

Red River Ramblings

November 2022 - Vol. 24 No 4

Sunday, November 6, 2022 - 11:15 am
Wintertime Starts - clocks go back one hour!

**The Legacy of Wangari Maathai:
 Planter of Trees and Justice**
 The Rev Dr Mark Y.A. Davies, *leading*

Nobel Peace Laureate Wangari Maathai of Kenya led a movement to restore the forests of Kenya for the sake of the environment and the economic well-being of all people. Her efforts were met with fierce resistance, but her work led to the greenbelt movement and international recognition for her sacrificial work for justice and peace. *Read Mark's bio [here](#).*

Sunday, November 12, 2022 - 11:15 am

Education for the Common Good
 The Rev Dr Mark Y.A. Davies, *leading*

We often tend to focus on how education can make us better as individuals and help us to be more prepared and successful in our careers, but it is important not to lose sight of the importance of education for the common good as we work together to create beloved community. Read Mark's bio

Sunday, November 20, 2022 - 11:15 am

What Gifts Can We Bring
 The Worship Team, *leading*

The Worship Team leads this morning's assembly in anticipation of Thanksgiving. We will celebrate this widely loved holiday in a ceremony of sharing. We ask that you bring the gift of yourself along with a favorite reading to share with the

gathered community, and we will all share a symbolic meal of bread from the good Earth.

Thursday, November 24, 2022 - 2 pm

Come, Ye Thankful People, Come
An All-Church Potluck Thanksgiving Dinner

While many in our community share a Thanksgiving dinner with family and friends, there are those whose families live far away, or who are alone. This year, all who wish to share a Thanksgiving dinner at church are warmly encouraged to sign your name, and what dish you will bring, on foyer bulletin board outside the chapel. Details elsewhere in this issue of Red River Ramblings.

Sunday, November 27, 2022 - 11:15 am

Peace Sunday #5
 Michelle Haynes & Marla Loturco, *leading*

Our last Peace Sunday this year will 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 mixed in their familiarity. Bruno Hussar believes in "Interfaith Harmony" and has created an experiment in living. A better-known individual, Desmond Tutu, believes "All Belong". Both have interesting stories, and we hope you will enjoy learning about these two peace makers.

Search Team Update

The Minister Search Team meets each month at 2 pm 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.

At the fall congregational meeting the membership approved funds that we may use to help cover the minister's compensation package. An amount "not to exceed" of \$51,000 was approved. This amount would come from savings. This money will be pulled out in increments to meet the monthly compensation demands as needed. Barring any future surprises, we expect that we will not need this full amount.

This month the team also put in place an online form where people may pledge funds to help cover the minister compensation package.

I am proud to say that to date we have a total of \$12,840 pledged from 7 people. We won't need this money until the minister starts, but you are welcome to donate it sooner and we will save it in a restricted fund bucket. The Team expects that this number will increase over time. If you are interested in pledging to this fund, click [here](#).

We are now applying for the NTUUC Grant and the Chalice Lighters Grant to complete the funding we need. Once we secure these grants, we will next enter our church profile into the UUA Minister Search Program. After our profile is approved by UUA we can start looking at available ministers and they can look at our profile. Hopefully, we will find a match. However, there are 3 NTUUC churches looking for ministers as well as other UU churches everywhere and the pool of ministers available is not big so it may take a while.

Jim Holmes, chair
members: *Marilyn Alexander, David Dyer, Marla Loturco, and Jana Norris,*

Chair Yoga Tuesdays

It happens at 10 am, each Tuesday, our Chair Yoga hour. If you haven't tried it, you might be surprised to see how helpful and fun it is. If a picture is worth more than a thousand words, here's one from a recent Tuesday morning gathering. Marsha Runnels, a retired physical therapist leads the group.



OF NOTE TO LONG TIME MEMBERS AND FRIENDS:

We have received notification that Thomas Phillip Carolan, who was a part of our congregation 25 years ago died on September 14, 2022. He was a founding member of the Moveable Feast and a wonderful guy. You can read his obituary [here](#).



Marilyn's Musings

We held our Fall Congregational Meeting amid a very welcome and much needed rain. You can tell that I am a rancher and in touch with the weather because it impacts farmers' and ranchers' livelihood and impacts the food supply in our area. That impacts you, even though you may think that all food arrives from somewhere else fully processed, packaged and ready for your table. But I digress.

For the Fall Congregational Meeting, we had a quorum with 16 persons attending and 8 persons with proxy or on zoom. As I read through the Annual Reports, I was struck by how much is happening at Red River UU.

We are an impressive congregation of active souls. Some of us are busy doing one activity while others are busy doing other activities, but everything is important and contributes to the well-being of our church. Everyone seems to pitch in to do whatever is needed. During the meeting, Marion volunteered to head the Shelter Meals Team that has been inactive.

I was especially impressed with renewed energy in Community Outreach. Many of these listed activities have been done by Amy on her own or were done with very few others. They are Pride, Free Children's Clothing Swap, Art Fest, Austin College Volunteer Opportunity & Internship Fair, National Voter Registration Day, NAACP Dinner, and the Denison Fall Festival. She and those few can't continue to do all of this on their own. It was a lot to get done, and more is needed and that means more of us need to be involved. Please contact Amy to see how you can get involved.

Our area is growing. New people are moving here. This is the perfect moment to make contact and be visible, so newcomers know we are here to provide a

liberal spiritual option. The warmth of our church community should be shared.

I am so pleased that we approved using up to \$51,000 over two years in funds from savings so that the Minister Search Team can apply for NTUUC and other grants to support a contract minister, provided that search is successful. Only two people voted to have no more than \$26,000 taken from savings for the minister compensation fund. I am also encouraged by the number of "In Support of the Minister's Compensation Fund" pledges that have already been made: \$12,860. If you haven't pledged, please do that so they know how much they have to work with.

I distributed HELP cards for everyone to see. These cards provide a list of resources in the area where people can get help. They fold to the size of a business card for handy reference. You gave me good suggestions about the HELP cards and their distribution. There are cards for each of our Oklahoma and Texas local areas. I'm sure these will be helpful to people in our communities.

www.redriveruu.org
903-231-3232
Denison, TX 75020
515 N. Burnett
Church
Red River Unitarian Universalist

Oklahoma

NEED Help?

Shelter	
Youth Services of Bryan County	580-924-6262
Mission Community Shelter	580-387-0091
Salvation Army Emergency Shelter for Men	903-868-9602
Crisis	
Crisis Control Center of Durant	580-924-3030
Medical	
Great Physician's (free) Pharmacy & Clinic	580-924-1633
Bryan County Health Department	580-924-4285
Clothing	
RSVP Clothes Closet for Children	580-924-3659
LGBTQ+ Welcoming Congregation	
Red River Unitarian Universalist Church	903-321-3232
Elderly	
Area Agency on Aging	800-211-2116
Counseling/Recovery	
Durant First Baptist Church	Monday 5-8 pm
Pregnancy/Parenting	
Pregnancy Center of Bryan County	580-920-2229
Parenting, Nutrition & Diabetes Classes	580-924-5312
Child Care	
Human Services Hotline	800-522-3511
Big Five Free Head Start	580-924-5331
Food/Nutrition Sites	
Donald W Reynolds Community Center & Library	580-924-3486
Choctaw Nation Food Distribution	580-924-7773
Hands of Hope Food & Resource Center	580-920-2574
Calvary Baptist Church Food Pantry	580-924-9852
Believers Church, Asian Gourmet	4th Sat. 11:30-2:00
Meal on Wheels/RSVP	580-924-3659
Title VI Native American Nutrition Site	580-924-7810

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903-231-3232
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Texas

NEED Help?

Shelter	
Texoma Family Shelter	903-465-6041
Family Promise of Grayson County	903-771-0322
House of Eli	903-771-4339
North Texas Youth Connection	903-893-4717
Meats & Food Banks	
Tri-County Senior Nutrition - Meals on Wheels	903-786-3351
Denison Helping Hands	903-465-5101
Salvation Army Food Distribution Center	903-868-9602
Grand Central Station	903-957-0264
Callic Clinic Food Distribution Center	903-891-1972
TCOG All Assistance	903-893-2161
Medical	
Grayson County Health Clinic	903-771-2846
Child and Family Services - Greater Texoma Health Clinic	903-465-2440
Crisis	
Grayson County Crisis Center	903-893-5615
Elderly	
Area Agency on Aging	903-813-3505
Sherman Senior Citizens Center	903-892-7316
https://www.caring.com/senior-living/assisted-living/texas	
Recovery or Mental Health	
Child and Family Guidance Center of Texoma	903-893-7768
Four Rivers Outreach	903-870-4000
Texoma Community Center	903-957-4700
TMC Behavioral Health Center	903-416-3000
Texoma Community Center Sherman	903-957-4701
Texoma Health Foundation	903-337-0755
Texoma Specialty Counseling (eating disorders & LGBTQ)	888-659-7618
Child Care	
Sherman Head Start	903-891-6556

Also, at the meeting Amy introduced a redesigned name tag that includes our own church logo along with an option for your pronouns. You can see a sample image if you want a new nametag elsewhere in this issue. See Amy if you want to buy a new name tag. They are \$9. each. Of course, name tags will be provided for new members at no cost to them.

It is great that we will be able to participate with others in crowd funding through eBay, PayPal and GiveButter. Kudos to Amy and Dick for making this possible.

Our building has really been spiffed up, courtesy of the Labor of Love workers on October 9th! Take a bow. You are appreciated. Work on the garages should begin soon. When completed, they will appear to fit with our church building, rather than just seeming to be stuck to the side.

In November, we should have an updated Policy and Procedures Manual reflecting the operation of the hybrid church, along with updates on the responsibilities and duties of various church teams/committees/interest groups. Jim has been working very hard to get this revised. The board will consider that document for approval.

November is a time of reflection and thanksgiving. The Thanksgiving Holiday was always a favorite for my family. It was a time when our immediate family would get together and also invite friends who didn't have family to be with.

We would have our typical dinner of turkey, stuffing, gravy, sweet potato casserole, fruit salad, steamed asparagus spears, fresh cranberry relish, fresh baked bread, pecan pie and wine or punch. After dinner, we would all retire to the living room for an afternoon of football or drive a couple of miles up into the Montana forest to cut down our Christmas tree and bring it back to decorate for the season. It filled the house with the smell of pine and kindled us with holiday spirit. We didn't always have much, but we had each other and special memories. I hope yours

will be filled with family and friends - the important things in life.

Marilyn Alexander, *president*

Money Matters\$

For the first quarter of the current fiscal year, we had total income of \$17,242.42, which was over budget by \$5,032.42, due to the prepayment of the current year's pledges (total pledges received through the end of the quarter exceeded the budget by \$5,602.50). Total expenses were \$13,177.69 (slightly over budget), leaving an excess of income over expenses of \$4,064.73, for the three months ended September 30, 2022.

Included in Administration expenses – copying, is \$364.98, which was the cost of a new printer. Included in Community expenses – Social Action, is \$280.00 paid to the Ministerial Alliance and \$50.00 paid for Art Fest. Included in Facilities expenses – Building Maintenance, was \$1,174.28 paid for A/C system repairs.

As of September 30, 2022, we had \$15,387.24 available in checking, including \$5,413.00 held in trust for Kat Walston from the sale of her personal effects prior to moving into assisted living. There is a total of \$19,110.27 in all savings accounts, which includes the \$2,545.00 for the Rhonda DeCaire Memorial Fund. There is a total of \$66,784.40 invested in in the UUA Common Endowment Fund which has a current market value of \$68,073.07. It is also worth noting that a total of \$1,764.00 of new AV equipment was purchased in this quarter and the \$1,326.00 included in Other Current Assets – Uncategorized Asset, is the prepayment of our entire UUA Fair Share for this year.

Dick Powell, *treasurer*

Guess what these people had in common

[Thomas Jefferson](#) -seemed to express a preference
[Ralph Waldo Emerson](#) [Keith Olbermann](#)
[Isaac Newton](#) [Charles Dickens](#)
[Greta Gerwig](#) [Sylvia Plath](#)
[Paul Newman](#) [Ann Clark aka St. Vincent](#)

New Nametags!

We have had the same nametags for 25 years, and the board decided it is time for a change for a couple reasons. The logo on our current name tags was the UUA logo back then. It has changed 5 or 6 times since then (the current UUA logo is right here >, but after designing our own logo, it would be wonderful to have it on our nametags.



Also, the new nametags give you the option of listing your pronouns. The company that produced our nametags was owned by members of the Community UU Church in Plano. (In our early years, we were an outreach ministry of the Plano UU congregation, and we got free nametags as did the Plano congregation.)

The owners retired and the new owners aren't much interested in giving us free nametags, but they will produce them for a special price of \$9.00. each. If you'd like a new nametag, download an order form [here](#).

Here are two examples to give you a design visual for the new nametags :



Order nametags [here](#)

Moveable Feast



The Feasters along with new people wanting to join in the November Moveable Feast will be excited to learn that on **Thurs. Nov. 17 @ 4:30 pm** we're heading to a new place in Denison called Cantina Lime. It is at [2300 W Morton Street, Suite 105 in Denison](#). (in the same complex as Cielito Lindo) Tap/click [here](#) to see their menu.

Please email [Marion](#) no later than **Monday, Nov. 14** if you wish to be part of this Dutch Treat early dinner.

Thanksgiving Dinner

The holiday season will soon be with us, although Christmas has already invaded the stores, arriving well before Halloween. As noted on page 1, this year the church is hosting a potluck Thanksgiving Dinner for all who wish to come and break bread together.

We will gather at 2 pm in the chapel. In order that we don't end up with 4 turkeys and no sweet potatoes, you will find a signup sheet on foyer bulletin board AND on the bulletin board outside the Servedy.

Please write down whose coming, how many in your party and what your food contribution will be.

LOOKING AHEAD TO CHRISTMAS - It is on a Sunday. While the worship team decided *not* to have a formal Morning Assembly, the church will be open for all who wish to drop[in for some Christmas music, eggnog, and some sweets from 10 am - 1 pm.

Adult Forum



FAITHFULLY BECOMING
UUA GENERAL ASSEMBLY
PITTSBURGH · JUNE 21 - 25, 2023

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

PayPal Donations

Red River UU has been added to the lists of charitable organizations by PayPal and eBay, and donations can be made directly to the church through PayPal. Donations will accumulate over the month and will be deposited only once per month. All donations through PayPal will be designated for the Minister Fund.

The need to add PayPal to contribute was necessary for the church to sell unwanted or unneeded items on eBay. For instance, dinnerware no longer being used will be listed for sale on eBay later this week after a short wait to verify the account's eligibility for non-profit status.

Members and friends who sell on eBay can designate a portion of their sale to the church as well, and those who shop on eBay can add donations to the church with their purchase. The funds through this charitable giving function are transferred to the charity after 21 days, so sellers need to be mindful of this when scheduling withdrawals from their PayPal accounts.

More people to guess what they had in common

[Rod Serling](#)

[John Quincy Adams](#)

[E. E. Cummings](#)

[William Howard Taft](#)

[P. T. Barnum](#)

[Louisa May Alcott](#)

[Paul Revere](#)

[Susan B. Anthony](#)

[Christopher Reeve](#)

[Pete Seeger](#)

[John Adams](#)

[Frank Lloyd Wright](#)

[Herman Melville](#)

[Beatrix Potter](#)

Tap or click to read more about any of them.

The theme for General Assembly 2023 is "Faithfully Becoming." We continue to live in times of transition and change; so much is in flux. The COVID-19 pandemic upended our lives, our communities, and the world. It made clear the devastating and deadly impacts of longstanding racial and economic disparities. The ongoing losses and threats from climate change (of which the pandemic is not unrelated), growing authoritarian movements and the rolling back of fundamental human rights – these all-present tremendous challenges for our lives, our children, and our future. Many feel worn out and overwhelmed. But times of notable change can also be moments of opportunity and possibility. Major shifts are happening. Our theology and our values as Unitarian Universalists are needed.

This General Assembly will be an exciting moment demonstrating the ways we are called into Faithfully Becoming.

We are at a threshold moment for our faith, and will choose the next path in our journey. We will consider new articulations of Article II (including our Principles and Purpose) and elect a new President to lead our Association. These are decisions that will shape who we are and how we respond to and grow through these times. These changes offer us possibilities for becoming more connected, courageous, inclusive, generous, and continuing our ongoing journey of becoming Beloved Community.

IF YOU'RE CURIOUS about attending next summer's GA - either in person or via ZOOM. Speak with Marion or Doug who have attended many GA's. Registration doesn't open until next March, but you might want to think about it now!



November. Common Read

Our Common Read this month is from the UU World's "[Welcome to Unitarian Universalism](#)" column that offers brief answers to some of our newcomers' most frequent questions about UU practices, beliefs, and culture.

How do people become Unitarian Universalist ministers? And didn't I read once that Jared Kushner is an internet Unitarian minister?

He isn't. Unfortunately for everyone, the letter U is a very common letter to start a religion's name with, and that creates a lot of confusion. When you hear about internet ministers, that's generally the Universal Life Church. Not only *are* there no internet UU ministers, there *couldn't* be. Only congregations have the power to ordain ministers—and without a congregation ready to perform the ceremony of ordination, there can be no Unitarian Universalist minister. In fact, this is *technically* the only requirement—but note the italics.

This requirement speaks to our commitment to congregational polity, which is sometimes understood as a fancy term for "congregations make their own decisions." It's more than that, though. Congregational polity is also a fancy term for "we support each other and hold each other accountable." To embody this support and accountability, there is another layer to what makes a minister, called fellowshipping, which basically involves getting approval from the wisdom of the larger group.

Most UU ministers undergo a fellowshipping process prior to ordination that involves psychological testing, much hands-on experience and mentorship, a master's degree, and the reading of a truly intimidating list of texts that can later be used to line their office walls for both decoration and insulation. At the end of this process, the Ministerial Fellowship Committee—which is populated by both clergy and laity—agrees that the candidate is ready to go. And *then* the congregation ordains them. (If they so choose. There is, of course, a vote. There's *always* voting.)

What exactly are the requirements for ordination? Does the minister pledge celibacy, poverty, and obedience, and declare their adherence to a strict creed? As you might imagine, they do none of these things. Matters of celibacy would generally be considered none of the congregation's business (as would matters of gender or sexual orientation). There is no vow of poverty—ministers draw salaries, like other

professionals. And obedience is out of the question, although ministers do have a mutual covenant through which they agree how they will relate to one another. It involves matters of support and mutual accountability, and very much does not involve obedience.

As for adherence to a strict creed, that's not only not a requirement, it's explicitly stated in the Unitarian Universalist Association bylaws that it *cannot* be a requirement.

What happens at an ordination service? Does the bishop lay hands on the new minister? Well, this would be tricky, because there is no UU bishop. There is often a laying on of hands, but it usually involves everyone. There's usually a Charge to the Minister and a Charge to the Congregation (these are marching orders of a sort, given by someone the new minister chooses). There's usually the offering of a collegial blessing such as the right hand of fellowship, where another minister welcomes the new minister into the collegial group. And there's always the act of ordination, which is performed by the members of the congregation and is usually a reading led by the congregational president.

There is no magical moment of ethereal transformation where the minister takes their place as an intermediary between God and humankind. UUs do not all agree on whether there is a God, much less where such a God might be located. But we definitely agree that whatever transcendental forces exist, ministers do not have a special place in controlling or mediating those forces. Ministry is not a supernatural state of any kind. It's a choice, a process, and an ongoing relationship.

One final word to confuse matters a little further. In Unitarian Universalist congregations, ministry is not seen as a thing that only ordained ministers do. Ordained ministry is just one type of ministry. There are music ministries and religious education ministries and community ministries, and sometimes these things are done by ordained ministers and sometimes they are done by laity or other religious professionals. Even preaching at the pulpit—something long associated with ordination—is a shared privilege and responsibility. We believe that the truth is not spoken until many voices—and many types of voices—are heard (and even then, it's still a work in process). UUs will often refer to something someone does in the world as “a ministry,” even when it's not being done by a minister. Sometimes, the phrase “ministry” means “important work you're called to do,” and we believe *everyone* is called to do important work.

Everyone. No ifs, ands, or buts!

Our non-Resident Poet

If Elected, I Promise

by Don Mathis

*Free Drinks, Live Music, No Cover,
A Chicken in Every Pot,
A Car in Every Garage,
An End to the Energy Problem,
No Taxation Without Representation,
No Repression, Depression,
or Repercussion,
Peace in the USA,
Cheaper Prices, Higher Wages,
Lower Taxes,
No More Bad Weather,
20/20 Vision,
Barbie Dolls, New Bikes,
Pacifiers for Infants in Infancy,
Redemption for Adults in Adultery,
Human Rights, Equal Rights,
No More Mass Shootings,
Food for the Hungry,
Houses for the Homeless,
Gasoline at 35 cents a Gallon,
World Happiness,
Honesty in Politics,
Truth in Advertising,
An End to Pestilence,
No Censorship,
Sunshine, Blue Skies,
Silver Linings,
Perfect Health,
And Time to Enjoy it All.*

Remember November 11

by Don Mathis

*Children become soldiers; there are a thousand reasons why.
Some will die in combat, others will survive.
I won't forget their sacrifices, their families who had to wait,
and their careers they put on hold. So, if it's not too late,
I want to thank the veteran. What he had to do, he did.
Soldiers grow old too fast. It seems yesterday he was just a kid.
We can flower and flag the cemetery. We can shed a little tear.
We can offer our thanks to the living veterans who are still here.*

Our Leaders

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Amy Hoffman-Shehan, *Vice-President*
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NTUUC Rep: *Marilyn*
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Safe Congregation Panel: *Dan*
Social Justice: *Jan*
Web Team: *Hannah, Jim, Marla*
Welcoming Congregation: *Adrian, Amy, Lisa, Marla, Thomas*
Worship: *Dan, Jana, Marla, Michelle, Walter*

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