



# Red River Ramblings

The Monthly Newsletter of Red River Unitarian Universalist Church ♦ Denison TX ♦ Vol 20, No. 13 ♦ May, 2018

Sunday May 6, 2018

Morning Assembly - 11:15 am

## The Existential Grand Canyon

Dr. William Fridley, *speaking*

Existentialism, the meaning of life, personal identity, and my trip to the Grand Canyon.



*New UU Orientation – open to anyone wishing more information about our church. Meets 12:45-1:30 in the chapel.*

Sunday, May 13, 2018

Morning Assembly - 11:15 am

## Flower Communion Sunday

### Roots and Blooms

Elena Westbrook, *speaking*

What does it mean to refer to "Mother Earth"? Is the interconnected web we mention in our seventh principle just a poetic metaphor or is there a way in which all beings are truly, literally, physically one?



*During our assembly this morning we will celebrate Flower Communion, an annual ritual - that started 95 years ago - which celebrates beauty, human uniqueness, diversity, and community. Remember to bring a flower or two with you on Sunday.*

♦ Meditation ~ 9

NOTE: No Meditation May 6 or 13

♦ Ault Forum ~ 10

♦ Morning Assembly ~ 11:15

♦ Conversations & Calories ~ 12:15

Sunday, May 20, 2018

Morning Assembly - 11:15 am

## Spring Congregational Meeting today!

### To The Universe and Beyond

Jim Holmes, *speaking*

I first fell in love with astronomy and the sky when was 10 my dad gave me my first telescope and I've been hooked ever since. I majored in Physics TCU and was accepted to the Masters in Astrophysics program at the University of Arizona but unfortunately I was drafted into the army by Uncle Sam. In spite of that 3 year diversion, I never lost my desire for astronomy. I try to stay current on its latest developments and discoveries although its becoming harder and harder to understand.

The more science uncovers about the size and nature of the universe. the more curious I become about how a God or Gods fit into this and wonder what form She really takes.

Sunday, May 27, 2018

Morning Assembly - 11:15 am

### Torda 450: A Legacy for Today

The Rev. Shari Woodbury, *preaching (video message)*

The UUA encouraged Unitarian Universalists to celebrate Torda450 by inviting churches to submit a sermon honoring the 450<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the [Edict of Torda](#). The judges unanimously and enthusiastically chose the sermon we will watch on Sunday from a crowded field of excellent sermons, noting that its 'out of the box' format and engaging style made it a creative and meaningful way to share the story of the Edict of Torda, as well as helping it to be relevant to our faith today.

## Hello from Helen



Earth Day came and went with a rainy vengeance, and we applaud all the brave members of Red River UU who kept things going despite the

weather.

I hope that you are all planning to join us at the Spring Congregational Meeting that will be held on Sunday, May 20<sup>th</sup>, after the service. You will have a chance to vote on new church leadership and find out about our financial state, approve next year's budget and to ask any questions you may have. There is the added attraction of a catered lunch!

The Board has been working on ideas to improve our parking spots, with the knowledge that whatever we do has to be approved by the city of Denison. We are also hoping to improve our AV corner and make it more secure.

Please bring us any idea you have as well, and remember that you are always welcome to attend Board meetings. Our next one will be on May 13<sup>th</sup>.

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## Spring Meeting May 20<sup>th</sup>

There is one big difference about this year's spring meeting, on Sunday, May 20<sup>th</sup>. **We Get Lunch!** The board has arranged for Dickie's BBQ to cater lunch (yes, there will be vegetarian and gluten free options). Lunch will be served at 12:30, in the chapel and the meeting will start as we finish eating.

During the meeting we'll do the usual things:

- 🌀 approve the minutes of our last congregation meeting,
- 🌀 adopt the budget for next year, and
- 🌀 elect new church leadership.

We'll also take time to

- 🌀 review our 5-Year Plan, which concludes this year
- 🌀 discuss creating a Long Range Planning Team;

Some of you know that my oldest son was married in April, which left me very happy, but feeling a great deal older (!) I found a poem that helps describe the experience of aging, and I will leave you with that.

### *Thirsting*

by Alicia Ostriker

*It's not that the old are wise  
but that we thirst for the wisdom  
we had at twenty  
when we understood everything  
when our brains bubbled  
with tingling insights  
percolating up from  
our brilliant genitals  
when our music rang like a global siege  
shooting down all the lies in the world  
oh then we know the truth  
then we sparkled like mica in granite  
and now we stand on the shore  
of an ocean that rises and rises  
but is too salt to drink*

See you soon, Helen.

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- 🌀 whether we want to increase parking and paint the second floor walls;
  - 🌀 update ourselves on our Endowment Fund management
  - 🌀 look at our completed one-year goals and determine what goals we want to achieve in the upcoming church year which starts July 1<sup>st</sup>
  - 🌀 decide what community organizations will receive our Share The Plate donations.
  - 🌀 have an open discussion from anyone wishing to bring up something.

All the specifics are contained in the Spring Meeting Packet which will be released 14 days prior to the meeting (i.e. May 7<sup>th</sup>) and can be accessed instantly on the church app, web site and the Wednesday Update.

Congregational Meetings are open to everyone, members and friends. All may participate in any of the discussions.

# Leadership Candidates

Here's the slate of people who have agreed to run in the election:

## **Jim Holmes, President (2018-2020)**



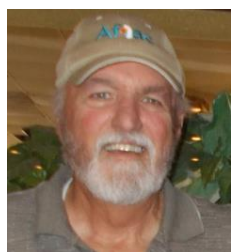
I was born in Fresno Calif. and my dad was a career army officer so I was raised all over the US as I grew up. When he retired we moved to Fort Worth which is where my dad's brothers and sisters lived. I went to TCU and graduated with a Physics degree in 1968. My graduation present from the US Government was my draft notice so I spent 3 years in the Army. When I got out I went to NTSU in Denton (now UNT) and got my MBA, graduating in 1973. From there I got into computers and worked for Burroughs, TI, 3Com and Dell. About half of my career I was a computer consultant. I was married, have 2 daughters, a granddaughter, grandson, and great granddaughter. I divorced in 2009 and moved to Denison in 2016.

## **Kelly Cofield-Dryer, Secretary (2018-2019)**



Kelly Cofield-Dyer is the proud mother of Ellie Dyer, wife of David Dyer and loving human mother to canine children Bertie, Chiquita and Abby. She loves being on the Care Team, attending church conferences with Marla and enjoys chinese food at every opportunity.

## **L.D. Clark, Trustee-at-Large (2018-2019)**



Grew up in Kansas, my Senior year in H.S. was in Chattanooga, TN. I joined the U.S. Air Force out of high school. After basic training in San Antonio, was stationed in Albany, GA, and spent 6 months in paradise...on the islands of Vanua Levu, Fiji and Nanumea, in Tuvalu, and Pago Pago American Samoa. Upon discharge, started college at Washburn University in Topeka. Moved to Houston then Austin, where I graduated (cum laude) from the University of Texas and then 5 years working for the Texas Workforce Commission. Lived in Austin for 10 years, where I married my future ex-wife, then on to the Dallas area, still with the TWC. After TWC, I joined A.L. Williams & Associates in the insurance and securities industry as a Regional Vice President. Then on to other sales professions in the consulting business, dealing primarily with Fortune 500 companies on national accounts. Joined Aflac about 10 years ago and still represent them, among other major insurance carriers like Transamerica. I have one grown son, who lives in Sherman, TX.

## **Dick Powel, Treasurer (2018-2020)**



Born and raised in California. Graduated with a BS in Social Sciences in 1964 and then served as a Peace Corps volunteer in Chile for 3 years. Married Carol in 1967 and went back to college for an MBA in accounting. Passed the CPA exam and worked for an international accounting firm for about 10 years then became Executive Director of a large specialty physician group. Was on the siding crew for Dallas Habitat for many years and then helped Plano Meals on Wheels a bit longer until we moved to Denison. Bi-lingual, English and Spanish. Carol and I spend a lot of time with our family - 3 married daughters and 6 grandchildren who all live in Frisco or Wylie.

## **Dan Althoff, Committee on Ministry (2018-2021)**



Dan Althoff is a charter member of the congregation. He was the first vice-president and later the second president of the Board during the congregation's battle with the state of Texas for tax-exempt status in 2004. He was elected president a second time in 2014-16, but has been most visible (and audible!) behind the keyboard on Sunday mornings.

## **Amy Hoffman-Shehan, Nominating Committee (2018-2020)**



Amy Hoffman-Shehan is a life long Unitarian Universalist, having been raised at First Unitarian Church of Dallas. While there, she was in one of the first classes of youth to go through the OWL (Our Whole Lives) program and was a leader in LRY (Liberal Religious Youth, an autonomous youth organization affiliated with the UUA). Her education is in the fine arts. She has a Bachelors of Fine Arts in Drawing and Painting and studied Printmaking at University of New Mexico. Her work experience is varied, from owning a kitchen store to working as a community organizer with the Southwest Industrial Areas Foundation.

A charter member of Red River Unitarian Universalist Church, Amy has served on the Board of Trustees. She has facilitated Adult Forum, RRUU Green Team and the Earth Day Planning Committee. She is a gourmet cook and accomplished seamstress, is interested in historic houses and antiques and continues to be creative through assorted creative arts.

## Colbert Choir Sings in Branson



Ellie Dyer, and the rest of the JH/SH Colbert Choir are off to Branson MO to perform on May 4<sup>th</sup>. This is Ellie's second trip to Branson with the choir. She went two years ago, at which time she was awarded Miss Show

Face (the singer who smiled the most). We can clearly see why she won!

## Booked For Fun ~ May 11

Do you want to hear about new authors and great books to read? Our next book club meeting is on Friday, May 9, at 1 pm at church. Open to book lovers everywhere. This will be our last meeting before our annual summer reading hiatus.

## Board of Trustees ~ May 13

Our Board of Trustees will meet on Sunday May 13 at 1 pm, in the F. Church Library for their regular monthly meeting. Board meetings are open to all who wish to attend.

## Worship Team ~ May 13

The Worship Team will also meet on May 13<sup>th</sup> to plan summer Morning Assemblies. They'll meet in the chapel.

## Treasurer's Report

In the month of February, we had total receipts of \$9,956.07, which included the \$7,410.00 NTUUC grant for the new elevator/lift, which was mentioned in last month's report as having been received at the awards ceremony in Oak Cliff in February.

Total disbursements in February for operating expenses were \$3,017.33, including \$85.00 Share the Plate donation to the Texoma Earth Day Festival and a contribution to UUA Fair Share of \$741.50, leaving net income for the month of February of \$6,938.74. In addition, \$7,000.00 of the NTUUC grant was disbursed

for the initial payment for the installation of the new elevator.

As of February 28, we had \$9,083.81 available in checking, a total of \$71,838.20 in all savings accounts and a total of \$14,561.72 in Certificates of Deposit. These balances reflect the transfer of \$10,000.00 made at the Board's direction during the month of February from checking into the Endowment Savings account.

All bank accounts have been reconciled with no exceptions noted.

Dick Powell, *treasurer*

## Friday Night Flicks ~ May 18



The movie *Come Sunday* has a real connection to Unitarian Universalism in a intriguing and serendipitous way.

An evangelical Bishop, minister of the country's biggest Pentecostal congregation in the nation stopped believing in hell. The Universalists did that in 1779. Bishop Carton Pearson told his Tulsa congregation of 5,000+ members about his revelation that no loving God can condemn good folks to eternal hell. The largest Pentecostal church soon became one of the smallest. Bishop Pearson and the 500 or so left their faith. They were invited to All Souls Unitarian Church where he is now on staff and his flock are active parts of the largest UU congregation in the country.

Quite the story! His sojourn was a [segment](#) on *This American Life* and now is a full length movie.

We'll stream the movie on Friday evening, May 18<sup>th</sup> @ 6 pm. The flick is an hour and forty-six minutes long. Those who want can stay for a discussion afterwards.

Comfy Seats, Two Screens and Free Popcorn!

See you there!

# NTUUC Updates and News from Around the Cluster

1. New NTUUC BOARD: Prez- Janes Snell (1<sup>st</sup> Dallas); VP Lisa Casto (Horizon); Treasurer – Carol Cappa (Horizon); Secretary – Alyssa Ralston (Westside UU), Endowment Independent Member – Susan English (Sacred Journey); Endowment Board Representative – Raymond Enstam (1<sup>st</sup> Church Dallas).
2. Anti-Racism Workshop April 13-15 – Marla, Kelly, Ellie attended as representatives from Red River UU.
3. Summer Conference - August 11 put on by NTUUC – Save the date (not just for leaders!)
4. NTUUC Bags for Sale \$5.00 each or 3 for \$10.00. Marla has these wonderful recycled cotton cloth bags. Please ask people to send photos of themselves and others using the bags to Daniel.
5. Each NTUUC Board Representative attend their church board meeting in September to advocate for more people to be recommended for Awards For exemplary service
6. Need more members on Awards, Registration, Education Committees (Doesn't have to be an NTUUC Rep)
7. Registration assistance available for DBLE, GA, U-BAR-U, OWL training.

**Arlington:** Our failed memorial garden is being converted into a rock garden and is looking good. Pagan Unity will be held in Arlington at the church on May 19, 2018.

**Community:** In the Search process for a new Minister, new DRE, and new Membership Coordinator.

Women's Alliance Annual Retreat will be at Glen Lake Camp and Retreat Center in Glen Rose, April 13-15. Spring Festival hosted by RE Board will be Saturday, April 21, 3-5 pm. The Humanist Group continues to meet weekly, with each attendee selecting a Humanist-oriented topic and facilitating the discussion of the topic.

**Denton:** Pam Wat is leaving end of June to be close to aging parents - committee is formed for interim search. Hoping to find one to start with August.

**Horizon UU:** Continuing work with faith in Texas - making sure all in church are registered to vote

**UU of Oak Cliff:** Interim minister search is back in force and doing survey of land

**Pathways:** Firearms safety course coming up in the next couple weeks for families

**Westside UU:** Next Sunday having stewardship drive “no place like home” with play “Follow the red brick road”. One person put up 25,000 with matching funds - met that challenge and now they have put up another 25,000 challenge. Going to use the money for renovation.

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## Social Action Update ~

This was a busy month for me – I was ill half of it and then my in-laws visited! You may have noticed that I wasn't at church and that I didn't post on our Facebook page much. I hope to be more active in the coming months.

I have continued participating in our Welcoming Congregation Committee meetings and I look forward to the coming activities. For more information: <https://www.uua.org/lgbtq/welcoming/program>.

I have been asked by at least one person to do a short teaching class on how to interact on the internet for social justice. If you are interested in participating in that, email me at [crystalclarity8@gmail.com](mailto:crystalclarity8@gmail.com) with the subject line SOCIAL ACTION VIA THE NET. If enough people are interested I will do a short class. In the meantime this may help:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wkVf8BLE8rI> a beginners guide to using social media

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LJpEMSIQ3iE> what social media is

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hqezbib5qpQ> Dos and Don'ts when using social networks

The UUA has this:

<https://www.uua.org/communications/social-media/facebook/workshop>

To see our posts: go to our Facebook site (<https://www.facebook.com/Red-River-Unitarian-Universalist-Church-180948475292991/>) you will see on the left side a list of options starting with “Home.” At the end of that list is “Community” and if you click on it you will end up at [https://www.facebook.com/pg/Red-River-Unitarian-Universalist-Church-180948475292991/community/?ref=page\\_internal](https://www.facebook.com/pg/Red-River-Unitarian-Universalist-Church-180948475292991/community/?ref=page_internal) which is where posts will appear.

Rebecca Crystal, *facilitator*

# LGBTQ update

One of the social action initiatives underway at Red River UU is a drive to gain UUA Certification as a Welcoming Congregation. The UUA Welcoming Congregation Program seeks to provide safe and supportive worship space for LGBTQ persons at UUA congregations across the country. The Welcoming Committee is hard at work undertaking the considerable task of complying with the UUA program and we'd like to offer this brief update on our progress. We'll try to explain here what the UUA Welcoming Program entails, what's we're doing to gain certification, and why.

## What is Required

The UUA Welcoming Congregations Program connects gay, lesbian, bisexual and trans gendered people with UU congregations who have made a commitment to be safe welcoming spaces. According to the UUA website, "...being welcoming means striving for radical inclusion, and creating spaces that honor every part of our identities, backgrounds, and experiences.". There is a defined list of attributes the UUA has specified that define a Welcoming Congregation. To become a designated Welcoming Congregation we must commit to nine specific initiatives, including the following.

- Promote inclusivity and use inclusive language
- Create welcome spaces including gender-neutral bathrooms
- Say our welcome out loud and in print
- Build our welcoming skills as congregational leaders and greeters
- Deepen our understanding of identities that differ from our own
- Offer sexuality education for the entire lifespan

The entire list can be [found here](#) on the UUA website.

## What We're Doing

This is no small task. Becoming a Welcoming Congregation is more than just an admirable affirmation. These are concrete steps that involve a commitment to immediate and sustainable changes in our approach to the LGBT community. We've begun the complex task of translating these benchmarks into specific steps that will make Red River UU a Welcoming Congregation and improve the lives of our gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender members, visitors, friends, and neighbors. To accomplish this, the Welcoming Committee has agreed on a comprehensive list of steps, including...

- We are planning educational programs for all ages to enlighten the RRUU congregation on various aspects of LGBTQ life and culture.
- We are adding statements to the church website and Facebook page declaring our commitment to inclusivity.
- We are adding inclusive language to the weekly program and will make a commitment to add it to the content of our services whenever possible.
- We're planning community outreach projects to connect with and celebrate our LGBT community, including activities planned to coincide with Pride Month, Transgender Day of Remembrance, and National Coming Out Day.
- We are reaching out to local schools to offer support for LGBTQ students and gay-straight alliance clubs.
- We are reaching out to the adult LGBTQ community to offer support, fellowship and of course, an invitation to worship in a welcoming faith community.

## Why

This is a daunting task and as you can see, we're serious about making RRUU a Welcoming Congregation. You might ask why. We think the answer is obvious. In the current political climate wherein reactionary tides are rising, Queer folk are suffering marginalization, discrimination, cruelty and violence. Rights gained through years of struggle and civil action are being threatened and lives are being lost.

As UU people of faith and good conscience, we find this unacceptable. We feel a call to action to do what we can. If we cannot reverse the tide of misguided animosity, we can at least offer shelter from the storm and make Red River UU a safe harbor for battered and weary souls. This is our charge and our commitment. We will be reporting more on our progress as the work continues and we hope you will join and support our efforts as you are able.

Jerry Barrax

*LGBTQ Welcoming Congregation Committee*

## Leaders

### Board of Trustees

Helen Schulze, *President*  
Linda Tracy, *Vice President*  
Dick Powell, *Treasurer*  
Kelly Cofield-Dyer, *Secretary*  
Jim Holmes, *Trustee*  
Dan Althoff, *Past President*

### Committee on Ministry:

*Carole Harner, Marla Loturco,  
Robert Shelton*

### Team Leaders/Members:

Adult Forum: *various members*  
Building & Grounds: *Marilyn*  
Caring Circle: *Kelly*  
Communications: *Doug*  
Finance:  
Membership: *Marion*  
Nominations: *David, Elbert, Lanan*  
NTUUC Rep: *Marla*  
RE Team: *Dan, Tommi*  
Safe Congregation Panel: *Dan*  
Social Action: *Rebecca*  
Worship: *Chris, Doug, Marla, Rebecca,  
Robert, Tommi*

## Contact Us

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Facebook: [RedRiverUnitarianUni-  
versalistChurch](https://www.facebook.com/RedRiverUnitarianUniversalistChurch)

Our mobile App: 'RedRiverUU' free  
at the [Apps Store](https://apps.apple.com/us/app/redriveruu/id1444444444) & [Google Play](https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.redriveruu).

Church Calendar [here](#)

## May Birthdays

May 8 Joe Jordan  
May 9 Eleanor Dyer  
May 14 Xander Hogan  
May 27 Don Mathis

## Chalice Circles & Interest Groups

*Church activities are open to everyone. Contact the facilitator if you wish more information.*

**BOOKED FOR LUNCH** ~ an informal monthly gathering for those who love to read and enjoy hearing about what others are reading. The group meets September - May on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Friday at 1 pm. They meet in the Emerson Room. [Carole Harner](#), *facilitator*

**EARTH DAY PLANNING COMMITTEE** ~ the group is responsible for the creation, each year, of the Texoma Earth Day Festival. All who enjoy planning a large-scale community event are invited to learn more. During the Festival many church members and friends volunteer to help. Look for the committee to reconvene later in the year. [Amy Hoffman-Shehan](#), *facilitator*

**FRIDAY NIGHT FLICKS** ~ a replay of an old idea to see if it flies. The 3<sup>rd</sup> Friday of the month @ 6 pm, a movie on the screens in the chapel for all who want to come. Comfy chairs, nice surroundings - even free popcorn! The first flick is *Come Sunday* the story of a Pentecostal bishop who stopped believing in hell - *very* Universalist of him. The audience can then decide on the next month's flick. [Doug Strong](#), *ersatz facilitator*

**MOVEABLE FEAST** ~ a culinary chalice circle of people who enjoy food, preparing, sharing, and enjoying. A very popular church group that welcomes newcomers. The Feasters meet monthly and may gather in someone's home, at a restaurant, or church. [Marion and Elbert Hill](#), *facilitators*

**ZEN MEDITATION** ~ on sabbatical until later in the year. HOWEVER, remember you can always join in the Sunday morning meditation starting a 9 am, in the chapel. Open to everyone.