

Appreciation

~ the Love that Keeps us Strong

RED RIVER RAMBLINGS FEBRUARY 2024 VOL 25, NO. 8

Sunday, February 4, 2024 - 11:15 am

Reflections on the Eight Principles, 5th Principle: *The Right of Conscience and the Use of the Democratic Process Within Our Congregations and in Society at Large.*

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

How can we both embrace and accept one another in our differences while also growing together spiritually in a diverse community? Read Mark's bio [here](#).

Sunday, February 11, 2024 - 11:15 am

Reflections on the Eight Principles: 6th Principle: *The Goal of World Community with Peace, Liberty, and Justice for All.*

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

How can humanity more fully see ourselves as part of a world community of persons of equal inherent worth and more effectively work together to address the global challenges we face and create a more peaceful, free, and just existence for all? Read Mark's bio [here](#)

Sunday, February 18, 2024 - 11:15 am

Seeds for the New Year

the Rev Dr. Sofia Betancourt, *video message*

What seeds are you planting for the new year? How are you weaving your magic into your relationships with others? How can we center beauty and goodness and love in all that's ahead? These questions are at the heart of this special morning that will also include a charming children's story *Bridge of Flowers* by Leah Lakshmi Piepzna-Samarasinha. You can read Sofia's bio [here](#).

Sunday, February 25, 2024 - 11:15 am

What Is C.A.S.A. and How Can You Help

Maureen Kane Stevenson and
Marla Shaver, *speaking*.

We welcome this morning Maureen Kane Stevenson and Marla Shaver, two devoted leaders with the Grayson County Court Appointed Special Advocates, C.A.S.A., a nonprofit organization of volunteer advocates who speak up on behalf of abused and neglected children. CASA provides a valuable service to many and we're proud to learn more of their efforts. Read their bio's [here](#).

*Our Appreciation Luncheon
is today @12:30*

Marilyn's Musings

In my January 2023 Musings, I spoke of kindness. I wrote of several examples of how we show kindness as a congregation and noted that we are truly a kind community. Our kindness has even 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.

The kindness we express to one another begins in the common ways we include everyone. That, friends, is our way of showing love. In many churches, the congregants only show love to those with the same beliefs. In ours, we celebrate *Love Beyond Belief*, welcoming all, including everyone. During February, the month of love, let's share the love.

Our annual Appreciation Potluck Dinner will again be following the Morning Assembly and is set for February 25. Show your love by helping convert our chapel from worship to dining. Bring your best potluck dish and get ready to appreciate what others have done over the last 12 months to make Red River such a wonderful place. Come, share the love!

Marion Hill, a charter member, tendered her resignation as Member Chair after many, many years of devoted service. She has given selflessly to visiting with prospective members and maintaining our membership, leading new member ceremonies and created the Sunday morning Host position and brought back from a General Assembly the "Pathway to Membership" program which we currently use. She also was the church treasurer before becoming the membership chair! When you see her at church, do thank her. Obviously, we are now looking for someone to step into this vitally critical position. If you are interested in learning more about what the membership chair does, please speak with me.

We have two other big events coming up that I'm sure you will want to help with. See descriptions and needs below. Let's all get onboard with this and show Texoma who we are! The details are in this box:

"Plug-In Texoma." Jan reported that our church is providing breakfast for the [Sherman Chamber of Commerce on February 27 at 8:00 AM](#) at Finley 502, the building just north of the Municipal Building. She will have flyers inviting them to our ribbon cutting and open house. (see below for details of that event). Jim is preparing business cards to be distributed. We could use help setting up and bringing breakfast food. Please contact me if you can help. [We will be meeting there to set it up at 7:15 AM.](#)

[Ribbon Cutting and Open House on March 6th, 3:00-5:00 PM at our church.](#) This is our biggest opportunity to introduce Red River UU to the Denison Chamber of Commerce and the Texoma community. We anticipate 25-50 people and will serve appetizers and adult beverages.

Please contact me if you can help make this important church outreach a success.

Here is how you can help.

1. Go through our building and put away items to make it more inviting to guests?
2. Put the grounds in top condition and new plants in the porch pots. If the flowers in the sign flower bed didn't survive the freeze, they may need to be replanted, as well. Fortunately, Paula and Larry Jennings have been doing a great job on the grounds, but the north bed of our Monarch butterfly garden needs attention.
3. Select and donate one of the following: meat trays, cheese trays, fruit trays, other finger food appetizers, cookies, wine, beer, and sodas.
4. Bring a door prize. Some that have been suggested including a) Red River UU shopping bag with 2 mugs and brochures, b) housewares, c) wine basket.
5. Lead tours of the church and make people feel welcome and comfortable?
6. Hopefully, we will also have James Smith, the funeral director who owned our building for many years, here to give its history. Also, Jan is inviting a descendant of the family who built the original house available to talk about it. They will need to be introduced to guests.

Marilyn's Musings continued on the next page.

Marilyn's Musings continued

Well friends, you now have many ways to show your love this month. Our open house will either be a glowing success that people will remember and share with others, or we'll fail, and the impression left on our guests will haunt us for a long time.

We have a bright yellow handout called "Love Beyond Belief" in the foyer literature rack. Let's keep "Love Beyond Belief" in our hearts and our actions during February, The Month of Love.

Here are highlights from the January board meeting.

- Jim advised he has been in contact with Cameron Young. Young reported that our profile is on the UUA portal so that ministers can now look for us. We cannot look for them. Young also said he would help with Challice Lighters grant for minister compensation fund. Jim also talked to Daniel Polk who advised Denton was losing their minister. It was suggested that we could partner with them having a $\frac{3}{4}$ time minister here and a $\frac{1}{4}$ time minister there. The Minister Search Team will meet again in February.
- The home page on our website now includes minister search updates. One effective way to let everyone know about upcoming events is to send the details to news@redriveruu.org so the event will be in the church calendar. As always, any church closures due to weather, etc. are posted on the homepage and in the This Sunday information, following consultation with AV and Worship teams, as they are integral for our Sunday morning assemblies.
- The Vision Statement Task Force will soon finalize their recommendation so it can be voted on at the Spring Meeting.
- Amy is completing a FEMA survey so the Emergency Preparedness team will be ready to submit a grant application to FEMA as soon as the FEMA grant is made available.
- The board members completed the last area of the required annual UUA Certification Survey during the meeting, so it was submitted on time.
- The Welcoming Congregation group held a very successful "Family Christmas Party" with 30-40 people

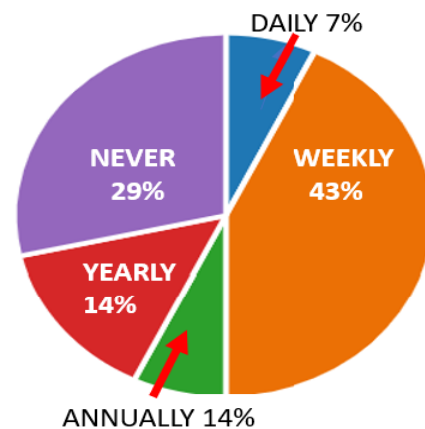
attending. Adrian also held a New Year's Eve board games party. They are planning a Fairy Tea Party for February 10.

- The board discussed adding the Welcoming Congregation to the Policy and Procedures Manual and decided that since that committee has evolved in purpose that it belongs under Social Justice. A statement will be added to the Policy and Procedures Manual noting that the church must update its Welcoming Certification through the UUA every two years.
- The "SumFun Summer Children's Experience" has been cancelled until we have more children to draw from.
- The congregation was asked to approve the Stebbins Amendment that appeared in the Wednesday UPDATE, but the board felt that since no congregational meeting was scheduled prior to the Feb. 1st deadline, we could not approve the Stebbins Amendment for the 2024 GA meeting. However, if it receives approval from at least 15 other congregations, then it will be put on the agenda for our Spring Congregational Meeting. At that time, we will have the opportunity to discuss the amendment and forward our response to our delegates for action prior to the GA Meeting.
- This year's Giving Tree focused more on the daily supplies that we go through and regrettably fell short. So, we will post a list of the critical supplies – with toilet paper at the top – we still need and will invite all to help.

Marilyn Alexander, *president*

Survey Results

We received a 50% discount to continue having our church app. Here's how often folks use the app.



Social Justice & YOU

It is a new year and important for being committed to improving our world.

First and foremost, Texas Unitarian Universalist Justice Ministry has resumed their meeting schedules. The Action Hour is now using a platform titled Every Action. Please sign up to join these tremendous opportunities to make a difference.

Is there any interest in meeting after church, maybe the last Sunday of each month? Or at least once a quarter. Please let me know. We need to be more committed to Social Justice.

As a member of the TXUUJM Advisory Council, there are some future events of interest. Texas Impact shared a couple of projects with us which I would love to get our community involved with. One is a Trans Care Package and Climate work.

We also would like to remind the Community to Register to Vote! To vote in the March 5 Primary Election, you MUST BE REGISTERED BY FEBRUARY 4. Grayson Elections needs this by February 5. If you are not registered or need to change your address, etc., Amy Hoffman-Shehan and I are both Deputy Voter Registrars. Voting is the most important facet of Democracy!

GET OUT THE VOTE!

Texas Unitarian-Universalist Justice Ministry (TXUUJM) requests the member congregations to participate in this year's GET OUT THE VOTE activities. As Social Justice Team Leader, I am requesting our Texas members make a commitment to Democracy. Though we are small, let's make a strong

commitment to participate. We will participate in Postcard Writing (a fun event to do as a group), Letter Writing (info is sent to members to do on your own), Phone Banking (which can be done as a group or individually). TXUUJM also encourages participants to become Deputy Voter Registrars, Election Clerks, Election Judges. A few members of Red River UU have done so. Let me know if you want to learn more about GET OUT THE VOTE.

Please contact me to be part of this important aspect of Democracy. I will be planning sessions on UU the Vote in the future...keep watching. Social Justice is a core value for UUs. Please step up and help!

Jan Fletcher, Social Justice Team Leader

Minister Search Team

We did not meet in January, but we were active in these areas.

Cameron Young (our UUA representative with the Southern Region) got back with us to let us know that the Chalice Lighter grants are currently open. There is not a lot of money available per grant request.

Cameron did say that because we had a minister, we may not qualify but suggested we still apply. The committee will be looking into this and decide how best we can address this in our grant request.

We also talked with Daniel Polk who informed us that Denton is losing their minister who is taking a position with another UU church. Denton may be interested in sharing a minister. We will follow up with this but have the requirement that the minister live in the Texoma area and does their primary community work in our area. I sent another copy of our UUA Congregational Application Packet to Daniel in case he hears of any candidates.

For now, no actual activity has happened in talking with candidates. Hopefully, things will pick up as we start this new year.

Your Minister Search Team:

Jim Holmes, David Dyer, Jana Norris, Marilyn Alexander, Marla Loturco

Money Matters

In the month of November, we had total receipts of \$2,269.00. Total expenses for the month were \$2,432.19, leaving us with a small net loss for the month of (\$163.19).

We had a net profit for the fiscal year-to-date of \$3,234.03. The year-to-date net profit was primarily due to higher other income, partly offset by costs to improve building security and the timing of various other costs.

As of November 30, 2023, we had \$13,299.31 available in checking. There is a total of \$20,747.33 in the bank savings account, including \$4,667.08 restricted for the Minister Fund and \$5,951.89 held in trust for Kat Walston from the sale of her personal effects prior to moving into assisted living. There is a total of \$66,784.40 invested in the UUA Common Endowment Fund. The congregation voted to use up to \$51,000.00 of the Endowment Fund for minister compensation, if needed.

Carole Harner, *treasurer*

The Want Ads!

SMILING FACES/WARM HEARTS NEEDED On Tuesday, February 27 Red River will provide breakfast snacks for the Plug-In Texoma meeting in Sherman at 8 am. I would appreciate [any volunteer offers of food or serving help](#) for this outreach opportunity.

GREETERS / FOOD / GUIDES NEEDED On Wednesday, March 6, RedRiverUU will host a Ribbon Cutting and Open House for the Denison Chamber of Commerce at 3 pm. This event gives us the opportunity to show off our building. We will need [food and drinks to serve as well as volunteers to conduct tours of the building](#). If you are interested in these opportunities, please contact me to discuss. Contact me, Jan Fletcher [here](#).

REVIEW MARILYN'S MUSINGS SECTION IN A TEXT BOX and volunteer to help with the various tasks to be completed before March 6th.

Chair Yoga

The weekly chair yoga under the leadership of Marsha Runnels meets each Tuesday from 10-11 am in the chapel. It is a gentle impact approach which leaves participants feeling spiffy when done. Newcomers are always welcome.

Spiritual Explorations

Revitalize your love of truth and understanding by studying with us each Tuesday evening 6:30 – 8 pm in the chapel. Good conversations in a caring atmosphere. Newcomers and the curious are most welcome to come.

February Birthdays

02 Jerry Harris

22 Dick Powell

Earth Day Planners

The Earth Day Planners meet Thursday, Feb 8th from 6-7 pm in the Emerson Room. The focus of the 2024 festival is on trees and the benefits they provide for us. We are busy securing recycling and attracting entertainers, vendors, and workshops. All help and input are welcome.

Come Sing a Song with Me

Music is a major part of each Sunday to me, and we are lacking in that department. Do you like to sing? Are you interested in being part of a small group to share music with the community?

We could learn the song selections in advance, which would improve participation on Sundays and enhance our recordings. Maybe you would like to prepare a solo to share on a Sunday. And we would try to provide a group song once a month. I would like to hopefully have this going as soon as possible. If you are interested, please contact me in the next couple of weeks. Let's MAKE A JOYFUL NOISE!

Jan Fletcher, *Worship Team*

The Giving Tree

We had a successful giving tree, with many pledges of donations of coffee, paper towels, trash bags, and cleaning supplies. We received underwriting for mugs for new members, new style name tags for 8 people, and microphones for the AV team. Several categories received no donations: toilet paper, banners for our booths at festivals, button making supplies for the Welcoming Congregation Team, plants for the front porch and sign flower bed, first aid supplies, and pledges toward the new minister fund. It's not too late to make contributions to the giving tree. Please contact Amy for more information or to make a pledge.

Fairy & Fae Tea Party

The Welcoming Congregation Team is hosting a tea party with a **Fairy & Fae Tea Party** theme on **Saturday, February 10th from 2-4 pm** at the church. Finger sandwiches & sweets will be served with a plethora of wonderful teas. Bring your favorite teacup & saucer plus any extras you don't mind sharing. If you haven't got one, we have spares. Admission is free. Donations are accepted.

From our non-resident poet



National Make a Friend Day is Feb. 11, a time to meet someone outside your circle and make a new friend. Friendship promotes peace, inspires happiness, and encourages unity. These are important concepts among individuals as well as nations.

concepts among individuals as well as nations.

A friend shows respect. A friend can show anger without violence. A friend can offer criticism without being abusive. A friend is a memory maker. A friend can share feelings and fears in complete confidence. A friend can help elaborate on an idea, can encourage reasoning, and can provide introspection — and still disagree with you.

Friends compliment and complement each other. They share their strengths in the other's weakness. A friend will help with no expectation of a reward. Communication is essential in a friendship. A relationship without trust is not a friendship.

Sharing is important — as is the ability to share friendship. One does not have to be all things to be a friend. He or she can allow that friend to be with others without jealousy.

One need not wait until Feb. 11 to create a new comrade. Find a future friend by exploring your interests; take a class or join a club. Introduce one friend to another. Talk to a stranger at work, when you're out and about, or any social gathering.

Offer an encouraging word to the odd one out; get to know an internet acquaintance a little better. Invite someone you'd like to know to an event, to have coffee, to attend church.

By promoting the bonds of friendship and strengthening the ties of togetherness, we assist on a global scale the realization of peace and stability of the planet.

(by Don Mathis)

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, Jim Runnel, Walter Norris (not related to Jana)

Our Various Teams:

The first name is the team leader

Adult Forum: *Marilyn, Jim, Amy, Marion*

Aesthetics: *Amy, Jana, Adrian*

Audio Visual: *Jim, Carole, Don, Marla*

Caring Circle: *Carolyn, David*

Communication: *Amy*

Earth Day Planning: *Amy*

Endowment: *Carolyn, Doug*

Facilities: *Jim, Carole, Marilyn*

Grounds: *Marilyn, Paula*

Long Range Planning: *Jim, Marilyn*

Membership:

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

Monarch Way Station: *Lynn*

Moveable Feast: *Elbert & Marion*

NTUUC Rep: *Marilyn*

Publications: *Doug*

RE Team: *David, Marilyn*

Safe Congregation Panel: *Marilyn*

Social Justice: *Jan*

Web Team: *Hannah, Jim, Marla*

Welcoming Congregation: *Jack, Adrian, Amy, Billy, Cristin, Jana, Olivia, Sherilyn, Thomas*

Worship: *Marla, Dan, Jan, Jana*

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