day faith leaders to action. Unitarian Universalists are partnering with Jews, Christians and Muslims to carry on the Sharps' legacy by standing up against religious bigotry, Islamophobia and indifference in the face of today's refugee crises. Hundreds of actions are being planned for the book and film's release across the country through the Defying the Nazis UU Action Project. The Unitarian Universalist Association, Unitarian Universalist Service Committee and Meadville Lombard Theological School are encouraging all UUs and multi-faith partners to honor the Sharps by working to advance the values for which they sacrificed," said UUSC President Rev. Dr. William F. Schulz. "The Sharps answered the call of their faith, risking their life to save others. Their selfless dedication to a more just world is an example for Unitarian Universalists and all who care about human rights."

NOTE: Red River screened the first version of this movie on Sunday, January 9, 2013 in a special Sunday extended service. The working title was "Two Who Dared, The Waitstill and Martha Sharp Story."