



RED RIVER RAMBLINGS

The Monthly Newsletter of Red River Unitarian Universalist Church ♦ Denison TX ♦ Vol 20, No. 9 ♦ January 2019

Sunday, January 6, 2018

Morning Assembly - 11:15 am

Awakening the Senses

Marla Loturco, *leading*

Start the first Sunday of 2019 by awakening your senses. This special assembly of *letting go, cleansing, intention, and hope* is a perfect way to begin the new year and is becoming one of our annual rituals. You will also be treated to special music from our own ad hoc choir. Please join us for this wonderful celebration.

Sunday, January 13, 2018

Morning Assembly - 11:15 am

Walt Whitman: Alive and in Person

Don Mathis, *speaking*

Walt Whitman, the American poet, essayist and humanist, will celebrate his 200th birthday in 2019. And to commemorate the event, he will make a rare appearance at Red River UU church! Come hear Walt reminisce about his life, and journey with us as we wander through Leaves of Grass.

NOTE: *In the event the trains and boats conveying Mr. Whitman are delayed, poet and writer Don Mathis of San Antonio will speak in his stead*

Morning Meditation - 9 am

Adult Forum - 10

Emerson, Thoreau & the Transcendentalist Movement

A Great Courses Series

Now thru March 31

Sunday, January 20, 2018

Morning Assembly - 11:15 am

Wade in the Water

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

We all know that without water there is no life. Sadly, without water there is no life. What are the water challenges that are facing our communities, our region, and the world? How can we care for this most precious part of our ecological community? Mark will explore these questions and look at what experts are telling us about the future of water here on earth.

Mark Davies is the Oklahoma State Humanities Scholar for the Smithsonian Institute Museum on Main Street Water/Ways exhibit.

Sunday, January 27, 2018

Morning Assembly - 11:15 am

Universalism. Past, Present and Powerful

The Rev. Kalen Fristad, *speaking*

The teaching of eternal damnation is not merely a harmless untruth that we might appropriately ignore and allow to stand, but it has serious consequences. It leads to the possibility, perhaps even the inevitability, of wars, bigotry, oppression, and abuse. On the other hand, the teaching of universalism leads to equality, respect, love, and dignity for all.

Rev. Kalen Fristad has been a United Methodist minister for more than 39 years, is a member of the Unitarian Universalist Christian Fellowship, and is President of the Christian Universalist Association. He and his wife, Darlene have traveled extensively, speaking at churches, proclaiming the hopeful message of Universalism and countering the teaching that many people will suffer for eternity in hell. Kalen has written a book on Universalism, entitled [Destined for Salvation: God's Promise to Save Everyone](#), and a Study Book with the same title. His books, CDs and DVDs are available for purchase after the morning assembly

~ Celebrating Compassion, Diversity, and Spiritual Growth ~



Jim's Jabber

Hope everyone is having a Happy Holidays.

The two grants are submitted. Grant 1 is for the updates to the second floor and back stairs to turn it into a youth RE area with

a nursery. For this grant we are requesting \$5,530. Grant 2 is for repairs from the water damage caused by the roof leak and for repairs to the basement chimney structure and support walls. This grant is for \$4,320. Unfortunately, there have been over \$160,000 in grant requests submitted to NTUUC. I expect we will get one of our requests, but feel less certain about getting both.

We are already working on the basement repairs and have had a structural engineer review our progress and he is putting together recommendations on how

to handle the more difficult areas. This is important to take care of even if we don't get the grant money covering these repairs.

We will also be starting on some of the work for the second floor soon. Unfortunately, we are in need of a RE Team and RE Director to make our new RE area successful. Today we only have Ellie and Angie (who do a great job) watching any children that show up. Anyone interested in working on the RE Team or applying for the RE Director position please contact Linn Cates or me. This is an important team going forward so we really need help in this area.

On December 8th we had a successful children's clothing swap even with the bad weather. For our first attempt 9 people showed up. Thanks to everyone who helped and a special thank you to Adrian who helped get this going and helped make it successful.

Jim

Congratulations Kelly!



As a way of acknowledging and appreciating the time and dedication volunteers and staff make in promoting Unitarian Universalism within the area, NTUUC created three special awards. One for ministry, one for Religious Education and one for Lay Volunteers.

The first awards were given in 2010. They are:

- The Marty Robinson Award – Volunteerism
- The Robert Raible Award – Ministry
- The Ruth Clark Award – Religious Education

Red River UU is the *only* NTUUC congregation to receive the Marty Robinson Award every year. The 2019 Marty Robinson Award will be given to Kelly Cofield-Dyer in appreciation and recognition of her involvement on behalf of our congregation as well as promoting the cause of Unitarian Universalism throughout the area.

Kelly chairs the Caring Committee, helps provide snacks at coffee time, filled in as treasurer when no one else volunteered, has spoken in worship services, and helped lead a church workshop about

bridging differences. Kelly lives UU's Seven Principles and has become an ambassador for the faith, often telling casual acquaintances about her church and inviting them to a service. By her example of treating all people with respect and generosity, she illustrates UU ideals to the wider community.

The board (less Kelly since she was the nominee) eagerly endorsed the suggestion from several people who felt Kelly was an excellent nominee. The nomination form goes into great detail of Kelly's involvement, dedication and enthusiasm. The 150-word summary reads:

Kelly Cofield-Dyer found Red River Unitarian Universalist Church four years ago as a "seeker on a journey," and is now a real ambassador for UUism. She lives the UU ideals, both inside and outside the church community, and also enthusiastically invites people unfamiliar with her chosen faith to experience it.

Kelly will receive the award at the

Ninth Annual Volunteer Award Luncheon
January 26, 2019
Unitarian Universalist Church of Oak Cliff
3839 West Kiest Blvd Dallas
\$20, \$12 Elders/Students

Save the date and come to the luncheon. Last year 19 people from Red River UU attended (more than any other area UU church). Speak with Marla if you'd like to attend. Car pooling is available.

A Mid-Winter Surprise: Vellamo, in concert February 10th



Ethereal Finnish folk with gorgeous vocals and memorable melodic hooks, “Baptized by trolls and Norse elves”

The Worship Team received an invitation from Vellamo’s leader, Pia Leinonen last fall asking if we might like to have this singing duo participate in a morning assembly. On their eighth visit to US their 9 week “Winter Trails 2019 – Tour” will take them all across the country from Florida to California through 8 states and over 20 concerts, including four Unitarian Universalist churches, beginning with Red River.

Save Sunday, Feb 10th and plan on being delighted by Pia’s voice and Joni’s guitar. As is our custom when having visiting performers, we suspend much of our morning liturgy in order to provide ample time for our guests to share their music. They sent their press release by way of introducing themselves to us:

Vellamo is led by the performing and songwriting team of Pia Leinonen and Joni Tiala. Their music is characterized by haunting melodies, Pia’s ethereal lead vocals and Joni’s virtuosic guitar stylings. In Finnish mythology, Vellamo is the goddess of the sea. Based in Kokkola, on the western coast of Finland, Vellamo combines the rich tradition of Finnish folksong with an appealing “retro” sensibility, creating a modern folk music experience.

Pia Leinonen, originally from the arctic region of Lapland, is Vellamo’s lead singer. Her exquisite voice combines her love and vast knowledge of Finnish folk music with the western singer–songwriter tradition in a unique and beautiful way. Her moving and evocative

expression has been compared to other story-centric performer such as Joan Baez and Marlene Dietrich.



Joni Tiala, originally from the Finnish port of Kokkola, began playing guitar at the age of 11. His eclectic musical background includes writing and performing for theater, progressive and alternative rock and Finnish and western folk. In addition to his work in Vellamo, Joni is an accomplished theater and session musician, and is founding member of the renowned Finnish progressive rock band, Moonwagon.

In addition to shows in their homeland, Vellamo spends half of each year touring abroad; their adventures have led them throughout the United States, Europe and New Zealand.

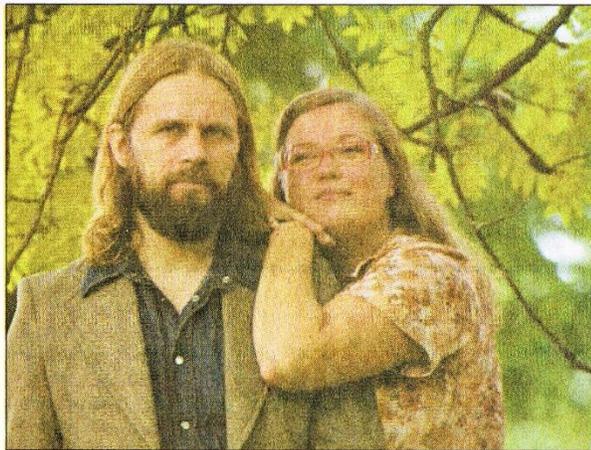
A Review from the Bennington VT Banner:

K.D. NORRIS
Arts and Entertainment Editor

BENNINGTON — Finland may be half a world away from Bennington, give or take a mile or two, but Fin folk musicians are not only influenced by Americana but they can add a little different flavor to the coffeehouse blend.

Care for a taste? The Meetinghouse Café of the Bennington Unitarian Universalist Fellowship will be offering a little music from Finland this week, as the duo Vellamo will open for returning favorite Hungrytown — the musical and marital duo of Ken Anderson and Rebecca Hall — on Friday, Sept. 14, with the music starting at 8 p.m.

“We really love British folk and music, there’s something really mystical there for Finnish ears, it’s very different than Finnish folk,” Pia Leinonen, lead singer for Vellamo, said this week in an email interview. “There is lots of American influences in Finnish culture nowadays: we like American rock, folk, country and pop really a lot. So what we are trying to do is to blend nicely together all these influences and make it sound like Vellamo.”



Supplied photo

Opening for Hungrytown at the Meetinghouse Café Friday, the folk duo Vellamo — direct from Finland — is Pia Leinonen on lead vocals and Joni Tiala on several stringed instruments.

In Finnish mythology, Vellamo is the goddess of the sea. Based in Vaasa, on the western coast of Finland, the folk duo Vellamo has been performing in Europe

since 2008.

“Differences between American folk and Finnish folk — yeah, of course the lyrics to begin with, maybe the song struc-

tures are a bit different, it’s quite hard to analyze how though,” Leinonen said, when asked how Finnish folk music is different and the same as Americana. “Influences come from very melancholy Slavic music, cheerful Scandinavian dance music and poetic 5/4-time lyrical structures from Kalevala, our national folklore.”

Leinonen, originally from the arctic region of Lapland, has had her moving and evocative stylings compared to those of other story-centric performers such as Joan Baez and Marlene Dietrich. Joni Tiala, originally from the Finnish port of Kokkola, began playing guitar at the age of 11. He is now a master of several stringed instruments. His eclectic musical background includes writing and performing for theater, progressive and alternative rock and Finnish and western folk. In addition to his work in Vellamo, Tiala is an accomplished theater and session musician, and is founding member of the renowned Finnish progressive rock band, Moonwagon.

The duo’s trip to America is a perfect example of cross-cultural exchanges.

“We met Rebecca and Ken (of Hungrytown) a couple of years ago in London,

in a pub where they were playing. We started talking, saying that you guys should come to play in Finland someday,” Leinonen said. “Few weeks later Rebecca contacted us and we started planning a little tour for Hungrytown in Finland. They came, and following year they came again, played lovely gigs and stayed with us. This time we started planning gigs together for Vellamo in U.S., and here we are. So yes, this is a very first time in U.S. for both of us.”

Vellamo, according to the band’s website, combines the rich tradition of Finnish folksong with an appealing “retro” sensibility (recalling the likes of Judy Collins or Richard and Mimi Fariña), creating an exotic and magical acoustic experience. Pia and Joni have even been known to sneak in a “Vellamo-ized” Jethro Tull song now and then.

So make sure you get your coffeehouse drinks full strength; it may be a long night.

Contact K.D. Norris at knorris@benningtonbanner.com

The UUF Meetinghouse is located at 108 School Street. Tickets are \$15. For information visit uubennington.org

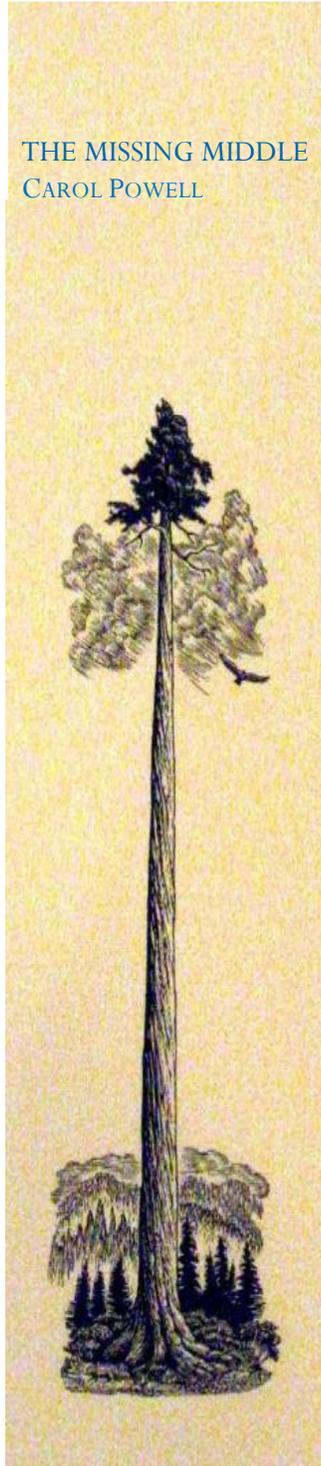
Common Read for January

*I think it's about the missing middle.
We hang about the ends of thoughts—
I guess we want an answer,
Something definite.
Something to stay put so as not
to worry so much about that which
we don't know. It's
hard to know we don't know.*

*We need to make it "Good and Bad"
and we are the Good.
We need to make it "Us and Them"
and we are the Us.
We are very sure of "Right and Wrong"
and they are the Wrong.
We need to make it happy since sad
drags. We would rather
pretend on the edges.*

*Anything except the middle where
everything is relative, changes, depends
on context. Where sad is necessary and
"bad" need not be denied. Where
forever is uncertain and "Truth" is
just a word filtered
through lenses maybe foggy
and often broken.*

*It's hard in the middle. It
feels like work and we are lazy. Scared
(of course), and answers (any
answers, really), give a sometime*



*anchor so we can stop this
constant rowing on this
river whose current we
cannot control.*

*The problem is, once locked and
stabilized, "Truth" becomes a
tunnel or a narrow passageway and
we miss the scenery. We believe our tree
stands for all. Life flows
And I think it's about the flow and not
Getting stuck somewhere. When you're
stuck; you don't go. "Do unto
others seem pretty good to me but
Look how we twist that around with
our "Right" and
feel justified.*

*Our getting stuck in the so-called
certainties is getting us by
into a lot of trouble. When we
feel we "know," we get
kind of obnoxious,*

you know.

The Missing Middle
© by Carol Powell

Read during the morning assembly
Red River Unitarian Universalist Church
Sunday, December 30, 2018
Used by permission of the poet

LGBTQ Update

The Welcoming Congregation Committee is one way that Red River UU is trying to make a difference for those identifying as LGBTQ and their allies.

We are very close to being ready to present our report to the congregation as to our completion of the requirements and finish the application process to become a Certified Welcoming Congregation for persons who identify as LGBTQ.

An important decision was made at December's meeting, to change the way we reach out to people in the LGBTQ community. Adrian and Jack agreed to create and monitor a new Facebook page. Check out the page:

Red River LGBTQ @rrlgbtq
<https://www.facebook.com/rrlgbtq/>

They also created a Twitter account:

Red River UU @uulgbtq
<https://twitter.com/uulgbtq>

Hopefully, by communicating across multiple platforms, we can reach more LGBTQ people who may be feeling alone and bereft.

In that vein, we are sad to report that since the untimely death of the newest owner of the Good Time Lounge, the only local gay bar for more than 25 years, has closed. This club was the anchor of the LGBTQ community in Texoma. They were one of the first sponsors for the AIDS Resource Center of Texoma, ARCOT, which was changed to the Callie Clinic. Hosting classic events of the LGBTQ culture such as drag and talent shows plus just providing an atmosphere of belonging to a larger family, Good Times Lounge welcomed many of us into the open arms of our Family.

On a more positive note, our friend, Valerie Hefner, is organizing the first ever Texoma Gay PRIDE event! Scheduled to be at Pecan Grove Park on June 8th, the event has a board and is currently considering applying for nonprofit status. Follow them on Twitter - Grayson County Pride Event @PrideEvent to support them however you can! We will be participating at the event and will keep you posted as developments occur.

LGBTQ Welcoming Committee

meets on Sun. Jan 7th @ 12:45 to continue the process toward our congregation becoming a certified Welcoming Congregation.

Moveable Feast

is trying out a new plan for a New Year: This month, instead of its large, all-inclusive monthly Feast, the group will have a series of small dinners (6-8 people). Details in upcoming wednesdayUPDATES.

The Worship Team

meets on Sun. Jan 13th @ 12:45 in the chapel to plan upcoming Sunday morning assemblies.

Treasurer's Report

In the month of November, we had total receipts of \$4,719.00, and total expenses of \$3,012.82, including \$104.00, Share the Plate donation to the Grayson County Shelter, leaving an excess of receipts over expenditures for the month of November of \$1,706.18.

As of November 30, 2018, we had \$7,890.17 available in checking, a total of \$60,911.46 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

Board Bits

The board of trustees held their monthly meeting on December 16th. Jim Holmes reported on the Long-Range Planning Committee. The group has been discussing several vacancies, including Chalice Circle Coordinator and Social Action Chairperson.

Our grant requests have been submitted to NTUUC. Awards will be announced at the annual Appreciation Dinner to be held on January 26th.

The next board meeting will be held January 27th.

Kelly Cofield-Dyer,
Secretary

Annual Women's Conference

SouthWest UU Women's Conference 2019

Join us for Workshops, Worship,
Music, Vendors, Community,
and more — in beautiful Hot Springs!

PEACE & HEALING



in the
VALLEY OF THE VAPORS
HOT SPRINGS, ARKANSAS

February 22-24, 2019

The Hotel Hot Springs and Spa
hotelhotsprings.org

Register Online at
www.swuuw.org



Keynote Speaker:
Kally Webb,
Vice-Mayor of Little Rock, AR



Featured Musicians:
Christine DeMeo and
Cassie Lea Ford



Featured Musician:
Laura Lee Willard



Featured Minister:
Rev. Jan K. Nielsen

Early Bird registration ends
January 10, 2019!



Those who attend this annual conference rave about how informative and renewing it is. Note early bird registration ends Jan 10th



Paula Blackshear who a month ago has been recuperating well from back surgery had emergency surgery a couple days later to remove a blood clot between her lungs and heart. Regretfully, she suffered cognitive memory loss triggered by the anesthesia (it happens in about 1 out of 3 surgeries). She is very confused and while her memory loss has not worsened, it has not improved either. The next two months will be critical for Paula. If her memory does not return by then, they feel it will be permanent. Currently a neighbor is looking after her house and caring for her chickens. Her family has been encouraged to call the church if they need volunteers to temporarily take turns caring for the chickens (should the neighbor become unavailable). If you would consider helping, please email caring@redriveruu.org. Cards and notes can be sent to Paula at her son Danny's home:

6013 Shelton Street
Ft Worth TX 76112

Kat Walston, long-time and valued church member, is now at a skilled-nursing facility and will be there at a minimum until mid-January. This stay will most likely be followed by a permanent move to a nursing home. It's a big change for Kat, since she'll be living less independently than before. Kat doesn't have family around but does have state assistance. Also, a team of church members is helping Kat with various matters, including banking, bill paying, insurance, advocating, transporting to and attending medical appointments, downsizing, moving, and care of and possible placement for Kittenish, her beloved cat. Kat is experiencing short-term memory loss that hopefully will improve with appropriate treatment of underlying medical conditions. Caring Team member Linn Cates suggests that Kat would enjoy receiving texts (903-647-4540) and cards. Anyone wishing to help Kat may contact Linn or Kelly at caring@redriveruu.org

Cards and notes can be sent to her at:

c/o The Terrace at Denison
1300 Memorial Drive
Room 148
Denison TX 75020

Saturday Afternoon Flicks



Saturday, Jan 19th
2:00 pm
In the chapel
Runtime: 121 min

Here is a review by [Geoffrey Macnab](#) from *The Independent*:

Already a box office phenomenon, [Crazy Rich Asians](#) is an expertly crafted melodrama along Cinderella lines. Shamelessly kitsch but funny and affecting

enough to get away with its own excesses and many toe-curling moments, this trailblazing film has extra significance as one of the first mainstream Hollywood films to feature an all-Asian cast

Not that *Crazy Rich Asians* wants to lecture us or to spend too long exposing the hypocrisy of most of its protagonists. It's a glossy, escapist romcom, after all. The film may be set in Singapore but its characters and themes will be instantly recognizable to anyone who has attended a fractious family wedding anywhere.

We know exactly how the story will resolve itself, but the filmmakers still show wit and invention in the way they handle the cliches and take us toward the inevitable (and predictably very soppy) finale. Wu makes a likeable and resourceful heroine, one prepared to use game theory or talk about micro-loans in the developing world if it will help keep her relationship with Nick alive.

Like *My Big Fat Greek Wedding*, *Crazy Rich Asians* has come from nowhere and hit the box office bull's-eye. Sequels are bound to follow – and will almost certainly be anticlimactic in the extreme. The original, though, is just as much fun as all the advance hype has suggested.

Leaders

Board of Trustees

Jim Holmes, *President*
Linn Cates, *Vice President*
Dick Powell, *Treasurer*
Kelly Cofield-Dyer, *Secretary*
L.D. Clark, *Trustee*
Helen Schulze, *Past President*

Committee on Ministry:

Dan Althoff, *Marla Loturco,*
Robert Shelton

Team Leaders/Members:

Adult Forum: *Jerry*
Building & Grounds: *Marilyn*
Caring Circle: *Kelly*
Communications: *Doug*
Endowment: *Carolyn, Dick, Doug*
Finance:
Long Range Planning: *Jim, Marilyn,*
Robert, Ronda
Membership: *Marion*
Nominations: *Amy, Elbert, David*
NTUUC Rep: *Marla*
RE Team: *Linn, Tommi*
Safe Congregation Panel: *Dan*
Social Action: *Rebecca*
Worship: *Doug, Marla, Rebecca,*
Robert, Tommi

Contact Us

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DENISON, TX 75021-1806



How to reach us:

- Phone: 903.231.3232
- Email: info@redriveruu.org
- Website: redriveruu.org
- Facebook: [RedRiverUnitarianUniversalistChurch](https://www.facebook.com/RedRiverUnitarianUniversalistChurch)
- Mobile App: 'RedRiverUU' free at the [Apps Store](#) & [Google Play](#).
- 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 is taking a brief hiatus for a while.

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. For January, the group will screen *Crazy, Rick Asians*. Sat. Jan 20th @ 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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