



**In this issue:**

**Paula Jennings receives the Bruce Cameron award.**



**The 2025 Stewardship Campaign is coming**



**Something special for our Easter Morning Assembly.**



**Great press release for the Earth Day Festival**



**CHECK out the 6 folks in the church who have a birthday in March!**

**On page 5**

# Red River Ramblings

March 2025 ♦ Volume 25 ♦ Issue 9

**March 2, 2025 – 11:15 am**

## **Music as Social History A Special All Music Sunday**

Tom Neilson & Lynn Waldron, *guest musicians*

These two performers have been at Red River UU several times in the past. If you missed them then, or even if you didn't, come join in the fun of live music, resistance songs, and thought-provoking words. A different type of spiritual morning. Two comments from other sources include: "Tom skewers hypocrisy and insanity with his rapier wit. His global sophistication put into performance art is extraordinary." Kathy Hersh, Miami Friends; and "If you haven't heard his slant on social justice and current events you are missing a treat!" April Myers, Amarillo UU. Note: The video of this service will only be available for 30 days.

**March 9, 2025 – 11:15 am**

## *Summertime Starts Today*

### **Love at the Center**

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

Reflection on how love holds together and permeates all of the shared values of Unitarian Universalism and compassion. We covenant to use our time, wisdom, attention, and money to build and sustain fully accessible and inclusive communities.

**March 16, 2025 – 11:15 am**

## **'Choctaw Gift to the Irish'**

Adam Salazar, *guest speaker*

In 1847, the Choctaw people donated money to the Irish people who suffering from a potato famine. Even though they were on different

sides of the Atlantic Ocean, separated by thousands of miles, the Choctaws and Irish people endured similar struggles and misfortunes. It's because of the donation that a friendship/bond was formed.

**March 23, 2025 – 11:15 am**

## **Reflections on our Shared Values: Solidarity**

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

Reflections on how we can express solidarity with the most vulnerable persons and communities in the most pro-active and effective ways.

**March 30, 2025 – 11:15 am**

## **Trans Day of Visibility**

Adrian Hinman, *speaking*

The story of transgender people is often told in statistics and numbers - 40% of us have attempted suicide, 1 in 5 of us have experienced homelessness, we have nearly double the rate of unemployment compared to our cisgender peers, and since November 2024, over 75 anti-LGTBQIA bills have been filed in Texas alone, a majority of which target transgender people specifically.

But, for today, I want to focus on trans happiness. I want to focus on trans love. I want the trans story to be written by trans people, not just statistics and lawmakers. Half of the fight for trans rights involves knowing who we are as people - and I hope you join me this Sunday to experience our joy.

## Congratulations Paula ...

by Marilyn Alexander



I have the distinct pleasure of introducing our Bruce Cameron Distinguished Service Award recipient for 2025.

This person moved here with her husband from Whidby Island, Washington state, to be closer to their son's family. I knew when I met Paula that she was energetic and enthusiastic. Almost immediately, she asked if she could be on one of the teams to bring food for Conversation and Calories. OF COURSE you can, it was my response, and I got her signed up.

Shortly after that Sunday, she somewhat hesitantly, asked me about the maintenance of the grounds. She said that she really likes doing that kind of work and wondered if I needed help. YES, I DID! Since Kerry had to quit doing it, I found it difficult to find reliable people to just mow and trim the yard, much less maintain the flower beds! We discussed what all was involved in the grounds maintenance and she said that her husband would be working with her. I asked how much they would need to be paid for doing the work. She said that they would do it without being paid and that would be a contribution they could make as part of their pledge. Since we had been using my equipment to do the work and now, they were going to take care of it, I quickly bought equipment that they could store in the garage and have ready for use instead of hauling mine back and forth. She was excited about the butterfly gardens, so she works with Linn Cates to make sure that the butterfly gardens are planted and maintained.

Our grounds have never looked better! She and Larry volunteered to repair the inside entrance floor near the back door, where the flooring had become weak or totally deteriorated.

Later she said that she wanted to work on the membership committee. Then, when Carolyn passed away and David had the Caring Committee by himself, she

volunteered to help. Here is the kind of help offered. When Megan had back surgery and also broke her arm, Paula and Larry found a way to get lumber to Megan's in Ponder, Texas, to build a ramp so she could get into the 5<sup>th</sup> wheel trailer that she is living in. She also arranged for Red River members to provide frozen homemade meals, and they were delivered to Megan.

She participates in Rainbow team events and other Red River social justice events. She also has attended and helped provide food for a Chamber of Commerce breakfast provided by Red River. I am delighted that we are recognizing Paula Jennings as our 2025 recipient of the Bruce Cameron Distinguished Service Award.

## From our President...

They say that the three things that shouldn't be discussed in polite company are religion, politics, and sex. I think we're a pretty polite bunch, and we love talking about politics and religion. But I think most people would find talking about sex less intimate than talking about money.



Yet it's that time again. This year's we are asking you to let your Unlash your spirit. You'll be receiving your Stewardship letter soon that gives you details of how – with a successful campaign – have our spirit unleashed thru the many ways we can impart our community. But no matter what we budget, we can only spend the money we have, even if that means falling short. Baptists and Mormons, among others, tithe. Ten percent of their income goes to their church. For some of us, two percent would be a strain. Others can, and do, give more than ten percent.

This year, we are asking for 100% of us to pledge. Some pledges are going to be small—some of us have too little income and too many responsibilities. But pledging isn't just about raising money for the electric water bills, insurance, and for speakers on Sundays. It's also about taking ownership, about literally buying into to the idea that what we do here together is important. Think hard about what this church means to you and what you can do about it. Then make your pledge. **Jana Norris, President**

## A Different Easter ...

Easter for Unitarian Universalists has, from time immemorial, replaced the focus from the birth of a Savior to the rebirth of Spring. Soon flowers will peek through the ground, trees will burst forth scads of green leaves and we get a gift of another hour of sun. It brings for us ways to explore the renewal of our energy and enthusiasm for life.

So, the worship team thought, "Why not hold of annual Flower Communion on Easter?" The idea sparked more thoughts resulting in expanding Flower Communion into a larger theme "Capturing the Essence of Spring." To succeed, we need your participation, so here's what we are asking you to bring to this special morning: Poems, photos, and songs that speak to you of Spring's spirit, soul, core and rebirth of the season.

An Easter, Flower Communion, Essence of Spring gala! What a wonderful idea. Thanks, in advance, for your participation by emailing, texting, bringing what you think demonstrates the Essence of Spring – no later than April 10<sup>th</sup>. Start thinking now, you have six weeks, enjoy gathering images, songs, poems and even quote as together we will Capture the Essence of Spring. 🥰.

## Money Matters ...

The new fiscal year started in July 2024 with a very generous donation of \$50,000 from Marilyn Alexander's daughter, Merrilee Kick. An additional \$10,361.00 was donated in October 2024. A total of \$56,467.82 has been spent on repairs and renovations. That leaves \$3,893.18 remaining in this fund as of January 31.

In the month of January, we had total operating receipts of \$2,717.00. Total operating expenses for the month were \$3,721.53, leaving us with a net loss for the month of (\$1,004.53). The net loss for the month was due to the timing of pledge payments and the timing of insurance costs.

For the fiscal year-to-date we had an operating net profit of \$301.39. The year-to date net profit was primarily due to the timing of communication and worship expenses, partially offset by lower weekly offerings.

As of January 31, 2025, we had \$19,951.11 available in checking for general operations. There was also \$9,937.35 available in the bank savings account for general operations plus \$4,871.08 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. In addition, we have invested a total of \$66,784.40 in the UUA Common Endowment Fund. The congregation voted to use up to \$51,000.00 of the UUA Savings Fund for minister compensation. *Carole Harner, treasurer*

## Earth Day Cometh ...



### Texoma Earth Day Festival returns April 26

By Michelle Haynes, Earth Day Festival

Texoma Earth Day Festival returns with expanded recycling and entertainment programs. The 2025 Earth Day Festival, Texoma's premier environmental awareness event, will return on April 26 from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. with an expanded lineup of workshops, entertainment, and recycling opportunities. Vendors and non-profit organizations can save \$15 on registration fees by registering before March 1, with final registration remaining open through April 16 for businesses and organizations interested in participating in this community celebration.

"This year's festival shows our community practical ways to reduce waste," said Amy Hoffman-Shehan, Earth Day Festival coordinator. "From turning landfill gases into electricity to transforming discarded materials into useful products, we're showcasing innovative solutions that benefit our whole community. The festival will feature educational workshops including beekeeping demonstrations, fossil exploration with Bluestem Master Naturalists,

Continued on next page

and a presentation by Vitol Biomethane about the Texas Area Solid Waste Authority's (TASWA) innovative landfill-to-energy project that converts waste methane into electricity. Additional workshops include sessions on upcycling.

A comprehensive recycling program will accept materials ranging from electronics and textiles to eyeglasses and {continued on next page}

unused medications, providing residents with a one-stop opportunity to responsibly dispose of various items.

Entertainment will include performances by Legend Martial Arts and various local artists. The festival will also host the Trashion Fashion Show presented by Grayson College, where students transform recycled materials into wearable clothing and costumes, demonstrating creative approaches to repurpose everyday items.

This press release continues for those who wish to be a vendor OR WANT TO VOLUNTEER by going to the church website [here](#).

## From our nonresident Poet...

### First, They Came... by Don Mathis

*Zero Discrimination Day, March 1, aims to promote equality and eliminate discrimination worldwide. This day highlights the rights of vulnerable groups who are often subjected to discrimination in various forms. To paraphrase Martin Niemöller:*

First they came for the Snowflakes, and I did not speak out —Because I was not a Snowflake.

Then they came for the Nasty Women, and I did not speak out —Because I was not a Nasty Woman.

Then they came for the Bad Hombres, and I did not speak out —Because I was not a Bad Hombre.

Then they came for me —  
and there was no one left to speak for me.

## Social Action for UUs

### UU DAY AT THE TEXAS LEGISLATURE ...

From the UU Social Justice Ministry minister, Rev. Erin Walter, TXUUJM Minister & Executive Director

I'm excited to report that we have 100 folks registered for [TXUUJM Legislative Action Day on March 17!](#) That is about how many attended last time, so we know we'll have an even bigger group this year. We hope you'll bring a group from your congregation! [Register here.](#)



**GREAT NEWS!** A generous donor has contributed \$1,500 toward registration scholarships for TXUUJM's day at the Capitol and the interfaith partner events, March 16-18. And several other folks have also joined us as sponsors. Amazing! Thank you! Rev. Erin Walter talks about it in a short, spontaneous video above, for those who prefer video. NOTE: [there is a box to click on the registration form](#) for community support. If someone clicks that box when they register, we'll will get them squared away! **It is so important for folks experience economic hardship to have their voices heard at the Capitol!**

**Please register NOW if you haven't yet.** To get t-shirts ordered in time, in your size, we need your info now! [Click here to register and give TXUUJM your T-shirt size!](#)

Click [here](#). To watch the video below about the special grant.



## Happy Birthdays



12 Jan Fletcher  
13 Lillie Pauline Peterson \*  
14 Marilyn Alexander  
19 Carole Harner  
21 William Lloyd Fridley  
22 Elbert Hill

## Our Elected / Appointed Leaders

### Board of Trustees

Jana Norris, *President*  
Amy Hoffman-Shehan, *Vice president*  
Carole Harner, *Treasurer*  
Jack Bolerjack, *Secretary*  
David Dyer, *Trustee at large*

### Committee on Ministry

Jim Holmes, Elbert Hill, Bruce Cameron

### Nominating

Marilyn Alexander, Liz Rapp, Jack Bolerjack

## Connect with Us

our [website](#)

our [Facebook](#)

our [mobile app](#)

our [LGBTQAI+ Facebook](#)

[email us](#)

Red River Unitarian Universalists  
515 North Burnett Ave  
PO BOX 1806  
Denison TX 75021-1806

## Our Various Teams

*The first name is the team leader*

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

Aesthetics: Amy, Adrian Jana

Audio Visual: Jim, Carole, Liz, Marla

Caring Circle: Paula, David, Susie

Choir: Marilyn, Bill, Cindy, Doug

Children's R.E. Teacher: Shanna (Jack)

Children's Clothing Swap: Adrian, Amy, Cristin, Jim, Sherilyn

Committee on Ministry: Bruce, Elbert, Jim

Communications: Amy, Doug, Marion

Earth Day Planning: Amy, Bruce, Cristin, Jan, Jim, Marla, Martina, Megan, Michelle

Endowment: Doug

Facebook Admin: Amy

Finance: Carole, Jim, Marilyn

Good Times Team: Amy, Bill, Carole, Cindy, Elbert, Eva, George, Jim, Lisa, Liz, Marilyn, Marion, Pat, Paula, Samuel, Susie, Walter

Greeters: Amy, Paula, Shanna, Sherilyn, Susie, Walter

Grounds: Marilyn, Paula

Historian: Marla

IT Support: Jim

Long Range Planning: Bruce, Jim, Marilyn

Membership: Susie, Amy, Adrian, Doug, Marion, Marla, Paula

Minister Search: Jim, Liz, Marilyn, Marla, Walter

Monarch Way Station: Linn, Michelle, Paula, Sherilyn, Susie

Moveable Feast: Elbert & Marion, Amy, Bruce, Carole, Cindy, David, Doug, Jan, Jana, Joyce, Kelly, Liz, Marilyn, Marla, Michelle, Susie, Walter,

Music: Dan, Jan

NTUUC Rep: Marilyn

Publications: Doug

Rainbow Team: Jack, Adrian, Amy, Billie, Cristin, Jana, Jamie, Jana, John, Lisa, Lynda, Olivia, Sherilyn, Thomas

RE Support Team: David, ~~Marilyn~~

Safe Congregation Panel: Jana

Spiritual Perspectives Group: Jim, Liz, Melleissa

Social Justice: Jan

~~TXUUM~~ Rep: Jan

Web Team: Jim, Hannah, Marla

Worship: Marla, Adrian, Dan

Worship Associates: Adrian, Cristin, Jana, Marilyn, Marla, Megan, Paula, Thomas