



# Red River Ramblings

October 2022 - Vol. 24 No 3

Sunday, October 2, 2022 - 11:15 am

## Stages of Faith or Spiritual Development

The Rev Walter Norris, *guest speaker*

In 1981, James Fowler, a Methodist Theologian at Emory University, developed the idea of a developmental process of human faith or spirituality. We will consider the different stages that endure throughout a person's individual life. An example of one of these stages is the last or sixth stage, Universalizing Faith. It is the stage that many never reach. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr and Mahatmas Gandhi are those who have reached this phase. It is a phase that considers all people important. They strive to create social justice in the world. *Read Walter's bio [here](#).*

Sunday, October 9, 2022 - 10:00 am - Noon

## Labor of Love Sunday

Marilyn Alexander, *coordinating*

A few times per year, our congregation needs to take care of the things that Minnie can't manage in weekly housekeeping. Please join in making our church home as welcoming as loving hands can provide. Read details in Marilyn's Musings.

Sunday, October 16, 2022 - 11:15 am

## Time In The Wilderness

The Rev. Dr. Mark Y.A. Davies, *leading*

Our experiences and understandings of wilderness are quite varied. For some, wilderness is a place of life-threatening danger. For others, it is a place of trial and temptation. Some look at wilderness as wasted land that needs to come under the control, use, and ownership of human beings. Some see

wilderness as a place of great beauty and spiritual inspiration. And some see wilderness as having value for its own sake as a place of biodiversity and flourishing ecosystems. This discourse will explore both historical and contemporary visions of wilderness with special attention given to the importance of preserving wilderness for sake of all life on earth. *Read Mark's bio [here](#).*

Sunday, October 23, 2022 - 11:15 am

## Out of Our Comfort Zone

The Rev. Dr. Mark Y.A. Davies, *leading*

Sometimes our greatest growth as persons comes during times when we either intentionally or unintentionally find ourselves outside of our normal comfort zones. Sometimes we need to hear and experience things that make us uncomfortable so that we begin the hard work of questioning what we think we know in order to come to a better understanding of ourselves and others. *Read Mark's bio [here](#).*

Sunday, October 30, 2022 - 11:15 am

## Peace Sunday #4 - Teaching Peace

Michelle Haynes & Marla Loturco, *leading*

This morning for our fourth Peace Sunday we continue this special series based on the book *Great Peacemakers: True Stories from Around the World* by Ken Beller and Heather Chase. Our Peace Sunday candidates this month are people we weren't very familiar with. Coleman McCarthy who advocates "teaching peace" and Oscar Arias who believes "US" refers to all of humankind. Both have interesting stories and we hope you will join us to learn about them.

# Search Team Update

The Minister Search Team meets (normally) each month at 2pm in the Alexander Room on the Thursday prior to the Sunday monthly Board meeting. It is an open meeting so join us live or on Zoom with the Zoom ID 989 0789 7878.

Due to member availability, we held our meeting on September 18th after the Board meeting. Because the Fall Congregational Meeting falls on the 3rd Sunday in October, we will hold our meeting afterward the congregational meeting.

The team is wrapping up our interviews with the

remaining friends and members to discuss what the congregation is looking for in a new minister. We are also reviewing funding options.

We presented a draft of a pledge card to the Board that will allow people to let us know how much they may be willing to give to support the 2-year minister compensation package. We already have over \$2000 in verbal commitments.

We will present the results of the interviews and our current status of funding options in the Fall Congregational Meeting.

Report prepared by: *David Dyer, Jana Norris Jim Holmes, Marilyn Alexander, Marla Loturco*

# Chair Yoga a Hit

A faithful group of chair yoga enthusiasts met every Tuesday @ 10 AM in the chapel for an hour of low impact yoga that participants feel is beneficial as well as being fun. It is always easier they

maintain a more healthful lifestyle by doing it with others. If you have been nudging yourself

to 'get out there and exercise more, but continually find yourself unable to make the leap to thinking about to doing something, Chair Yoga may just be the perfect thing for you. Marsha Runnel is the leader of the group.

# New Image of Church

The last time Google Map photographed North Burnett Ave was in March, 2008 during prior to our purchasing the former funeral home. It was, to say the least, a dreadfully depressing image. Good news! Last June, Google maps took new pictures of North Burnett Avenue. Since most of us don't have much need to look up the church on Google (or Apple) maps, we thought you'd enjoy seeing the improvements we the people have wrought since 2011.





# Marilyn's Musings



Funz-A-Poppin' in October! Set your calendar so you can participate in the following events.

1. **Oktoberfest** in Muenster, Movable Feast, Saturday, **October 8**. Meeting at church for rides at 9:30 a.m.
2. **Labor of Love Sunday, October 9<sup>th</sup>**, meet at church at 9:30 to show our love for our unique building by doing a deep cleaning and organizing that Minnie can't do in her weekly cleaning.
3. **42 Bed Bash, October 13** in Collinsville at the Madelyn Venue Guesthouse, starting at 5:30 with dinner at 6:30. Meal is provided by *Feast on This! Catering*. Music provided by *The Self Family Band*, a uniquely talented musical family from the Abilene area. RRUU & Powells are sponsors, so we have tickets for 8 people. We are asking for a donation to RRUU for each ticket. Location: 8091 Southmayd Road, Collinsville, TX 76233. Get tickets from Dick Powell.
4. **Fall Congregational Meeting is October 16<sup>th</sup>** at 1:00 in the chapel. We are having a potluck lunch, so be thinking of what you would like to bring. Also, Minnie will be setting up and cleaning up. You will be receiving the meeting packet two weeks prior to the Fall Meeting. Please plan to stay and participate. We have an important vote on funding for the search for a minister.

## News from the board:

1. The board has approved a new printer for communications, HVAC cleaning and maintenance, and carts for the kitchen. Amy is labeling the drawers for the carts. This provides a new appearance and more function for the kitchen. Carolyn and Bruce purchased new Corelle dishes that are lighter weight and will fit the dishwasher better. Thank you, Bruce and Carolyn. Amy is selling the other ones on eBay with the proceeds going to the minister search fund. Thanks, Amy.
2. Estimates:
  - a. It will cost approximately \$6000 to repair the garage and replace the siding. We are seeking a grant to help with some of that cost, but the board approved the funding so that repairs could begin in a timely fashion.
  - b. Marion suggested that we print HELP cards for people who are needing to access community resources, such as food banks and medical help. Marilyn, with Doug's help, designed the cards. The cost of printing them was prohibitive, so we sought another way of printing them that will be more affordable. You will be able to see them at the Fall Meeting.
3. Jim gave the Minister Search Team report and reported that a funding shortfall of \$60,000 over two years must be made up before we qualify to find a minister for a two-year term. You will hear more information about this and have an opportunity to vote on this at the Fall Meeting. This team is working hard to make this work for us.
4. For our Labor of Love Sunday, we will be working on cleaning, straightening and putting away things that have accumulated in the wrong places and taking care of things that Minnie can't manage during weekly cleaning.

## Marilyn Musings - continued

Please plan to come help Love our unique building.

5. The Fall Congregational Meeting is October 16 and you will receive your meeting packet via email two-weeks prior to meeting. We need everyone to be there and participate.
6. Jim continues to review and revise the Policies and Procedures Manual to fit our hybrid church. He hopes to have the revisions made for the November Board Meeting. Thanks, Jim.
7. There may be a need to find a different supplier of our name tags, since the business that was printing ours sold. Amy has been working on some options.
8. Amy has been busy with Community Outreach and Communications.
  - a. She and several others attended the Austin College Internship Fair. She reported that attendance was better than last year, but still slower than years previous to the pandemic. She also reported that they didn't have a visit from Chaplain John Williams, who stops by if they have new students who are UU.
  - b. She and Jan are hosting National Voter Registration Day on Tuesday, Sept. 22, between 4:00 and 7:00. Amy will be giving an update on the new Texas voter laws between 7:00 and 8:00.
  - c. Amy also updates Red River UU information on social media and boosts those pages.
9. The board reviewed progress that has been made on Annual Goals – We will review these at the Fall Meeting so we can get your input.
10. Amy opened an eBay account for Red River UU Church. She worked with Jim to open a PayPal account to link to the eBay account. Next, they will establish the church as a charity. Once this process is complete, anyone

who sells on eBay can designate all or a portion of the proceeds to our charity. Anyone who makes a purchase on eBay can make a donation to our charity. Thank you for your forward thinking and action.

Marilyn Alexander, *president*

## Social Justice Ministry

Our organizational meeting was Friday, September 16. We agreed our monthly meeting will be the 2<sup>nd</sup> Monday of each month from 6:30 – 8:30 at RRUU. We will be known as the Red River Unitarian Universalist Social Action Team.

The group present agreed to work independently on each main area of interest but to also bring items of urgent need to the group. Initial members present and their primary interests are:

1. Shanna Bolerjack; LGBTQ, Poverty
2. Sherilyn Bolerjack; LGBTQ, Poverty
3. Linn Cates; Environment; Homelessness
4. Jan Fletcher (chair); Women's Rights/Abortion; Racial Justice
5. Thomas Garland; LGBTQ, Reproductive Rights
6. Amy Hoffman-Shehan; Voter access, voting rights Equal rights & reproductive rights.
7. Susie Norris; Women's Reproductive Rights

Not attending but will join:

1. Walter Norris; Civil & Human Rights
2. Jim Runnels; Environmental & Healthy Eating

The group plans to utilize Texas UU Justice Ministry Action, UU The Vote and On the Side of Love for many of the sources for contributing to the needs of justice. If anyone is interested in social action activities, please come join us or give me a call.

Jan Fletcher - 972-897-5796

*Social Justice chair*

# Money Matters

In the month of August, we had total receipts of \$1,452.00. Total expenses for the month were \$6,759.02, which included \$1,729.28 for building maintenance (a/c repair), leaving us with a net loss for the month of (\$5,307.02). It is worth noting that in August we paid all of the remaining balance for this fiscal year of our Fair Share donation to UUA, and we paid \$500 to the Texoma Family Shelter in support of their annual fundraiser ' the 42 Bed Bash'. Also, please note that year-to-date we have net income of \$4,481.89, due largely to the prepayment of pledges in July. As of August 31, 2022, we had \$17,270.81 available in checking, including \$5,413.00 held in trust

for Kat Walston. We also have a total of \$19,107.86 in all savings accounts, including \$2,545.00 in the Ronda Decaire Memorial Fund. The total market value of our investment in UU Common Endowment Funds was \$70,077.67, reflecting a market value increase of \$3,293.27 (4.9%) from the value of our original investment.

Dick Powell, *treasurer*

# Adult Forum

The Forum decided they were enjoying the current Great Courses video series *Comparative Religions* through January 26, 2023. Details about each session available [here](#)



**FALL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING**  
**SUNDAY, OCTOBER 16**  
**POTLUCK LUNCH - 12:30**  
**MEETING - 1:00**

Members will receive Packet of Meeting Documents  
On Monday evening, October 3, 2022

Image: Autumn Foliage Turner Falls, OK



# Our Common Read for October

## THE UNRAVELING OF AMERICA

By Wade Davis

Editor Note: "The Unraveling of America" by anthropologist Professor Wade Davis was the most read of tens of thousands of stories published by Rolling Stone in 2020. The whole article is too long for our newsletter, so I selected random paragraphs that I felt important. The link to the entire article at follows hopefully enough intriguing snippets to whet your desire to read it all.

WADE DAVIS HOLDS the Leadership Chair in Cultures and Ecosystems at Risk at the University of British Columbia. His award-winning books include "Into the Silence" and "The Wayfinders." His new book, "Magdalena: River of Dreams," is published by Knopf.

In a single season, civilization has been brought low by a microscopic parasite 10,000 times smaller than a grain of salt. COVID-19 attacks our physical bodies, but also the cultural foundations of our lives.

Unsettling as these transitions and circumstances will be, short of a complete economic collapse, none stands out as a turning point in history. But what surely does is the absolutely devastating impact that the pandemic has had on the reputation and international standing of the United States of America.

At the height of the Covid crisis, with more than 2,000 dying each day, Americans found themselves members of a failed state, ruled by a dysfunctional and incompetent government largely responsible for death rates that added a tragic coda to America's claim to supremacy in the world.

For the first time, the international community felt compelled to send disaster relief to Washington. For more than two centuries, reported the *Irish Times*, "the United States has stirred a very wide range of feelings in the rest of the world: love and hatred, fear and hope, envy and contempt, awe and anger. But there is one emotion that has never been directed towards the U.S. until now: pity." As American doctors and nurses eagerly awaited emergency airlifts of basic supplies from China, the hinge of history opened to the Asian century.

In the wake of the war, with Europe and Japan in ashes, the United States with but 6 percent of the world's population accounted for half of the global economy, including the production of 93 percent of all automobiles. Such economic dominance birthed a vibrant middle class, a trade union movement that allowed a single breadwinner with limited education to own a home and a car, support a family, and send his kids to good schools.

But freedom and affluence came with a price. The United States, virtually a demilitarized nation on the eve of the Second World War, never stood down in the wake of victory. To this day, American troops are deployed in 150 countries. Since the 1970s, China has not once gone to

war; the U.S. has not spent a day at peace.

Since 2001, the U.S. has spent over \$6 trillion on military operations and war, money that might have been invested in the infrastructure of home. China, meanwhile, built its nation, pouring more cement every three years than America did in the entire 20th century.

By the 1960s, 40 percent of marriages were ending in divorce. Only six percent of American homes had grandparents living beneath the same roof as grandchildren.

The republic that defined the free flow of information as the life blood of democracy, today ranks 45th among nations when it comes to press freedom.

U.S. laws define freedom as an individual's inalienable right to own a personal arsenal of weaponry, a natural entitlement that trumps even the safety of children; in the past decade alone 346 American students and teachers have been shot on school grounds.

The measure of wealth in a civilized nation is not the currency accumulated by the lucky few, but rather the strength and resonance of social relations and the bonds of reciprocity that connect all people in common purpose.

This has nothing to do with political ideology, and everything to do with the quality of life. Finns live longer and are less likely to die in childhood or in giving birth than Americans. Danes earn roughly the same after-tax income as Americans, while working 20 percent less. They pay in taxes an extra 19 cents for every dollar earned. But in return they get free health care, free education from pre-school through university, and the opportunity to prosper in a thriving free-market economy with dramatically lower levels of poverty, homelessness, crime, and inequality. The average worker is paid better, treated more respectfully, and rewarded with life insurance, pension plans, maternity leave, and six weeks of paid vacation a year. All of these benefits only inspire Danes to work harder, with fully 80 percent of men and women aged 16 to 64 engaged in the labor force, a figure far higher than that of the United States.

American politicians dismiss the Scandinavian model as creeping socialism. ... That social democracy will never take hold in the United States may well be true, but, if so, it is a stunning indictment, and just what Oscar Wilde had in mind when he quipped that the United States was the only country to go from barbarism to decadence without passing through civilization. [Read the entire article here](#)

# Our non-Resident Poet

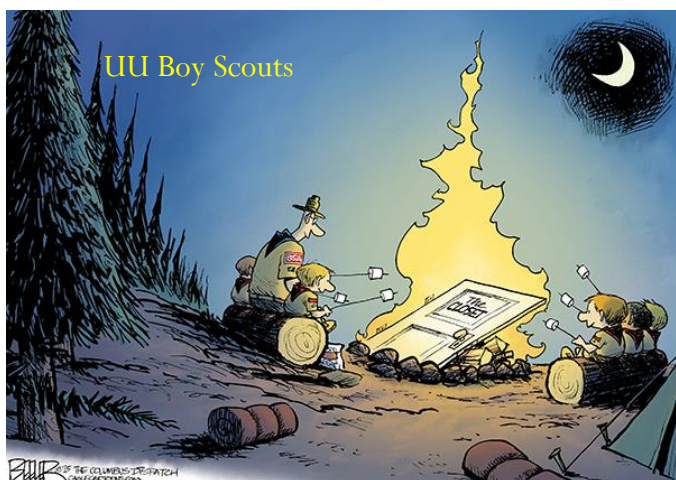
October 29<sup>th</sup> is National Cat Day according to our non-resident poet Don Mathis who send us this tribute to all furry friends:

## Mathematical Cat

By Don Mathis



I've a mathematical cat.  
She does figures in nothing flat.  
She's a fine multiplier  
to the third power.  
Nine kittens attest to that.



# Our Leaders

## Board of Trustees

Marilyn Alexander, *President*  
Amy Hoffman-Shehan, *Vice-President*  
Dick Powell, *Treasurer*  
David Dyer, *Secretary*  
Don Rogers, *Trustee*

## Committee on Ministry:

Carolyn Cameron, Elbert Hill, Jim Holmes

## Nominating:

Carole Harner, Jana Norris, Linda Tracy

## Team Leaders/Members:

Adult Forum: Marilyn, Jim, Amy, Marion

Aesthetics: Carol, Doug

AV: Carole, Don, Jim, Marla

Communication: Amy, Doug, Marla

Endowment: Carolyn, Dick, Doug

Facilities: Jim

Finance: Jim, Dick, Marilyn

Grounds: Marilyn

Long Range Planning: Jim, Marilyn

Membership: Marion

Minister Search: David, Jana, Jim, Marilyn, Marla

NTUUC Rep: Marilyn

RE Team: David, Ellie, Marilyn

Safe Congregation Panel: Dan

Social Justice: Jan

Web Team: Hana, Jim, Marla

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

Worship: Dan, Doug, Jana, Marla

# Contact Us

Red River Unitarian Universalists

515 North Burnett Ave

mail to:

PO BOX 1806

DENISON, TX 75021-1806

How to reach us:

Phone: 903.231.3232

[Mobile App](#)

[Email](#)

[Website](#)

[Facebook](#)