



July 2021 - Vol. 23 Issue 2

RED RIVER

Save your Soul ~ Serve the World

RAMBLINGS

Our church has now reopened. Learn more about our ongoing support for virtual participation in the side bar.

Sunday, July 4, 2021 - in the chapel & on Zoom

TO KNOW THE PLACE FOR THE FIRST TIME

the Rev. Dr. Mark Y. A. Davies, *speaking*
the Worship Team, *leading*

The poet T.S. Eliot once famously wrote: “We shall not cease from exploration, and the end of all our exploring will be to arrive where we started and know the place for the first time.”

After 15 months of virtual assemblies and online exploration, we joyfully, finally arrive where we started, at our beautiful home in Denison!

The Rev. Dr. Mark Davies will deliver the morning discourse “**All Persons are Created Equal**,” appropriate to the national holiday we celebrate on July 4, and one which also brings to mind the First Principle of Unitarian Universalism—the inherent worth and dignity of each person. Regarding his remarks, Mark writes,

What would the human community be like if we took to heart the idea that “all persons are created equal” as it was written in the Declaration of Independence? What progress have we made and what still must be done to realize this vision in our contemporary society?

We will also celebrate the day with special music by singers Ellie Dyer and Jan Fletcher and a sampler of Red River UU’s “greatest hits.” It will be like knowing the place for the first time!

Sunday, July 11, 2021 - in the chapel & on Zoom

WHEN THE UNIVERSALISTS & THE UNITARIANS VOTED TO CONSOLIDATED, MY MOTHER VOTED NO!

The Rev. Doug Strong, *speaking*

A month ago, the Unitarian Universalist Association turns 60. A good time to take stock and wonder, “Would liberal religion have died if the Universalists Unitarians hadn’t joined forces?” “Why consolidate and not merge?” “What fueled the desire to change?”

“Why didn’t they find a shorter name?” And if you thought the children of Israel took a long time (40 years!) to go next door and find the Promised Land, it took 100 years for these two groups – whose offices were walking distance from one another – to dowhat? Find the promised land? Hardly! They nearly went bankrupt before reaching 20! It’s an intriguing thing, history, and an important thing, too.

Sunday, July 18, 2021 - in the chapel & on Zoom

NOT ME. NOT MINE. NOT MY SELF

The Venerable Tashi Nyima, *speaking*

Are we this body and mind? Is this false identity the source of our suffering? These are not mere philosophical questions; rather, they are central considerations for everyday living. Let’s explore how we can become free of fixed identities and begin to experience real peace and clarity.

Sunday, July 25, 2021 - in the chapel & on Zoom

A POST-PRIDE LESSON ON GENDER

Adrian Hinman, *speaking*

Did you know that by simply respecting a transgender person’s pronouns, you can literally cut their odds of attempting suicide? [Details here:

<https://www.thetrevorproject.org/survey-2020/>]

I want that statistic in your mind when you come in, and be ready to listen, even (or especially) if you’re going to be uncomfortable. I’ll be speaking on the singular use of “they,” what to do when you accidentally misgender someone, and why some trans folks get angry when you make mistakes regarding their identity.

I’ll also be happy to answer questions regarding my own gender, so if there’s ever been things you’ve wanted to ask a nonbinary person, here’s your



WELCOME TO OUR HYBRID CHURCH COMMUNITY

When we closed the building on March 14, 2020, no one knew much about what it takes to become a 'virtual' church. Most of us didn't know how to join a Zoom meeting.

We had a visiting minister scheduled for the next day. He was already in town. The worship team and the board decided we could stream the morning assembly from the Emerson Room at church and went to town setting up lights, camera, microphone. Then came the first problem: our internet connection at church was way too s-l-o-w. Early Sunday morning we shifted to Doug's living room, with Dan at the dining room table (Dan could speak 'Zoom') and Jim & Don knew a bit about cameras.

Our first virtual morning worked. We learn plenty about what we did *not* know. The next week we were back at church - having doubled the church internet speed and for the next 67 Sundays a small group of volunteers became

Jim's Jabber

By now everyone should be getting haircuts, showering, and shaving, and deciding what to wear beside stretchy sweatpants so they can attend our live, in building July 4th Adult Forum (10am-11am), Morning Assembly (11:15am-12:15pm), and Coffee and Conversations (12:15pm-1pm). Yes, we are coming back! For those of you that live too far away or can't come in person we will have a Zoom session running that will enable remote attendees to join the live events. Here are the Zoom details. There is one Zoom meeting starting at 9:45am and running until 1pm to cover all events. Sign into the event you want at the proper time and stay for the next event.

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://zoom.us/j/98907897878>

Meeting ID: 989 0789 7878

One tap mobile

+13462487799,,98907897878# US (Houston)

+12532158782,,98907897878# US (Tacoma)

+1 669 900 6833 US (San Jose)

+1 312 626 6799 US (Chicago)

+1 929 205 6099 US (New York)

+1 301 715 8592 US (Washington DC)

Meeting ID: 989 0789 7878

The effort needed to open the church for July 4th is not just opening the doors. We closed the building in March 2020, so we have 15 months of accumulated dust, spider webs, and undone cleaning that needs to be taken care of. We also had a plumbing leak in the upstairs toilet that caused damage to the kitchen ceiling and other minor plumbing issues plus a dish washer that quit working. We also needed to expand our online capabilities in the Chapel, Gil Alexander room, and RE classroom. Much of this is now done and complete thanks to many people: the Board, Membership Team, Worship Team, AV Team, Facilities Building and Grounds Teams, Monarch Butterfly Garden Team, RE Team, and the wonderful group of people that showed up on June 26th for our cleaning day.

NTUUC is giving out Grants again and they will be announcing recipients in July. The Grant we are presenting is to fund Red

River UU so we can buy the additional equipment needed to complete our vision to support video streaming the Gil Alexander room and RE classroom and nursery. Thanks to equipment donations from members, we will be partially there for July 4th. If we get the Grant we will be able to complete this project. Please bear with us on July 4th. It's our first live/Zoom Sunday so we are working out the kinks. We also have put some of our capabilities together with less than optimal equipment. Hopefully, it will all run smoothly.

Be sure to read the Safety Protocol document in this newsletter so you will be familiar with what to expect when you come to church on July 4th. The Board will continue to review the latest CDC guidelines and any feedback we get from our members. We will adjust these guidelines as needed going forward as CDC information changes. Our current protocols recommend that masks are optional for those who have had both vaccines. For those that have not been completely vaccinated we ask that you wear your mask. Social distancing will not be required in the Chapel. The Gil Alexander room will be setup to show the live streaming service (Zoom) for those that want to observe from a more social distance environment.

Starting July 1st, we have a new budget year and a new Board. I want to thank Lisa Cates and Sabra Jones for their service on the Board during their 2-year term, they will be missed. I also want to welcome Dick Powell back to the Board as Treasurer, Marilyn Alexander as Vice President, Amy Hoffman-Shehan as the at-large representative, and David Dyer as Secretary.

As part of our AV capabilities expansion, we have added a 2nd camera in the Chapel to give us more recording options for recording our Morning Assembly and other events. One of the duties for this second camera is to show the audience at times during the Assembly. If you don't want to be seen on camera you will need to sit on the side rows near the AV desk. If you want much more on-camera action, the AV Team takes donations!

For anyone that can't come in on Sunday or Zoom in to watch us live, we are also recording the service and will be posting it to YouTube and Facebook. Our plan is to have it uploaded by 5PM on the following Monday.

If you like live music, we are planning on having Jan's music Circle at Church on July 3rd starting at 6pm. Arrive between 5:30 and 6. Some of the musicians will be joining us on Zoom so this will be a good test of our live/Zoom capabilities.

We have three very busy people on the AV Team; myself, Marla Loturco, and Don Rogers. We need help and need to add more team members so if you are interested talk to one of us.

Take care, keep safe,
And Keep on Truckin'

Jim Holms
president

experts in how to make a good video and trim out the bad stuff. They learned to insert video clips within a PowerPoint presentation and created intro slides so we would know we were about to see.

We got our own YouTube channel and navigated how to upload videos to our channel and to both of our Facebook platforms (the main church FB page and our LGBTQ+ page).

They came to understand copyright laws covering music and lyrics and how to recover when on Saturday evening YouTube blocked the morning program someone accidentally used a protected song.

For all those Sundays - except one when the final video simply would not upload even after 20 hours of trying - our crew brought us a morning assembly worthy of our taking time to watch.

The building is open again, we have comfy chairs to sit on, a chapel where we can again celebrate our liberal faith, and the crew that made it possible can take it easy.

That's not going to happen. These 15 months have shown us that the ways in which we may worship are vastly more expansive than we imagined.

We now have 88 subscribers to our YouTube channel and would you believe during the first year of being a virtual

Jan's Virtual Musical Circle

Jan's Music Circle goes LIVE STARTING JULY 3rd. We're returning to the church starting at 5:30. Jim will run the equipment there. To have a live session and include the folks from other areas, it is necessary to have the music and the Zoom meeting from the same location. This will give musicians a chance to have professional sound tech and me a chance to have musicians play for my singing. (Hooray!!!)

We will meet at the church (515 N Burnett Ave; Denison) **or on our zoom account** (Meeting ID is below) between 5:30 and 6 on Saturday July 3. Music starts at 6. We would love to have listeners join us; so, invite your friends. If you plan to join us at the church, please let me know so I can have the circle set up. (And be sure you have had both covid shots and your 14 days after.) Also, you may want to bring a snack or your beverage of choice. There is water and coffee available. With a live circle, we may make a great evening of music!!!

I'm looking forward to being back in a live mode again! And adding the new friends on zoom enriches us all! I hope to see a great group!

Zoom Meeting

<https://zoom.us/j/97041651332>

Meeting ID: 970 4165 1332

"Without Music — Life would be a mistake." Friedrich Nietzsche

Adult Forum for July

Adult Forum will continue its study of activism and activists during July.

- On July 4, four videos will portray the Asian-American community (a group that is often considered passive, but actually has its own activists).
- On July 11, Gay-Rights activist Harvey Milk will be profiled in two videos.
- On July 18, the focus is on singer and anti-war activist Joan Baez in four videos.
- On July 25, Adult Forum will watch a film that discusses rural climate activism, "The Other Side of the Hill."

Facilitator Marion Hill says these videos are not only informational but also inspirational.

congregation we had a weekly average viewership of, ready for this, eighty-three people. The total viewers for the year were 4,241 (viewing on either Facebook or YouTube).

We are back in our building but, friends, the church has left the building! And because the crew that created for us a virtual congregation, has become downright professional about taking our message everywhere, we are *Red River Unitarian Universalists, reaching the world from Denison TX.*

THE HYBRID CHURCH is the plan. If you are a virtual friend, you will not be overlooked simply because we're back indoors.

EVERY SUNDAY our adult forum, our morning assembly and our Coffee & Conversations will be live streamed on Zoom by opening Zoom and keying in **989 0789 7878**. One number to remember for all events on Sunday. Viewers can participate in the Adult Forum, watch the morning assembly live and join in the conversations during coffee. We will still upload the morning assembly to our YouTube channel. (By Monday evening.)

All of this was possible because of the financial support provided by everyone - through the annual stewardship campaign and gifts. The board augmented funds from budget as needed and together

Let Us Break Bread Together

There are a relatively new restaurant two blocks from church (previous life it was a Mexican restaurant). Those who wish to continue our July 4th Reopening Sunday are warmly invited to meet at Dragon Thai for lunch right after the morning assembly concludes. The restaurant is fairly quiet, reasonably priced and had both gluten free and vegetarian entrees. The food is particularly good. The restaurant is at 613 N Austin Avenue - a 1 minute drive from church.

No need to sign up, just show up!

Volunteer Help Needed

Grand Central Station soup kitchen and food pantry in Sherman is in desperate need of new regular volunteers. We lost volunteers during COVID, and some have not returned. (We maintained services during the height of the pandemic through take-out meals but have returned to indoor dining. However, volunteers have limited direct interaction with patrons. We have a new facility and expand capacity. Volunteer rosters are the limiting factor now.

Most volunteers help prepare lunches from about 8 to 1 on M-F. Many people work one day a month or one day a week. Those who work directly with food need a food handlers license. Obtaining one is about a 2-hour online process (maybe less). If you are interested in volunteering, staff or other volunteers will explain the procedure.

If you are interested in volunteering, please contact Wendy Velotti, the executive director, at diningcar.volunteer@gmail.com

Thanks, and I hope you are all well.

Pete Schulze

July Birthdays

03 - Don Rogers	14 - Meg McMurry
10 - David Dyer	14 - Robert Shelton
13 - Linn Cates	26 - Scott Bowie

we not only survived 15 apart, but we're also prepared and can be excited about sharing our community with the world.

Who know where it will take us. Hybrid Sunday morning is a fine way for us to begin.

To those who spent countless hours learning and growing and installing and training - thanks.

To those whose financial gifts made it doable - thanks.

To the worship team (Dan Althoff; Marla Loturco; Robert Shelton; Doug Strong) who continued to find speakers and then trained them how to make a decent video - thanks.

And finally, to the crew: Jim Holmes (video); Don Rogers (audio); Marla Loturco (production) and Doug Strong (production) - thanks.

There are opportunities for others to share in the excitement of Hybrid church. If you are interested, please speak with a board member. There much that we can do together.



Treasurer's Report

In the month of May, we had total receipts of \$5,112.16. Expenses for the month totaled \$1,822.22. The result was an excess of income over receipts of \$3,289.94.

As of May 31, 2021, we had \$7,198.00 available in checking, \$16,538.32 in general savings, \$14,229.10 in the Endowment Fund at UUCEF, and \$64,576.89 in the Savings Fund at UUCEF for a total of \$97,889.31 in all savings accounts.

We have a total of \$2,841.09 remaining on the renovation loan.

Ronda DeCaire Memorial Fund has a total of \$2,545.00.

all savings accounts.

Marilyn Alexander,

Treasurer

Come Join the Rally

Yes, it will be hot, but democracy is on the line, friends.



Join Indivisible—Sherman and other democracy supporters on Friday, July 9 at noon at the Grayson County Courthouse. The grassroots push is part of Indivisible's project **Deadline for Democracy**. We're going to be laser-focused on building a massive

wave of pressure on senators to eliminate the filibuster and pass the For the People Act.

Democracy experts tell us that the For the People Act needs to be on the books by the end of July for all its most important reforms to be enacted in time for the 2022 midterms. That means this recess is one of our last big chances to show all 100 senators we're serious and we demand their support, and we're making it happen.

Be part of a rally on Friday, July 9 from noon to 1 in front of the Grayson County Courthouse.

You can sign up at the event listed on Indivisible-Sherman Facebook. Bring your sign to save Democracy from the GOP "trash can." If you believe in saving voting rights for all as well as campaign finance reform and reinstating ethics for our representatives, join us to support S-1 For the People Act.

Democracy is up to you! Isn't it worth sweating for an hour?

Our Leaders

Board of Trustees

Jim Holmes, *President*

Marilyn Alexander, *Vice-President*

Dick Powell, *Treasurer*

David Dyer, *Secretary*

Amy Hoffman-Shehan, *Trustee*

Committee on Ministry:

Dan Althoff, Elbert Hill, Marla Loturco

Nominating:

Kelly Cofield Dyer, Don Rogers,

Team Leaders/Members:

Adult Forum:

Aesthetics: *Carol, Doug*

Caring Circle: *Kelly*

Communications: *Doug*

Endowment: *Carolyn, Dick, Doug*

Facilities: *Jim*

Finance: *Jim, Dick, Jan, Marilyn*

Grounds: *Marilyn*

Long Range Planning: *Jim, Marilyn, Robert*

Membership: *Marion*

NTUUC Rep: *Marla*

RE Team: *Tommi*

Safe Congregation Panel: *Dan*

Social Action:

Welcoming Congregation: *Adrian, Amy, Lisa, Thomas*

Worship: *Dan, Doug, Marla, Robert*

Contact Us

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PO BOX 1806

DENISON, TX 75021-1806

How to reach us:

- Phone: 903.231.3232
- [Mobile App](#)
- [Email](#)
- [Website](#)
- [Facebook](#)

The church calendar is now merged with the EVENTS listing on the church website home page