

Red River Ramblings

Special Speaker
looks at End Of
Life options

Robert Shelton
Honored

Register Now for
the Small
Congregations
Conference

Grayson College's
The Viking
article about
Red River UU

Meet our Four
New Members

Whose Life Is It, Anyway?

The Rev. Kevin Bradley, speaking

Medical advances allow us to live longer than ever before, even when we don't want to. Not long ago, death was relatively quick and typically happened at home surrounded by loved ones. Today, most people experience a slow, lingering death, usually in an institution, and often alone. We'll talk about why it doesn't have to be that way, and what you can do today to ensure your choices are honored.

We will have an Open Dialogue after Kevin's remarks and he welcomes your questions. See his bio on Page 4.

Sunday, March 12, 2017

Why We Marched

Marion Hill, speaking

The Women's Marches that took place on January 21, in Washington DC and in more than 600 other cities around the globe, made history in numbers of attendees and peacefulness. Marion Hill, who rode a chartered bus from Oklahoma with 50 others to DC, will discuss the marches' organizing process, their goals, her individual experience, and the day's apparent impact. Others in the church who attended various Women's Marches that day may comment also.



Sunday, March 18, 2017

Give Peace A Chance

The SonShine Sisters, in concert

We welcome back to our Sunday assembly the dulcimer sextet from Whitesboro who returns to bring us a special concert with a simple message: Peace. The group, which includes our own Marla Loturco, has compiled songs that remind us of one of human-

ity's most precious gift. Peace. Why sing of peace? Because music is the voice of the human spirit. It can go beyond language, beyond age or race or gender or nationality, beyond religious or political differences. It goes straight to the heart, body, and soul of all people. Music is a powerful tool for reaching out, building connections and understanding, and raising consciousness. Come enjoy the music as they spread songs that inspire peace.

Sunday, March 26, 2017

What Do We Promise One Another?

The Rev. Doug Strong, preaching

On the evening of March 26, 1997 nineteen brave, curious and compassionate people gathered in the Little Chapel at Austin College. They listened to a brass quartet. They heard my sermon *Why Is There No Shouting In The Sanctuary?* They sang some songs and they went home. They liked the experience and the first seeds of Red River Unitarian Universalists were planted that night.

Those seeds grew into the roots supporting the branches of our well established religious community. It is important that we have been here 20 years, especially now. Since the election, our branches have been casting different shadows. There is a perceived impossibility among us: that we can both support partisan politics and resist public policies that counter centuries-old Unitarian and Universalist practice of embracing *The Least of These* (Matthew 25). Must we pick? Resist or Rejoice? I suggest we can choose both.

- ◆ Meditation - 9 am
- ◆ Adult Forum - 10 am
- ◆ Assembly - 11:15
- ◆ Fellowship - 12:15

Red River Unitarian Universalist Church ◆ Denison, TX

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

Hello from Helen



The flowers and the bees think it is spring, so who am I to say no? Some of my friends keep a garden journal, and even they admit that the earth seems to be stirring a little earlier this year. I find this a good time of year to get organized in my thinking for the year ahead...this year brings a lot of challenging things to think about!

Today I had the amazing experience of listening to 5 of our members talk about their personal credo. The delight we take in supporting one another in our separate spiritual journeys is one of the things I like best about Unitarian Universalism. Our third principle is: acceptance of one another and encouragement to spiritual growth in our congregations. I can't think of a finer example than what was so evident in our pulpit this morning. Thank you to the people who were brave enough to come forward today. There is a real sense of peace from being in a room where people are curious to learn.

That sense of peace seems to be missing in our everyday life. Many of my patients and friends have been feeling very stressed in the past few weeks, and upset at the polarization that is portrayed in the media. We get the impression that things are neatly divided into 'this or that' rather than this AND that. As Kelly likes to point out, she can believe that 'Black Lives Matter' as well as believe that we should 'Back the Blue.' I can support a woman's right to choose, even as I hate the idea of abortion. When I am busy defending my position, I can't make room to hear the opinion of another.

One of the big gifts we give each other in this church is the gift of attention-of listening to what another has to say and of giving them the benefit of the doubt. Being a genuine listener is hard, and I think it takes practice. I am working on it!

I read something on a UU website by a woman named Ashley Horan, and I am guessing she won't mind if I share it with you.

"You are loved beyond belief. You are enough, you are precious, your work and your life matter, and you are not alone. You are part of a 'we,' a great cloud of witnesses living and dead who have insisted that this beautiful, broken world of ours is a blessing worthy of both deep gratitude and fierce protection. Our ancestors and our descendants are beckoning us, compelling us onward toward greater connection, greater compassion, greater commitment to one another and to the earth. Together, we are resilient and resourceful enough to say 'yes' to that call, to make it our life's work in a thousand different ways, knowing that we can do no other than bind ourselves more tightly together, and throw ourselves into the holy work of showing up, again and again, to be part of building that world of which we dream but which we have not yet seen."

Thank you all for doing the holy work of showing up.

See you soon!

Helen

Be Part of The Day!

Come join other UUs from the cluster on Sat. Mar 11th from 9 - 3 to meet, network, learn, celebrate, sing and laugh! Cost is \$15, including lunch and child care.

How we'll spend our time

Morning

Prior to 9 am - Continental breakfast for those who like arriving early

9 - 9:15 - Ingathering in the Chapel

9:30 - 11 am - The morning conversations: one focusing on **Stewardship**; the other on **Creating Religious Space**



Mid Day

11:15 - 12:45 - Two special interactive experiences to get your heart pumping and give your brain a break - with lunch in-between!

Afternoon

- 2:30 - The afternoon conversations: one focusing on **Growing Small Congregations**; the other on **Social Media**

2:45 - 3 - A parting thought



The Viking

Wednesday, March 1, 2017

What is Unitarian Universalism?

by Megan Hutchinson
I-Lab Instructor

Most people have never heard about this denomination, despite its long history.

Unitarians came out of the Protestant Reformation in Europe and developed in 16th-century Romania.

Universalists rose in popularity in the New World in the late 1700s with their belief that all people are deserving of salvation.

This belief was considered extremely liberal at the time, and the church has maintained that liberal bent to this day.

These two denominations united in 1961 to become the Unitarian Universalists (UU).

Over time, the organization opened its doors to all manner of faith practices, in keeping with the Universal principle of salvation for all.

While Unitarianism began as a Christian denomination and some UUs identify as Christians today, most would refer to themselves as Humanists or a number of other designations.

The local UU church, Red River Unitarian Universalist Church, located at 515 N. Burnett Ave. Denison, Texas, is celebrating its 20th anniversary this year. Originally begun in Sherman in the Grand Avenue Presbyterian Church, they have moved to a century-old home in Denison as the primary worship center.

The facility has plenty of parking and has recently been renovated.

They accept members from every walk of life.

UUs have no one creed, for to

do so would exclude some people from their practices.

UUs practice love and acceptance, inviting Buddhists, Hindus, Muslims, Christians, Jews, agnostics, atheists, and Pagans to worship.

The services are not god-centered, but instead preach the value of being a good person in this world.

Each UU has a different relationship with the god they worship, or with none at all.

What you believe is not as important as the spiritual journey of discovery you take to get there.

If you are not sure of your spiritual beliefs or are questioning, this is an excellent source of inspiration for your own spiritual journey.

Visitors and members have the opportunity to explore many different paths to spirituality and choose the one that is right for them. Church services mirror many aspects of a traditional church service, while maintaining unique differences in each congregation.

UUs follow seven core principles that apply to every person, regardless of their persuasion:

1. The inherent worth and dignity of every person;
2. Justice, equity and compassion in human relations;
3. Acceptance of one another and encouragement to spiritual growth in our congregations;
4. A free and responsible search for truth and meaning;
5. The right of conscience and the use of the democratic process within our congregations and in society at large;
6. The goal of world community with peace, liberty, and justice for all;

What is Unitarian Universalism?

7. Respect for the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part.*

*from uua.org

These are the guiding principles by which UUs live their lives.

They are gathered from many different religious sources and are universal.

UUs do not discriminate

based on race, gender, gender identity, sexuality, creed, color or anything else.

For more information, please visit uua.org or the local UU church website at rruu.org.

If you would like to stop in to find out more, Adult Forum is Sunday at 10 a.m. and Service is at 11:15 a.m.. Stay after for "Conversations and Calories"!

UU Day at the TX Legislature

By Marla Loturco



I'm here to tell you that 2:30 am on my phone alarm is much too early! That was the time I had to arise for the Texas UU Justice Ministry (TXUUJM) Legislative Justice Day in Austin. They wanted us to begin loading on the bus at 4:30 am with the bus leaving Horizon UU Church at 5:00. That was the start to a long and interesting day.

Approximately 250 UU's gathered in a room at the Capitol Extension for a short briefing, followed by dividing into groups with assignments to visit many of our state representatives and state senators. I joined several groups for other representatives where we talked on the topics of Reproductive Justice, Immigration/Refugee Justice, and Income Inequality/Economic Justice. Several people joined me in my visit to Senator Craig Estes. There we talked to Ashley Malone, a Policy Analyst. Ashley was very friendly and listened politely to our issues. Then I visited Representative Larry Phillips office. He had not bothered to respond for setting up meetings and all I could do was leave our literature with his receptionist. This is the second time he has ignored requests for meetings. Can only surmise he really doesn't care what his constituents think or support.

I arrived home around 9:00 at night. Tired but pleased with a day meeting new people, re-connecting with others, and working to make a difference. Come join me in two years for our next TXUUJM Legislative Justice Day.

FROM POSTBULLETIN.COM - ROCHESTER, MN

Kevin Bradley and David Breeden: People of Faith Support Medical Aid in Dying

By Kevin Bradley and David Breeden Jan 4, 2017

The Rev. Kevin Bradley, of St. Paul, is an interfaith counselor and hospice chaplain, and the Rev. David Breeden, of Bloomington, is senior minister at First Unitarian Society, Minneapolis.

As spiritual leaders of the Interfaith Clergy for End-of-Life Options, we embrace dying as a natural part of life and encourage discussion about this inevitable transition that we each will face. Our mission is to promote understanding and acceptance of diverse spiritual beliefs related to end-of-life decisions. We support the right to die a dignified, peaceful death at home, surrounded by those we love. We have seen too many people suffering from terminal illness face the end of their lives without access to all the options and choices that could have eased their passage. That is why we support legislation to give mentally sound, terminally ill adults the option to get a doctor's prescription for medication they may choose to self-administer if their suffering becomes unbearable.

We were heartened by the recent results of the survey conducted by LifeWay Research, showing that more than half of all Christians (59 percent), Catholics (70 percent), Protestants (53 percent) and those of other religions (70 percent) agree with the statement: "When a person is facing a painful terminal disease, it is morally acceptable to ask for a physician's aid in taking his or her own life." LifeWay Research is a Nashville-based, evangelical research firm that specializes in surveys about faith in culture and matters that affect churches.

More than 55 million U.S. citizens live in six states where medical aid in dying is authorized. Last month, Colorado joined Oregon, Washington, Montana, Vermont and California when voters overwhelming supported — by 65 percent — the Colorado End-of-Life Options ballot initiative. In 2015, Minnesota Sen. Chris Eaton introduced legislation modeled after Oregon's Death with Dignity Act and hosted a series of listening sessions around the state. The bill received a hearing in the Senate Health, Human Services and Housing Committee in March 2016, and Eaton has pledged to re-introduce the legislation this year.

As the oldest of the 75 million Baby Boomers head into their seventh decade, terminal illnesses, such as cancer, are expected to surge over the next 20 years. Now is the time for state lawmakers to act on behalf of the majority

of their constituents. They should honor the right of individuals to make end-of-life choices according to their own values and priorities.

The LifeWay Research results shows that many people of faith believe that asking for help in dying when you are experiencing extreme end-of-life suffering is a moral option. As persons of faith, we firmly believe this principle to be true. All terminally ill individuals of sound mind should have the option of

medical aid in dying with the choice guided by their faith and in consultation with their family and doctor.

We believe that life is to be cherished and filled with meaning and purpose. But when suffering and incapacity induced by terminal illness makes our life too much to bear, a compassionate alternative must be available to us. Medical aid in dying is just such an option.



Our First time Guest Speaker

The Rev. Kevin Bradley is an interfaith hospice chaplain, spiritual intelligence coach, stress management counselor, and writer. He will be talking about the Death with Dignity movement and Final Exit Network, which provides education and support for the terminally ill and anyone who is suffering intolerable pain. Rev. Bradley's perspective has been shaped by his theological studies and personal involvement with many patients and their loved ones during end-of-life situations. He is ordained in the UCC and a graduate of Brite Divinity School at TCU.



He is also part of Final Exit Network and is a volunteer member of their Speakers Bureau. Speakers Bureau service is available throughout the U.S. At our expense, we will send a speaker to your location. We will help with publicity for the event, coordinate and pay for travel and lodging, and furnish handouts and brochures.

Meet Our Newest Members



Linn Cates was previously a member of Red River UU (one of the founding members, in fact), and we're delighted to welcome her back into the congregation. Her daughter-in-law Lisa is a member, and her granddaughter Angie will be able to join when she reaches the age of 13. Linn taught at Belden St. Montessori School for many years,

and comments that she's happy and proud to be joining this congregation.

Jim Holmes moved here from Austin and for several months has attended both worship services and Movable Feast chalice group (which, for any who don't know, is a cooking/eating group made up mostly of church members). Jim's daughter and son-in-law, Keller Holmes and Joe Jordan, are also members of this congregation.

Jim's a former army brat, a military veteran, a former hippy, and a retiree after 35 years in the computer industry. Welcome, Jim, glad you're joining Red River UU.



Carol and Dick Powell have been attending Adult Forum and worship services for a few months. Dick served in the Peace Corps in Chile, and both Powells lived in Bogota, Colombia, where Dick worked with an international CPA firm.



Carol is a painter and has won awards with her paintings. Both have been active volunteers, Carol at their daughters' schools, Dick with Big Brothers, Habitat, and Meals-on-Wheels. In a lay-led congregation like this one, you'll find plenty of volunteer opportunities. Welcome to membership in Red River UU.

Book Club & Easy Yoga

Do you want to hear about new authors and interesting books? Our next book club meeting is on Friday, Mar. 10, at 1pm at church. Open to book lovers everywhere. A snack is provided. The book club meeting is followed by Easy Yoga starts about 2:15. You don't have to get down on the floor, so everyone can do it. Come for just the book club or just yoga or both. Everyone is welcome. Facilitated by Carole Harner, Yoga Led by Wanda Holmes

Robert Shelton Honored

During the 6th annual appreciation dinner, the Bruce Cameron Distinguished Service Award was given to Robert Shelton. Dan Althoff, who received the Award last year, presented it to Robert. In his remarks, Dan mentioned that Robert and Lanan joined the congregation on April 7, 2013. served as the church treasurer for two years, and currently is on the Committee on Ministry as well as being on the worship team, the green team and is a worship associate. The Award was given with deep appreciation for his ongoing care and support of our church.



Green Team Meetings

The Red River Green Team will be meeting twice during March to continue preparing for the April . has 2 meetings in March in preparation for the April 22nd Texoma Earth Day Festival.

PLEASE NOTE: We will be meeting from now in the Chapel at church, not at Amy's home.

Our dates are:

- Thursday, March 9 @ 5:30 pm
- Thursday, March 23 @ 5:30 pm

Adult Forum

will continue exploring 2,000 years of Unitarian Universalist History by watching and discussion the film series *Long Strange Trip*. The forum meets Sundays @ 10 am in the Barton Parlor. The series, created by UU Ron Cordess contains six one-hour films. The series to date has explored birth of Unitarianism and currently is discussion American Unitarianism and the Universalist Church of America.

Kudos to Meg Hutchinson

who wrote the wonderfully informative article about our church that was published in Grayson College's *The Viking*. You can read the article on page 3 (in case you skipped over it!)

Moveable Feast For March

Friday, March 31st @ noon - Three Sixty One Restaurant, On the Grayson College Campus



Come Enjoy the talents of our students as they train to become chefs or hospitality professionals in Six Ninety One, the student-run restaurant. Named for the highway where Grayson College's Main Campus is located, "Six Ninety One" is a unique dining experience for the patron and the students who run the facility. Student chefs select a menu based on what skills are being taught that week, and student wait staff hone their fine dining serving skills while the guests enjoy a fine dining meal at a very reasonable price.

Because the restaurant has limited space, reservations are required. Therefore, if you want to join this month's Feast, you must [email](#) your reservation to Marion Hill, *no later than March 15th*

Updates Around The Cluster

Arlington UU Church

Arlington is very pagan friendly, hosting Pagan Unity in May and Pagan Pride in October.

Community UU Church

Beginning classes Artists Way, Continuing with Faith Forward on second level, going well, Social action is very strong and using the indivisible guide to social action (may be found at indivisibleguide.com/web/)

Denton UU Fellowship

Denton UUF is thriving. Of particular note their minister has a great sign to march for justice that has a Jimi Hendrix quote on it.

First UU Church of Dallas

Starting capitol campaign to raise money to help pay off the current debt and make improvements. All church kickoff for capitol campaign was held at the arboretum.

First Jefferson UU Church

June 10, 2017 the leadership conference will be held at First Jefferson

Horizon UU Church

The Artist's Way

Facilitated by Dorayne Breedlove (Based on the book, The Artist's Way, by Julia Cameron

2nd Tuesday of each month 7:00-9:00pm \$20/class

Connect with your creativity! The Artist's Way is a spiritual path, initiated and practiced through creativity. Creative discovery and exploration are achieved through readings, exercises, tasks, and heart-connected

support with each other. This 12-part series taken once a month is for anyone interested in practicing the art of creative living. Offered on the 2nd Tuesday of each month. Come every month or any month you can. Based on the chapter for that month, each class is designed to be self-contained. It is strongly encouraged to come every month for there is immense value of consistent participation. Preregistration required because some sessions will require special materials and/or clothing. RSVP

to dlre@horizonuu.org

UU Church of Oak Cliff

Rev Thandeka held a service at Oak Cliff and really challenged them to transform worship service through music.

Pathways Church

Pathways formed several teams and participated in another Homeless Count on Jan. 26th in cooperation with the Tarrant County Homeless Coalition.

UU Fellowship of Tyler

Started adult study group a about a year ago - well attended with Annie Foerster leading. Going to start a new group facilitated by member of the congregation on second Sunday

Westside UU Church

Really like new minister, she is really good and brings lots of energy and excitement. Also had first gay marriage in the church with Annie Foerster officiating.

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

Treasurer's Report

In the month of January, we had income of \$4,108 from general operations.

After operations expense of \$3,610 for the month, we had a net income from operations of \$498.

In January, we donated \$122 from the Share the Plate program to the Grayson County Shelter.

Operations expense include water and waste of \$93, gas bill \$152, electric bill \$118, UUA donation \$118 and internet \$67.50.

We received an NTUUC grant of \$3,000 for community outreach and a new microphone.

As of January 31st, we had \$5,726 available in checking.

Kelly Cofield
 Treasurer

Church App Tops 60 Downloads!!



At press time, the Red River UU Church App has been downloaded 62 times!

At the bottom of the App you can tap various tabs:

- About Us
- On Sunday
- Register for the Small Congregations Conference
- Watch two short videos
 - *Love = No Boundaries*
 - *We Are UUs*

Tap More to access

- Church photos
- The monthly calendar
- The Wednesday eNews
- Facebook
- Contact
- Map
- Messages

Contact Us

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 ♦ ♦ ♦

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Web: www.rruu.org

E-News: [announce \(at\) rruu.org](mailto:announce@rruu.org)

Facebook: RedRiverUnitarianUniversalistChurch

Available at the Apps Store & Google Play

