

2023
HAPPY NEW YEAR



Red River Ramblings

January 2023 - Vol. 24 No 6

Sunday, January 1, 2023 - 11:15 am

Keeping the Church in your Heart

A New Year's Day informal open house

While there will be no morning assembly on this New Year's Day holiday, the chapel will be open with members of the worship and AV teams ready to greet all who may wish to drop in for an informal Open House. Nice people, wonderful surroundings, and lively conversations. Do come if you wish.

The Adult Forum and Conversations & Calories are taking the morning off.

Sunday, January 8, 2023 - 11:15 am

Stepping into Tomorrow

Marla Loturco, leading

An old year is ending, a new one beginning. We need to prepare ourselves for that step into the future by releasing whatever we want to leave behind and welcoming our next challenge. Along with the personal, we will also look at the UUA suggestions for the new 8th principle and the spiritual/religious challenge approaching.

Sunday, January 15, 2023 - 11:15 am

It's a Conspiracy

The Rev Dr Mark Y.A. Davies, leading

So many persons are drawn to conspiracy theories. When one begins to believe one of the many baseless conspiracy theories being spread, it is like a gateway drug that leads persons down a path of accepting beliefs and explanations of reality that are demonstrably untrue and that are often racist, anti-science, and have the capacity to motivate persons to bring great harm to others. You may read Dr. Davies's bio [here](#).

Sunday, January 22, 2023 - 11:15 am

The Social Ethics of Social Media

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

The chaos at a certain social media company over the past few months raises the question, "What is the good of social media?" With billions of persons investing so much of their time and lives into their presence on social media, how can social media be used in ways that benefit rather than harm the well-being of the human community?

Sunday, January 29, 2023 - 11:15 am

Reaction to Modernity

Walter Norris, leading

Karen Armstrong in several of her books about the history of religion reveals that "religious fundamentalism is a 20th Century phenomenon." She further communicates that "this phenomenon is a reaction or rejection to modernity."

I am taking the opportunity to develop a three-part exposure of religious fundamentalism that will take place over three different morning discourses, each focusing on a Century - the 19th, 20th, and 21st.

On Sunday we will start with the early indicators during the 19th Century looking at the lessons from "Frankenstein", Marxism, Evolution, and the loss of Colonialism.



5th Sunday Potluck Lunch is today. Bring a dish to share and plan on enjoying a lively, inclusive, and fun time. We start immediately after the morning assembly.

Search Team Update

The Minister Search Team did not meet in November or December. Our next meeting will be January 12 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. Jim Holmes, chair | members: Marilyn Alexander, David Dyer, Marla Loturco, and Jana Norris,

An Artistic Challenge from the Worship Team...

Last year the Worship Team created a play from discourse "A Christmas Birthday" written by the Rev. Dr. Don Fielding, in which we used images we found online to bring to life spoken words. We would like to take 2023 to create a new video with sketches of the actual storyline instead of generic pictures because it will result in a far more touching experience. If anyone is interested in creating the illustrations, you can watch the 2022 video on our YouTube channel [here](#) and then let your creative juices flow to think how you might draw pictures to bring the words 'to life'. Intrigued? please contact someone in the Worship Team or email us all in one email [here](#).

Walter Norris, Michelle Haynes, Jana Norris, Dan Althoff, Marla Loturco

Christmas is leaving ...

We enjoyed a wonderful Hanging of the Green afternoon in early December and, well, it is time to Return Christmas to the Basement. Please plan on lingering after the morning assembly on Jan 8th to lend you wrapping skills to pack up the Santa collection, the tree ornaments and even the tree itself. We will start immediately after Conversations and Calories.

Money Matters

In the month of November, we had total receipts of \$1,811.32. Total expenses for the month were \$2,353.10, leaving us with a net loss for the month of (\$541.78). Net income for the fiscal year-to-date was \$3,769.84.

As of November 30, 2022, we had \$15,092.35 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 the UUA Common Endowment Fund. The \$1,326.00 included in Other Current Assets, is the prepayment of our entire UUA Fair Share for this year.

Carole Harner, *treasurer*

Worship Team Training

The Worship Team is having a Saturday morning training on January 7 from 10-12 am in the Gil Alexander Room. If anyone has been thinking they might like to join the team to help them continue their quality services, this is the time and the place. Please let Marla Loturco know if you would like to attend.

January Birthdays



- 03 Bill Holloway
- 05 Joe Combs
- 05 Hannah Peterson
- 09 Kelly Cofield-Dyer
- 26 Megan Hutchinson

New year wishes

From Lanan who says her new year wish is that "our congregation doubles in size!"

Marilyn's Musings



January is the month of re-creating our lives. This is when we make New Year's Resolutions, join health clubs, go on diets and other futile things that we will abandon by the end of the month! I wish you success, but I don't shame you for failure. We

all count our successes and failures secretly to ourselves. There is one thing that we can all strive to do and that is to be kind. True kindness in all things is seldom achieved.

However, our church community excelled in kindness in three ways this holiday season. We provided gifts for the children in the Texoma Family Shelter and shifting from clothing to food, Marion coordinated church members as they provided finger food for the Shelter's Holiday Open House. Jim Runnells delivered the gifts to the shelter. They are always so appreciative. We also provided for our church needs with items for the Giving Tree. We distributed the Help cards to those needing services in our area in Oklahoma and Texas. We are truly a kind community. Our kindness has been a frequent observation by visitors who say that there is a warmth and a feeling of inclusion that they feel when they come here. May we always strive to be kind.

I wish you a 2023 that is everything you could hope for and more!

Each month, I will give highlights from the board meeting.

At our December board meeting, we accepted Dick Powell's resignation and welcomed Carole Harner as our new treasurer. Carole is no stranger to that position, since she held it years ago. We will miss Dick as he has moved to Plano to be able to take care of Carol, but we can be confident that we are in good hands with Carole. We have been fortunate to have people in our congregation capable of handling this critical position. Thank you, Dick, for your self-less work and thank you Carole for agreeing to take the treasurer position. Also,

thank you, Carol, for your work on the caring committee and the Aesthetics committee. We will miss your cheerful attitude and artistic touch. For those of you who don't know, Carol designed the cover of the Caring Cards, then Doug added the lettering.

Since Carole Harner is on the Nominating Committee and people who are on the board or on the Committee on Ministry can't serve on the Nominating Committee, she resigned. The board will be seeking new members for the Nominating Committee.

We also accepted the resignation of Elle Dyer as RE teacher for the children's program. She has taken a new job that makes it difficult to also manage the RE instruction. We can all be very proud of the work Elle has done. She alone has grown that program. Now, David Dyer has taken over the instruction. We are grateful for both of them. While I am sure that the program will continue to grow under his leadership, he has asked that we seek a new person for that position.

Amy, Marla, and I attended an online course for Lay Led UU churches and gained some insight on how to make things better. Amy attended the Leadership section; Marilyn attended the Family Worship section (RE) and Worship sections; and Marla attended the Worship section. Mostly, we found that we were doing more than the others, especially small congregations, but found some ideas to incorporate. We will be conferring with those teams and you may see some future changes.

Marla forwarded a notice from the UUA that proposed replacing the Section on Principles and Sources. Don and I will serve on a task force to evaluate that proposal and present at the February board meeting. [Ed. Note: You can read background material replacing the Section on Principles and Sources on the next page.]

Work to repair the garages and add new siding has begun. Amy has inventoried items in the garages and she and Jim Holmes will coordinate selling, donating and/or disposing of some of the items stored there that aren't needed. No personal items should be stored in the basement or garages unless first cleared by the facilities chair, Jim Holmes.

Marilyn Alexander, *president*

Where Did This Come
From Originally?

What does it mean
to be *accountable*?

Why Now?

Why the UUA
(USA)?

*Why single out
racism?*

What is *Beloved
Community*?

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.

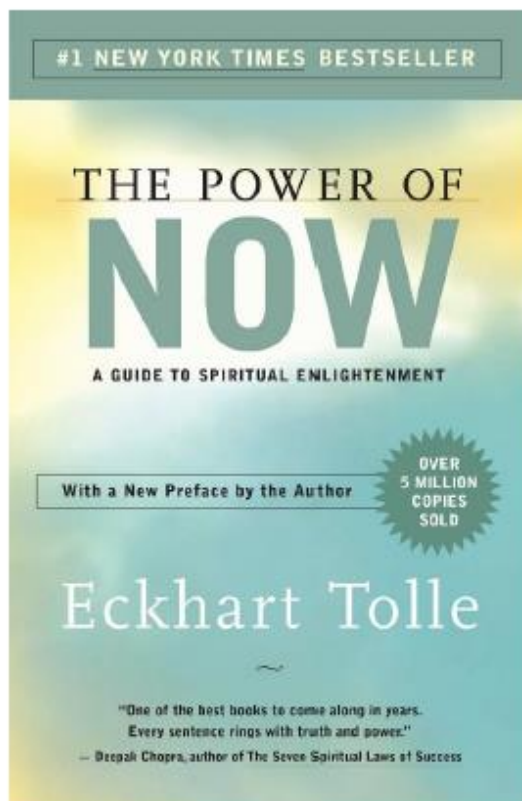
Many feel worn out and overwhelmed. But times of notable change can also be moments of opportunity and possibility. Major shifts are happening. Our theology and our values as Unitarian Universalists are needed.

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.

Spiritual Self-Help Group/Book Club

Revitalize your love of truth and understanding by studying with us: *The Power of Now, A Guide to Spiritual Enlightenment*, by Eckhart Tolle.

Ongoing weekly conversation, please join us at any point



You are here to enable the divine purpose of the universe to unfold. That is how important you are.

-----Eckhart Tolle

The pain you create is always some form of nonacceptance, some form of unconscious resistance to what is.

The past has no power over the present moment.

-----Eckhart Tolle

Listen to the author read the book [here](#).

Facilitator:	Jim Runnels, LPC 903-744-2860
Location:	Red River Universal Unitarian Church 515 North Burnett Ave. Denison, Texas
Time:	6:30 to 7:30 pm
Beginning:	Tuesday, January 10, 2023
Cost:	\$1.00 suggested donation

Social Justice

When the Supreme Court overturned *Roe v. Wade*, some thought that was the end of the story of abortion rights in America.

It wasn't the end. This fight is just beginning.

We won't give up after one disastrous ruling.

On January 22nd – the 50th anniversary of *Roe*, we march again. Save the date.

[I WILL MARCH →](#)

According to history, polls, and pundits, Democrats should have lost the 2022 midterms. *Instead, women turned out and stopped the red wave in its tracks.*

But winning the midterms wasn't enough.

In 2023, we march because our rights are still under attack, and this is a fight we refuse to lose.

On January 22, 1973, the *Roe v. Wade* ruling decriminalized abortion.

On January 22, 2023, the 50th anniversary of that ruling, we march to restore the protections of *Roe* — but that alone is not enough. Reproductive freedom is bigger than *Roe*. Our lives are bigger than *Roe*. On January 22nd, we fight for everything that we love.

To every politician and elected official: If you come for our families, our freedoms, or our future, we are coming for your seat. Period.

On January 22nd, Women's March is hosting our *#BiggerThanRoe* national march. It's time we take our fight to the states and prove our electoral power once and for all.

Be there. March with us in your city or state.

[Pledge to march with us on January 22nd.](#)

[I WILL MARCH →](#)

[DONATE MONTHLY](#)

[TAKE ACTION](#)

Please join us then. Jan Fletcher, *chair*

Nerdy New Year's Eve

It's gonna be a Nerdy New Years! Help us ring in the new year with a night of board games, geeky gifts, and great company. Visit for a couple hours or stay for the whole event. Either way, it'll be fantastic to have you here.



NERDY NEW YEARS!
DEC 31 8PM-1AM
BOARD GAMES ALL NIGHT!
NERDY GIFT EXCHANGE!
BRING A WRAPPED GIFT THAT IS NERDY IN SOME WAY (SCI-FI, FANTASY, A GAME, A COMIC, ETC) AND TAKE HOME SOMETHING DIFFERENT BY THE END OF THE NIGHT!
GIFTS DO NOT NEED TO BE NEW, REGIFTING IS MORE THAN WELCOME.
RED RIVER UU CHURCH
515 N. BURNETT AVENUE,
DENISON, TX
ALCOHOL-FREE
ALL AGES

At 6 pm on December 31st we'll start things off with some games. Bring your own or try out some games supplied by members of the church. Around 10 pm we'll kick off the White Elephant Gift Exchange. If you bring a gift, join us in choosing, opening, and sometimes stealing cool presents. Gifts don't need to be new, but we do ask that they be in good condition and fit the nerdy theme of the event (games, sci-fi, fantasy, comics, etc.). Then, games resume, with a pause before midnight to watch the ball drop. At 1 am, we say our goodbyes and head home, so we can be well rested enough to make corny jokes about how you haven't seen your friends 'since last year'.

Next Free Kids Clothing Swap:

Saturday, Sept 7 from 10- 4



TEXOMA
FREE KIDS CLOTHING
EVENTS

Hosted by Red River Unitarian Universalists
515 North Burnett Avenue, Denison, TX 75020

Bring your clean, unstained children's clothes, shoes, and accessories that your family no longer needs, and swap them out for something you can use! These events are totally free to everyone. and donations are encouraged but not required.

From our non resident poet

Two poems for the new year by Don Mathis

Sonnet for Somnolence **by Don Mathis**

I threw cross words at chirping birds
early in the morning.
Never in my days had I felt such rage.
I gave them each a warning.
They made me crazy. I was feeling lazy,
wanting to sleep late.
I was nauseous, they were obnoxious.
They made me irate.
Any other time, I wouldn't mind
bird song at the crack of noon.
But today I was furious, angry, and delirious,
at waking up too soon.
I wanted to rest my head in my soft bed
for a little while longer.
I'm feeling too weak, I'll get up next week,
when I'm feeling stronger.

Wondrous Gift **By Don Mathis**

Thank you for what you did in bed last night!
It was what I needed, and you did it just right.

I liked the feeling I felt when I closed my eyes.
And what you did next was a sweet surprise.

You kissed me gently, and softly closed the door,
and didn't complain at all when I began to snore.

Your wondrous gift was one that I wish I could keep.
The gift you gave me was what I needed – sleep!

Our Leaders

Board of Trustees

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

Committee on Ministry:

Carolyn Cameron, Elbert Hill, Jim Holmes

Nominating:

Jana Norris, Linda Tracy

Team Leaders/Members:

Adult Forum: *Marilyn, Jim, Amy, Marion*
Aesthetics: *Carol, Doug*
AV: *Carole, Don, Jim, Marla*
Caring Circle: *Carolyn, David*
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, Marilyn*
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*

Contact us

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