The Monthly Newsletter of Red River Unitarian Universalist Church ◆ Denison TX ◆ Vol 20, No. 7 ◆ October 2018

Sunday, October 7, 2018

Morning Assembly - 11:15 am

Transforming the Revolving Door

Whitney Redding, speaking

One in four Americans will experience a mental health disorder in their life time. It is a human issue that affects us all. So, too, the myths about those with mental health issues who are no more likely to be violent than anyone else, but they are much more likely to have contact with the criminal justice system. Nearly half the inmates in county jails have mental health issues.

On Sunday, our guest will talk about some collaborative programs that have reduced recidivism among those with mental health issues from 67% to 11%. These programs are transforming the revolving door.

Whitney Redden, a graduate of Austin College, earned a MA in Counseling Psychology at TWU, and is a licensed professional counselor. She has worked with the Battering Intervention program, Children's Advocacy Center and now is at the Texoma Community Center. She currently is the president of the local National Alliance on Mental Illness chapter and is an adjunct professor at SOSU.

Sunday, October 14, 2018

Morning Assembly - 11:15 am

Holding it Together While You Ride Out the Storm

Rebekah LaGrone, speaking

Those storms are never in the forecast. They pop up and knock you off course in an instant. My storm began like a flash of lightening - a quick misstep off a curb - but it blew up into a full cyclone, pulling my whole life into its whirling spin.

- Meditation ~ 9
- Adult Forum ~ 10
- Morning Assembly ~ 11:15
- Conversations & Calories ~ 12:15

Sunday, October 21, 2018

Morning Assembly - 11:15 am Congregational Mtg Today

This I Believe - Credo Sunday

Six among us will share their Credo Statements

We all have a foundation upon which we build our religious philosophy. It is nestled deep in our soul rather than printed in any brochure and hungers to be shared. It comes from the depth of our own thought and heart. It is the core of our individual spiritual path. Credo literally means, "I give my heart and loyalty to..." Astute credos marry the gifts of both intellect and spirit. Credos spur presenters to select highlights from their religious odyssey, highlighting those affirmations that sustain them during the happy and hard days and nights of life.

The worship team invited a few members once or twice a year to offer their credo statement. They are asked several months in advance because writing out what you give your heart and loyalty to takes some thought.

Following the morning assembly, everyone is invited to tarry for lunch, catered by Dickey's Barbecue Pit and remain for the Fall Congregational Meeting which starts at 1 pm. *Details about the meeting are on page 2*.

Sunday, October 28, 2018

Morning Assembly - 11:15 am

Study. Learn. Question. Die.

The Rev. Doug Strong, preaching

We trace the origins of our Unitarian heritage to the mid sixteenth century to one man. After years of study he concluded the theological basis for the Holy Trinity was mistaken and said so in his book *On the Errors of the Trinity*. Pretty ballsy given the ironclad hold religion had on the world. Both Catholics and Protestants branded his anti-trinitarian writing heretical. He was burned to death 465 years ago yesterday, Oct. 27,1553. Fortunately for us, one copy of his book did not go up in flames. If it had, Unitarianism might never have been permitted to exist.



Jim's Jabber

I don't know about ya'll but does it seem that each month is getting busier and busier. I still haven't shopped for Christmas and there are only 89 shopping days left

This month the Board has been focused on making sure all the proper information is compiled for the meeting doc's packet that will be emailed Monday, October 2 - the requisite 14 days prior to our Oct. 21st fall congregational meeting. Hopefully everyone is planning on coming. Most importantly, our catered lunch by Dickey's BBQ (with vegetarian options) will immediately follow the morning assembly, which will highlight credo statements given by several church members (including from 3 generations within the same family).

If you are going to miss the meeting, please vote either on-line or by proxy (available in the meeting doc's packet). Because we're voting on some minor bylaw changes, we must have a $\frac{2}{3}$ yes vote to pass. We will be voting other agenda items, the details for each will be in the meeting packet:

A new 5 Year Plan that we are proposing

Requesting board approval that should any adjacent lots become available the Board is given the authority to make an offer not to exceed more than 20% of fair

market value (also requires a ²/₃ vote pass).

Let me add a few words about the Board's request to purchase adjacent land. Available lots in Denison are being picked up quickly by builders. A normal size lot of 50x150 feet currently sells for \$5000-\$5500. Next door to the church on Bond Street is an empty adjacent lot (behind the garage and playground.) Marilyn had a conversation with the owner who might be interested, at some point, in selling it. We want to make sure we are in a position to move quickly if the owner is ready.

Our Bylaws require congregational approval to purchase real estate which would necessitate calling a special congregational meeting or voting at a regularly scheduled bi-annual meeting. We would not want to miss out by having to wait 14 days to call a special congregational meeting, should we need to move quickly. So, the Board is asking permission now to purchase this lot should it become available and the asking price be reasonable.

I want to also mention an upcoming NTUUC (North Texas Unitarian Universalist Congregations) event on Saturday, Nov. 10. NTUUC is looking into the future and wants to discuss some ideas on how this organization can better serve its member churches. Marla will present more details on this in the October meeting. We will also post what details we know in our November Newsletter.

Jim

21st Annual Fall Meeting

The fall meeting is Sunday, Oct. 21st following a special complimentary lunch catered by Dickey's Barbecue. The meeting doc's packet will have all the details, but for those who like sneak peeks ... we will

- Talk about the status/future of our community outreach efforts
- Review reports from the various church committees/groups/teams that help keep our congregation vital and feisty
- Consider making some minor changes to our bylaws (that takes a ¾ yes vote)
- Ponder the possibility of purchasing the vacant lot next to the playground in case we decide to expand our building to meet our growing congregation (currently standing at 54 members).

- Hear about an upcoming convocation of the 13 UU congregations in N. Texas at the upcoming NTUUC Summit on Nov 10

 they want our suggestions how NTUUC could best serve us
- Listen to the proposed new 5-year plan from the long-range planning committee
- AND, at long last, we will launch our new website: <u>www.redriveruu.org</u> and retire the "@rruu.org" email system, replacing it with "@redriveruu.org" emails

Please attend – friends as well as members!

Members: please remember to vote! On-line voting will be available as well as paper proxy ballots (available in the meeting doc's which will be emailed out on Monday, Oct 8).

A very special day – the morning assembly features 6 or 7 members sharing their Credo Statements, 3 generations of UUs from the same family! See you there!

Also known as a book group, people who like to read gather at 1 pm on the second Friday in the Emerson room. We talk about books we've read since last meeting And, like any Domination good thing, it's better if Society you see for yourself - and bring a friend.

Call or text Carolyn Cameron for more info. 903 786 8646

Board Bits from the Sept. meeting

The September Board meeting was held Sept. 23rd in the chapel. The entire Board attended. Marla Loturco also attended. Highlights included:

- Marla reported that the Committee on Ministry had been defunct for sometime, but is now up and running again.
- Marla, Doug and Jim are working on a plan for continuity of leadership records. Keeping a comprehensive church history is vital. The Board voted to purchase drop-box space where copies of yearly church history will be stored for future generations.
- Another crucial step that needs to be taken is cross-training for succession planning. Basic instruction in accessing and using various web applications that perform the work of the church should the occasion arise when neither Doug or Marla are available. We don't have a backup plan and we need one. Only one person can access iContact, the church app, the church web page. Others needs to learn how to do this.
- The Board discussed another backup plan that we are lacking. An emergency evacuation plan needs to be developed and posted throughout the building. Jim will be talking to the Denison Fire Dept. to ascertain the appropriate steps to develop this plan.
- Jim presented a 5-year plan the Long-Range Planning Committee has been developing. The Board voted to present this plan to the congregation for consideration at the Fall Congregational Meeting on Oct. 21st.
- The Board set the meeting dates for the rest of 2018. The next meetings will be Oct 14th, Nov 18th and Dec 16th.

Kelly Cofield-Dyer, Board Secretary

Treasurer's Report

In the month of August, we had total receipts of \$3,635.00, and total expenses of \$3,995.11, including \$204.00, Share the Plate donation to Earth Day, and building maintenance/renovation of \$1,441,83, leaving an excess of expenditures over receipts for the month of August of \$360.11.

As of August 31, 2018, we had \$3,073.41 available in checking, a total of \$64,886.97 in all savings accounts and a total of \$14,572.71 in Certificates of Deposit.

All bank accounts have been reconciled with no exceptions noted.

Dick Powell, Treasurer

October Birthdays

05 Marion Hill18 Joyce Peak

LGBTQ Welcoming committee

will meet on Sunday Oct. 7th @ 12:45 in the Church Library

Worship Team

The Worship Team will meet on Sunday **Oct. 14**th **at 12:45** to start working on the 2019

Moveable Feast ~ in Denton, TX

The October feast will be a cook out potluck, (some date yet to be nailed down) at Megan Hutchinson's home in Denton. Megan will provide hotdogs, quinoa salad (vegan/gluten-free), water, and unsweet tea. Her address is 2946 Ganzer Rd., Denton which is an RV park located on Merritt Bois d'Arc Buffalo Ranch. She says GPS knows the way. Lunch will on a great public space with giant covered picnic tables and a huge grill for people who have brought things to grill. With any luck, the buffalo will be rotated into the pasture right by her house that day. Please let Marion know what your food contribution will be. The feast is open to everyone who would like to go. When the date is finalized, it will be published in the Wednesday UPDATE.

NTUUC has been exploring the possibility of changing its focus on how to best support the 13 congregations in North Texas.

One focus has been conferences, on an assortment of topics, including Anti-Racism Training; Volunteer Leadership Development; Board Training; Time was a lot of UUs attended these events and report they were of value. Attendance has plummeted in the last few years to the point that some events were canceled.

Nine years ago, NTUUC created an award program that honor individual UU's whose volunteer service has enriched our faith. Red River UU is the only church that has received the Marty Robinson Volunteer Award each of the nine years.

Another focus has been to offer scholarships for people to attend UUA conferences and to give grants to individual churches. We've received \$61,330 over the last 14 years. NTUUC is unique because it has a large financial portfolio which allows it to offer scholarships and grants.

Now the NTUUC Board is inviting us to a special Summit Meeting on Saturday, Nov. 10 because they want to know how they can best be of service. Our congregation has significantly benefited from NTUUC and we are grateful. It is in our best interest to take advantage of this opportunity to participate in this special summit.

This summit is a splendid way for lots of our congregation to spend a morning meeting other UUs in the area and gaining a better understanding of how our congregation can benefit from NTUUC' future..

The tentative flow, (a tight schedule):

- Chalice lighting/blessing (5min)
- Welcome/grounding (4m)
- Introduction of Possibilities (30m)
 - Connections and Train UU's
 - Grow and Spotlight/Market
 - Social Justice
 - Big UU Platform with satellites?
 - Sharing Resources
 - Common Endowment
 - Serving People of Color & Other Historically-Marginalized Groups, including youth
- Straw poll (5m)
- Small group discussion of each possibility (20m)
- > Small group report out (10m)
- Break (10m)
- Plenary discussion (65m)
- Benediction/closing/extinguish chalice (5m)

We can car pool (limited parking at 1st Church, Dallas) and everyone — members, friends, visitors— are encouraged to seriously consider devoting the morning to attending the summit. Please say yes!

Speak with a Board member if you're thinking of going.

Here's a brief video about NTUUC.



Friday Night Flicks~in summer! Sat. Afternoon Flicks~in winter!

Taking a page from the Daylight Saving playbook, Friday Night Flicks is going to 'spring forward' to Saturday Afternoon Flicks starting on the 3rd Sat. of October. Show time is 2 pm. We'll 'fall back' on April 19th when sunset will be at 8:01 pm.

For October, a trip down memory lane for a wondfully funny flick that has some significant subtle messages for the audience.

Join us as the Saturday Afternoon Flicks screens the 1971 film *Harold and Maude* on Sat. October 20 @ 2 pm in the chapel. A classic cult film that features one of the screen's most unlikely pairs. It will defy everything you've ever seen or known about screen lovers. Bud Cort is Harold, a young man bored with wealth but interested

in death. And Ruth Gordon is Maude, a wonderful old rascal who only sees good intentions in the world.

Two screens, com-fy seats but no popcorn, no one has ever wanted any and it is getting really stale.



Update on our annual goals

During our spring congregational meeting we voted three goals to be completed by next spring's congregational meeting.

Establish Monarch Waystation: Use existing greenspace to create a welcoming environment as these endangered butterflies migrate across our area

Create Long-Term Planning Committee: To determine the long-term needs of the church and recommendations for the congregation as to solutions

Re-Establish an Endowment Committee: As required in our by-laws for the administration of the endowment fund

Under the leadership of Linn Cates, the **Monarch Waystation** is now planted and growing nicely. The original idea of one garden on the south side of the church was expanded when the group realized the garden could be planted surrounding the church on three sides. Over the summer, the plants have done well and while we may not see any monarch butterflies this fall, if we're patient and the plants continue to thrive, the butterflies will appear.

Forty Texas native plants, including ten milkweed plants, on which the adult female Monarch lays its eggs and the Monarch larvae feed were planted in the beds on 3 sides of the church building and in the Memorial Garden adjacent to the playground. The additional thirty plants are perennials or small shrubs with varying bloom times from spring through fall and provide nectar for the Monarch when it is in our North Texas area either when on its journey North or its fall migration South.

We have been seeing butterflies, including an occasional Monarch, in the garden all summer. they are more numerous now it seems, but according to Dale Clark, a Dallas County lepidopterist, the adult Monarchs we see until the end of September are NOT the 5th, or super generation, which will be coming through our county in mid October to merge into a single flyway in central Texas and continue on to the overwintering sites in Mexico. We have several plants ready to provide nectar for the migrating Monarchs (including Texas Fall Aster, Texas Lantana, Fall Obedient Plant, Gregg's Mist Flower, Mealy Blue Sage, and possibly our Frost Weed will be blooming then.) So, yes, we have Monarchs and will most likely be seeing more. Be on the lookout. Butterflies nectar in good weather, when temperatures are warm and the sky is sunny, so not usually early morning or near sunset. Monarchs that are migrating are not easily spooked and stay in place nectaring on blossoms for up to a minute or more, making them easy to observe.

Indeed, it seems the old adage, 'Build it and they will come," seems to ring true when you put up a Monarch Waystation.

Our waystation has met the minimum requirements of a Monarch Waystation and is in the process of certifying and registering it. When that is complete, we will acquire an all-weather sign to identify our grounds as an official Monarch Waystation. Also, it will be visible on the Monarch Watch website's interactive Waystation North American map. Hopefully those who see our sign will be inspired to plant their own pollinator gardens.

Goal status: Achieved!

The board has appointed four people to create a **Planning Committee** whose goal is to consider the long-term needs of the congregation. They are Marilyn Alexander, Ronda Decaire, Jim Holmes and Robert Shelton. The committee has met and their first project was to come up with a new five-year plan, as the current plan expired last May. Their recommendations for the 2018-2020 5-Year Plan will be on the agenda for the fall congregational meeting on Oct. 21st. The Long-Range Planning Committee is going to use the proposed and hopefully passed 5-year plan as a starting point to create a 5-year strategic plan.

Goal status: Achieved!

The board also appointed three people to the **Endowment Committee**. They are Carolyn Cameron, Dick Powell and Doug Strong. The committee has met and are researching various options for the management of our Endowment which currently stands at \$12,500. Goal status: Achieved!

Last Warning!

∫everal Annual Reports Are Missing

The dropdead deadline is

JATURDAY, OCT. 3th

Email your report to news@redriveruu.org

Time & Talent Forms

We are a community rich in knowledge, training, skills and experience. There are times when the Caring Circle needs to tap into some of that knowledge when a need arises for a volunteer to cook a meal, drive someone to an appointment (or church), offer a room for a few days, etc.

There also are times when the congregation, as a whole, needs to tap into some of those skills and experience when a need arises with the building. Also, there are times when committees or teams need help and don't know who might be interested in saying yes.

The solution is our Time & Talent form which lists a plethora of ways we each might assist the Caring Circle or become more involved in a committee or team. When we fill it out, the information ends up in the church database so when someone gets sick, the caring circle can get a printout of everyone who agreed to provide food, or will stop by for a friendly visit, or run an errand.

When the 'Ask Me' hosts needs a couple more people to join their efforts in welcoming first-time visitors, the database can print out a list of everyone who check 'Ask Me.'

You can see how valuable this information is for the church. It is the best way to assure, in times of need (either for the caring circle, or for committees/teams) and sadly our Time & Talent form is woefully out of date.

The best way to fill out the form is to have everyone, members & friends, take a few minutes to:

- 1. Click <u>here</u> to open the form
- 2. Print the form (print icon is in the upper right corner)
- 3. Complete the form
- 4. Leave it in the Communications mail box in the Emerson Room

Too complicated? There are copies on the bulletin board outside the chapel. Take one and then follow steps 3 and 4 above ②.

Thanks. We all will benefit when we each do this.

Fall Congregational Meeting

∫unday, Oct 21st 1 pm

Catered lunch for all 12:15

Meet our Newest Members

Three people were welcomed into the life of the church as new members during the moring assembly on September 30th.



Jen Linson, Diana Bickham, Joleen Whitten

Our new members all express gladness at having found Red River UU. Jen says she "has come to love UUism and is grateful to have discovered and joined Red River." Diana says, "I am definitely grateful to have found a church and group of folks receptive to and promoting true respect for many types of people." Jolene says, "I love the idea of belonging to an organization in which how we serve and treat others is more important than what we believe or don't believe."

JEN LINSON says she has a little bit of gypsy in her heart, having been born in New England and having lived all over the Southeast, Midwest before migrating recently to Texas. She is a proud mother, a medical editor, and a registered nurse.

DIANA BICKHAM comes to us from the San Francisco Bay area of California, where she was a preschool teacher for 25 years and still owns that business from afar. Her school, which she is extremely proud of, is on 10 acres of hillside land surrounded by pasture and cows and her landlord happens to be the UU Church of Berkeley in Kensington. Her appreciation of her affiliation with that church led her to us.

JOLENE WHITTEN grew up an Air Force kid, living in such far-flung places as Oregon, Washington, France, California, England and Nevada. After focusing on political science and English in college, and trying her hand at teaching, she found her real career as a Federal Probation Officer with the Northern District of Texas. She's now retired and writing fiction, with two books available online and hopefully a third published soon.

Our Common Read for October

Kurt Vonnegut Jr. was born on November 11, 1922. He was born in Indianapolis, Indiana to parents Kurt Sr., a renowned Indianapolis architect, and Edith, who had inherited wealth from her family's Indianapolis brewery.

In his early years, Kurt Jr. benefitted from his family's wealth and social status. He attended the private Orchard School where he first met Jane Cox, the woman who would later become his wife. During the Depression, however, his family faced financial hardship, and Kurt Jr. was no longer able to attend the Orchard School.

The Depression caused significant distress for both of his parents. His father fell into deep despair and his mother suffered from drug and alcohol addiction. Their difficulty coping with the Depression had a lasting impact on Kurt Jr. and his way of being in the world.

Four years after the beginning of the Second World War, at age 20 Kurt. Jr. dropped out of Cornell University and joined the U.S. Army. He was deployed to Europe and shortly thereafter the Germans took him prisoner during the Battle of the Bulge.

As a prisoner of war, Vonnegut was held in an underground facility which was previously home to a meat locker and

slaughterhouse. When British and American troops bombed Dresden on February 13, 1945, killing 60,000 civilians, it was this holding location that inadvertently saved the lives of Vonnegut and his fellow prisoners.

In the weeks following the bombing, Vonnegut was forced to scour the city, collecting and burning human remains. This unimaginable experience was the impetus for his classic work *Slaughterhouse-Five*. On top

of these horrific experiences at war, in 1944, Vonnegut lost his mother to a suicide by drug overdose.

After returning home from war, Vonnegut married Jane Cox. Soon after, their first child, Mark, was born. In the coming years, they would welcome two more children—Edith and Nanette—into their family.

In the years following the war, Vonnegut worked for General Electric, writing short stories on the side with the goal of publication. In 1952 his first novel, *The Piano Player*, was published.

In 1957, the Vonnegut family was forever reshaped as Vonnegut's sister Alice and her husband both died in the space of only two weeks—his sister of cancer and her husband of a freak accident. Kurt and Jane took in three of their surviving children, and this change placed greater financial burden on their family.

Over the next ten years, Kurt published several full-length novels, including: *The Sirens of Titan; Mother Night; Cat's Cradle; God Bless You, Mr. Rosewater*; and

Slaughterhouse-Five. With each novel, Vonnegut's dark comedy and sharp social critique attracted a broader following. It was *Slaughterhouse-Five*, however, that earned Vonnegut mass readership and worldwide fame.

In the wake of this success, in the 1970's Vonnegut's life turned once again toward difficulty. After raising their children, Kurt Jr. and Jane ended their marriage. Vonnegut moved as a single man to New York City, where he suffered from depression and struggled to write. The novels he did manage to write in this season, *Breakfast of Champions* and *Slapstick*, proved to be vehicles for processing his complex and heartrending experience of family.

In 1979, Vonnegut married Jill Krementz, a photographer. The 1980's also proved fruitful for his career, with his novels *Jailbird*, *Deadeye Dick*, *Galapagos*, and *Bluebeard* published to great acclaim.

In his later years, Kurt dedicated his life to the causes of peace, freedom, and environmental sustainability. His final novel and essays, *Timequake* and *A Man without a Country*, are expressions of these commitments. Vonnegut died on April 11, 2007 as the result of a fall.

A Note on Unitarian Universalist Connections

In his 1984 Ware Lecture, Vonnegut described his connection to Unitarian Universalism with characteristic sarcasm: "In order not to seem [spiritually inept] to strangers trying to get a fix on me, I sometimes say I'm a Unitarian Univer-

salist. So that denomination claims me as one of their own."

His father and grandfather were also Unitarians; both architects, together they designed a Unitarian church building in Indianapolis, Indiana. Vonnegut interpreted their Unitarianism, too, as a kind of obligatory religious identification. He said of his father: "he...had to have a religion, because *nobody* wants to deal with a guy who isn't anything, has no religion, which means he's just a wild man. So Fa-

ther said he was a Unitarian. That was OK...You had to be something."

Despite his blasé view of religious affiliation, Vonnegut was a deeply grounded person whose life was indeed an expression of UU values. In his Palm Sunday sermon, he called himself a "Christ-worshiping agnostic." He was also a proud humanist, even serving as honorary president of the American Humanist Association.

To close, this quote from an interview on life and faith gives a glimpse into Vonnegut's Christian-agnostic-humanism and its resonance with contemporary Unitarian Universalism: "Einstein's $E=mc^2$ is an extraordinary concept. So radical: matter and energy are two phases of the same sort of general stuff. There's only one other idea that radical: Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us."

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Harvard Square Library

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Social Action: *Rebecca* Worship: *Chris, Doug, Marla,*

Rebecca, Robert, Tommi

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Facebook: <u>RedRiverUnitarianUni-</u> versalistChurch

Our mobile App: 'RedRiverUU' free at the <u>Apps Store</u> & <u>Google Play</u>.

Church Calendar here

Chalice Circles & Interest Groups

Church activities are open to everyone. Contact the facilitator if you wish more information.

EARTH DAY PLANNING COMMITTEE ~ the group is responsible for the creation, each year, of the Texoma Earth Day Festival. All who enjoy planning a large-scale community event are invited to learn more. During the Festival many church members and friends volunteer to help. The committee has not yet made a decision whether there will be a festival in 2019. We'll keep you posted. Amy Hoffman-Shehan, *facilitator*

LITERARY DOMINATION SOCIETY ~ an informal monthly gathering for those who love to read and enjoy hearing about what others are reading. The group meets September - June on the 2nd Friday at 1 pm. They meet in the Emerson Room. Carolyn Cameron, *facilitator*

MEDITATION ~ a wonderful way to start your Sunday by sitting quietly in the chapel. Open to everyone, 9 am each Sunday morning.

SATURDAY AFTERNOON FLICKS ~ As the days are getting shorter, FRIDAY NIGHT FLICKS is shifting to a winter schedule, meeting on the 3rd Saturday at 2 pm. Comfy chairs, nice surroundings - even two screens! Doug Strong, *ersatz facilitator*

MOVEABLE FEAST ~ a culinary chalice circle of people who enjoy food, preparing, sharing, and enjoying. A very popular church group that welcomes newcomers. The Feasters meet monthly and may gather in someone's home, at a restaurant, or church. Marion and Elbert Hill, *facilitators*

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