



# Red River Ramblings

The Monthly Newsletter of Red River Unitarian Universalists ♦ Denison TX ♦ Vol 22, No. 7 ♦ November 2020

Remember to Turn Your Clocks **BACK** on Halloween!

Sunday, November 1, 2020 - 11:15 on our [YouTube](#) channel and our [Facebook](#) page

**“All Souls, All Saints:  
The Congregation of the Real World”**  
the Rev. Dr. Christine Tata, *speaking*

Join the Rev Dr Christine in a look at how all seekers, from any tradition, can be part of the Congregation of the Real World - the virtual congregation that has come into being in this year of pandemic. In the Congregation of the Real World, traditional categories are challenged, erased, or transformed: souls become seekers, sinners become saints, people become prophets. Who will you become?

Sunday, November 8, 2020 - 11:15 on our [YouTube](#) channel and our [Facebook](#) page

**“What Do You Love About Your Life?”**  
Mary Sue Foster, *speaking*

What do you love about your life? No matter what, we're still living with us. Every day. What gives you a taste of goodness, truth, and beauty every day?

Sunday, November 15, 2020 - 11:15 on our [YouTube](#) channel and our [Facebook](#) page

**“The Land Ethic and the Importance of Soil”**  
the Rev. Dr. Mark Y.A. Davies, *speaking*

Soil degradation is not on too many people's radar screen, much less high on their list of most pressing ecological problems facing our world today, but that being said, soil degradation is still one of the most significant ecological challenges of the 21st Century whether we recognize it or not. The good news is that there are practical, fun, and healthy ways we can all work together to regenerate our soil for the sake of all life.

Sunday, November 22, 2020 - 11:15 on our [YouTube](#) channel and our [Facebook](#) page

**“One Thing at Once”**  
the Rev. Dr. Christine Tata, *speaking*

The blessing of contemplating the vastness of our world is that it keeps us from taking ourselves too seriously. But when we see this hurting world in all its complexity, it's easy to despair—what difference can we make? How can our tiny presence possibly make a difference? But somehow, it does; somehow, the smallest of actions done with love and purpose and thanksgiving can shine a light in the darkness. Join the Rev Dr Christine on November 22 for a program of gratitude and grace.

Sunday, November 29, 2020 - 11:15 on our [YouTube](#) channel and our [Facebook](#) page

**“What Is My Duty?”**  
the Rev. Dr. Mark Y.A. Davies, *speaking*

What is my Duty? - To whom do we owe obligations? What is the difference between direct and indirect duties? Do we have duties to non-human life? To future generations? To people we don't even know? Should we do our duty no matter what the consequences may be?

## Jim's Jabber



We held our Fall Meeting on Zoom on Oct 18th. Thanks to David, Doug, and Marla for helping make this work. I was a bit concerned that we might have a problem getting a quorum because we only had 8 online voters. However, we had 17 people join the Zoom meeting and we easily made our quorum.

We approved:

- the Spring Congregation Minutes 2020
- that the interest from our Red River savings account held by the UU Common Endowment Fund be transferred to our Red River endowment fund also held by the UU Common Endowment Fund on May 1st of each year
- new, revised Congregational Annual Goals:
  1. Subscribe to our YouTube Channel and watch 2-3 morning assemblies each month
  2. Attend 1 Zoom coffee hour a month
  3. Sit in on 1 Adult Forum a month
  4. Read the church newsletter 5 times over the next 8 months
  5. Read the Wednesday UPDATE every week
  6. Find and join 1 UU Zoom event
  7. Reach out to 4 other members/friends over the next 8 months and have a friendly conversation [*maybe try a video call using Zoom, Google, FaceTime, Duo, YouTube chat etc.*]
  8. Be sure to press Share, Like, or write a comment for all online Red River UU events that catch your attention

What I like about these goals is that it puts the success of these goals on all of us. Following goals 1 and 8 results in free advertisement for our church. The more you like, comment, and share any and all Red River posts that appear on social media, the more a larger audience (friends and friends of friends) are introduced to Red River and what we are doing. Following goals 2, 3, and 6 help support online events. Following goals 4 and 5 helps keep you informed on what we are doing. Following goal 7 keeps us connected. Don't just contact someone you communicate with already, find someone that

you haven't seen or talked with in a while and give them a call. Some of our members do not do social media or use the internet so they could use a friendly call.

During the annual reports the Worship Team presented some statistics on attendance. Before we closed the building we were seeing an average attendance of around 28 people each Sunday. Since we went to online services we are now seeing on YouTube an average of 60 views per service and on Facebook an average of 57 views. Those are exciting numbers and with the help of all of us in following the Annual Goals, those numbers will increase.

One of the most exciting (for me) things that came out of the Fall Zoom meeting was that we had 17 people on the community Zoom screen. It felt great to see and talk with that many UU faces, even if it was on Zoom. That's why I encourage all of you to join in our Zoom sessions. Information on our Zoom sessions are posted in our church newsletter, our Wednesday UPDATE, and on our App and Website.

On Oct. 17th Jan Fletcher held our first Red River UU sponsored Zoom music circle. We only had 4 musicians sign in, but what we lacked in quantity we made up in quality. If you like live music please join us next time. You don't have to play to come to this. We meet on the third Saturday of each month starting at 6:30PM.

Jan also needed to resign as Treasurer. She has had to cut back on much of her volunteer activity due to health reasons. With regrets the Board accepted her resignation. Thank you Jan so much for all you do for us.

The Board also accepted Marilyn Alexander as our new Treasurer. Thank you Marilyn for filling this critical position.

Whew! That was a busy October.



## Adult Forum for November

The topic for Adult Forum during November is  
**“Activists: People who Can’t NOT Lead.”**

Adult Forum, which currently meets via Zoom, is planned and led each month by a different AF member, and November is Marion Hill’s turn. *“I’m an activist in a minor way,”* she says, *“and am fascinated by people who devote much of their lives to trying to bring important change in the world. These individuals often have a strong religious faith that supports or guides (and occasionally pushes back against) their activism. On the Sundays in November, we’ll look at five such activists.”*



**On November 1,** AF will watch and discuss a video about the Rev. Dr. William Barber, a Christian minister in North Carolina who leads Moral Mondays, the Poor People’s Campaign,

and Repairers of the Breach, attempting to address what he terms “the interlocking evils of systemic racism, poverty, ecological devastation, militarism and the war economy, and the distorted moral narrative of religious nationalism.” In this video, Rev. Barber relates his lifelong mission for social justice to the upcoming Presidential election. (Image: Dr. Barber speaking at the 2016 UU General Assembly.)



**On November 8,** AF will watch and discuss a video about Sister Simone Campbell who since 2012 has led the “Nuns on the Bus” crusade to call attention to social issues such as the need for economic justice and immigration reform. A practicing attorney who has focused on family law and the rights of the working poor, Sister Simone often finds that her outspokenness on behalf of Medicaid expansion, the Affordable Care Act, LGBTQ rights, and a humane approach to the issue of abortion places her at odds with the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops. (Image: Sister Simone, on the road.)

**On November 15,** AF will watch and discuss a video about the late Pete Seeger, who used his platform as a popular folk singer to speak for unions and the protection of wetlands and against the arms race and the Vietnam War. Although he was raised with no



religion and didn’t join a UU church until late in life (joining then to get rehearsal space and because his mother had become a UU), he said that he had actually subscribed to UU values all his life and those values inform his music. (Image: Seeger singing at the UU General Assembly, 1996)



**On November 22,** AF will watch and discuss a video about Greta Thunberg, the 17-year-old Swedish climate activist who gained international attention when she scolded a gathering of

world leaders at the 2019 United Nations Climate Action Summit over their slowness in addressing the global threat of climate change: “How dare you!” Thunberg told the U.N. attendees. In this video, Thunberg is interviewed about her laser-like focus on the climate issue, her parents’ response to it, and the way her activism relates to her Asperger-Syndrome diagnosis. (Thunberg speaking at the U.N., 2019)



**On November 29,** AF will watch and discuss a video about Archbishop Desmond Tutu, who along with Nelson Mandela led the fight to abolish the

racist policy of apartheid in South Africa. For his work as chair of the Truth & Reconciliation Commission (charged with investigating past human rights abuses by both pro- and anti-apartheid groups) that Mandela appointed him to, Tutu won the 1984 Nobel Peace Prize. Besides leading in race relations, he has also campaigned for gay rights and the rights of women. Although a much-honored official of the Anglican Church of South Africa, Tutu blends Christian beliefs with black liberation theology into a belief system he calls ubuntu (translated by him as reconciliation or hospitality). (Tutu at the Forgotten Liberators exhibit, 2019)

Remember our goal about attending one adult forum a month? A great month to attend all five forums!

# Earth Day Recycling Event

The Earth Day Recycling Event sponsored by the Earth Day Planning Committee was held in Sherman on October 24. We offered a wide variety of recycling opportunities- glass bottles and jars, Styrofoam, cardboard, paper, ink & toner cartridges, cell phones, shredding of sensitive documents, electronic waste recycling and drug take back.

The event was hugely successful, especially for a first time to attempt a fall event. Cars started lining up by 8:00 am and kept coming up until the last minute when we closed the parking lot. We completely filled the container for Choctaw Nation and had to start asking people to take their cardboard to the City of Sherman drop off re-cycling center. The electronic waste recycler collected enough to fill two 24-foot U-Haul trucks.

The owner stated this was their most successful recycling event in Sherman to date. The Sherman Police collected 9 boxes of unused and expired drugs. We estimate we provided recycling services to around 250 households.

Event sponsors were: Texoma Earth Day Festival, Douglass Distributing, Doctors Jeannine Hatt and Chuck Phelps, Red River Unitarian Universalist Church, Ghost Town Arts Collective, Grayson County Democrats, Sherman Police Department and Car Wrap City.



Our first revised goal **“Subscribe to our YouTube Channel and watch 2-3 morning assemblies each month”** will be easy to do in November because our two favorite guest ministers are each speaking twice and we have a one new guest speaker!



## With a Twist This Year

97.5 KLAK, 93.1 KMKT and Mad Rock 102.5 are again sponsoring a drive to collect warm clothing for those in need. The twist this year, given the pandemic, is to collect for the two most asked for items: blankets and socks.

The two stations teamed up with the **Texoma Family Shelter** to raise as much money as possible **ONLINE**, so we can purchase brand new blankets & socks. We'll then provide these items to as many local individuals, families and organizations as we can.

The Texoma Family Shelter will be directing the distribution on Thursday, November 12<sup>th</sup>. The distribution will take place in the chapel at church.

This is a win-win for everyone, including us because every time the stations announce where people will go to pick up socks and blankets "Red River Unitarian Universalist Church" will be heard throughout Texoma. Name recognition is always helpful.

Should you feel comfortable helping the day before set up at 3 pm, do come. Anyone willing to help during the distribution which will be a "**Share the Warmth Drive-Thru distribution**" that would be helpful. We'll be carrying socks and blankets from the chapel to the driveway while the radio staff (we are assuming) will be giving them to those in need.

The distribution will be from 10-2 with those helping to arrive at 9 am.

Here are two easy ways to make a donation:

**1** – You can text the code **stw2020** to **(202) 858-1233**

**2** – You can visit our official **Share The Warmth** donation site – <https://givebut-ter.com/ShareTheWarmth2020>.

## Can You Solve our Instagram Mystery?

We are interested in reaching more people – particularly a younger audience – through Instagram. However, a quick search reveals there is already an Instagram page titled "Red River Unitarian Universalist Church." The date of its last posting is February 28, 2019.

We have two choices: (1) Find out who set up the existing IG account and determine whether or not they are interested in keeping the posts current (with help) or (2) Create a new IG page.

First, it would be helpful to know who hosts the current account. Did you set up this IG page? Or do you know who did? If so, please contact Jim Holmes. Thanks!

## Little Free Library / Food Pantry

It's very gratifying to know that people in the neighborhood of our church building are benefitting from our Little Library/Pantry. Thanks to everyone who has contributed by donating groceries, cleaning products, toiletries, face masks, craft items and/or books! If you would like to contribute, you have a few easy options: (1) If you have a church key, you can place items in the boxes just inside the entry, (2) Place items directly in the Little Library/Pantry, or (3) Make a monetary donation, indicating it is meant for the Little Library/Pantry. Not sure what kind of items to donate? Use your imagination...what might you and your family need during a time of financial hardship? Keep in mind, any food items must be non-perishable. Here are a few suggestions, to get you started:

- Canned goods – veggies, fruit, meat, soups, chili
- Pasta – boxed or bagged (spaghetti, penne, elbow, mac-n-cheese, etc.)
- Packages of Ramen noodles
- Canned or bottled drinks that won't spoil
- Crackers and cookies
- Disinfectant spray, wipes
- Hand sanitizer
- Hand soap
- Paper products – toilet paper, Kleenex, paper towels
- Disposable or cloth face masks
- Toothpaste and new, packaged toothbrush
- Other toiletries
- Small craft items, puzzles, games



## The Final Count

Over the last year, the UU the VOTE, as we know, has been reaching out to as many registered voters as possible, urging them to check their registration and giving information on how

to vote by mail, when early voting opens, and offering words of encouragement to help entice people to vote.

Last week the campaign held a Zoom rally where the final tallies were announced. Drum roll please...



# 2,797,532 people reached!

UU the VOTE was an inter-faith, non-partisan effort designed, staffed, and led by Unitarian Universalists and others.

Nice work to all who were part of the massive undertaking.

## “Turn, Turn, Turn:

### UUA Southern Region Virtual Assembly 2020”

Saturday, November 14, 2020, 11:00 am - 3:00 pm EST

Type of event: Webinar

Sponsor: [Southern Region of the UUA](#)

Join your Southern Region staff team and sibling Unitarian Universalist congregations in the Southern Region for a day of collaboration and learning! UUA President Rev. Dr. Susan Frederick-Gray will be our keynote speaker in the morning. Afternoon workshops include:

- *Widening the Circle of Concern* with Kathy McGowan and Rev. Nate Hollister
- *What's Next? The Changing Congregational Landscape* with Natalie Briscoe and Connie Goodbread
- *Small Group Ministry and Membership Paths* with Cameron Young and Lillian Drab-Braddick

Registration fee: \$20 per person

We hope you'll join us! [Register today!](#)

### Workshop details:

*Where Do We Go From Here? Widening the Circle of Concern:* with Rev. Nathan Hollister and Kathy McGowan:

Join us in a discussion of how we might live out our UU values in the aftermath of the election. What does our response look like, depending on those election results? How do we continue our work for justice, peace, and an ecological world? How might we continue our work of dismantling white supremacy culture, both in ourselves, in our congregations, and in our wider communities? What should our actions with regard to the Commission on Institutional Change’s recommendations in their work “Widening the Circle of Concern” be? Our work doesn’t end on November 7th, so let’s talk!

*To Every Season, the Changing Congregational Landscape* with Co-Leads Connie Goodbread and Natalie Briscoe:

Come into community with Natalie Briscoe and Connie Goodbread. We will hold one another in brave space and talk about what is going on around us and how our partnerships will help us to weather the storm. We can talk about what is working in your congregation that helps you to cope. We will talk about how having relationships with the larger faith is grounding and supportive. We will talk about how we support each other

*A Time to Build Up, Small Group Ministry and Membership Paths* with Cameron Young and Lillian Drab-Braddick:

We need community more than ever. Come learn useful methods for fostering connections, virtually. Cameron Young & Lillian Drab-Braddick will share strategies for employing Small Group Ministry to build community and facilitate exchange between congregational leaders. Join in this discussion; share what is working for you and learn from one another's experiences.

[Register today!](#) You can’t beat the price and you don’t need to leave home!

## November birthdays



- 08 Carol Cameron
- 08 Dan Althoff
- 13 Marla Loturco
- 13 Maura Shehan
- 16 Cylvia Lawrence
- 22 Pete Schulze

## Common Read for November

### This is Real/igion for the Rest of Us Because why not?

By [Rev Dr Sparky](#)

[Oct 16](#) · 3 min read

It's now been a year since I came down from a mountaintop retreat, all inspired and sure that G\*d had called me to ministry to some wonderful progressive church somewhere — perhaps in New England, I thought, where we could serve a Higher Power, avoid the heat, and take in a Red Sox game from time to time.

I was seeking a congregation to serve...

Well, G\*d had other ideas, apparently. I'll skip the details, but through a series of events both local and global (\*cough\* COVID), I am still without an on-site church to serve. (And the Red Sox... well, you know, next year...)

Meanwhile, because of the pandemic, church-as-we-know-it was fundamentally transformed, while no one was looking...

And now, everything about “church” is changing

And because church is becoming fundamentally different, I have realized that ministry must become fundamentally different, too — or at least, the ministry I have to offer.

Now, I have a cobbled-together online preaching ministry ([here](#) is an example), for which I am grateful. My beloved and I have been working to flip our state from red to blue [this election — or at least, purple](#). And after neglecting my work on Medium, I am delighted to come back to find it has been updated and upgraded with tools to keep in touch with followers — like this newsletter I'm about to invite you to join.

My real congregation is the real world

I wanted to serve a congregation, and now I realize

— you are the only congregation I need. I am a word worker; a preacher is just a writer in real time. I am one tiny person among other tiny persons. And that's entirely fine with me. That's the real world. I don't need to “scale up” to be doing the work G\*d needs me to do.

And you readers are the congregation of the real world; real random people, doing real things, doing your best keep your souls alive. (And, if you're like me, trying not to be an ass that too much of the time.)

#### “Real/igion For the Rest of Us”: a newsletter for a virtual congregation

So, as members of congregation of the real world, you entitled to the free congregational newsletter, Real/igion For the Rest of Us. All you have to do is follow this publication, and you'll get notices whenever a new post shows up. I think that's how it works.

Real/igion For the Rest of Us is for you if:

- You'd like the occasional think piece in your email, but not too often, always with a link or two of interest, and *never* about how you, too, can make a zillion dollars writing for Medium;
- You question organized religion, but you also think “spiritual but not religious” types need to get a sense of humor;
- You're a pretty deep thinker, and you enjoy commenting, but you're not a jerk about it, because you already learned that nobody knows everything;
- You believe, as Oscar Wilde said, that “life is too important to be taken seriously”; and
- You'd like to be in the company of others whose heart sometimes breaks for love of the universe.

Thanks for letting me hear from you.

Keep the faith.

### Eight Goals for Eight Months! On your mark, get ready, GO!

And they are all SAM goals - the perfect kind. “SAM?” You ask. **S**pecific, **A**ttainable, and **M**asurable. So often folks conjure up goals that are more fanciful than real. Over the next eight months each of us could Zoom into the Adult Forum monthly ... Read *Red River Ramblings* 5 months out of the 8 ... Drop by Online Coffee Hour and chat ... subscribe to our YouTube channel and while there watch a Morning Assembly or two (or more) ... Dig out your church directory (or check the email members received from [directory@redriveruu.org](mailto:directory@redriveruu.org) on Oct 19 because the directory was attached) and randomly call a few folks.

Choose a goal and go for it. Then, in a day or two do another. Another nice thing about our goals - they give us something to do besides watching TV or cleaning closets!

## Our Leaders

### Board of Trustees

Jim Holmes, *President*  
Lisa Cates, *Vice-President*  
Marilyn Alexander, *Treasurer*  
David Dyer, *Secretary*  
Sabra Jones, *Trustee*

### Committee on Ministry:

*Dan Althoff, Elbert Hill, Marla Loturco*

### Nominating:

*Kelly Cofield Dyer, Amy Hoffman-Shehan,*

### Team Leaders/Members:

Adult Forum: *Sabra*  
Aesthetics: *Carol, Doug, Joyce*  
Caring Circle: *Kelly*  
Communications: *Doug*  
Endowment: *Carolyn, Dick, Doug*  
Facilities: *Jim (until we find someone)*  
Finance: *Jim, Dick, Doug*  
Grounds: *Marilyn*  
Long Range Planning: *Jim, Marilyn, Robert, Ronda*  
Membership: *Marion*  
NTUUC Rep: *Marla*  
RE Team: *Tommi*  
Safe Congregation Panel: *Dan*  
Social Action:  
Welcoming Congregation: *Adrian, Amy, Lisa, Marla*  
Worship: *Dan, Doug, Marla, Robert*

## Sneak Peek: Nov 1<sup>th</sup> Promo!



## Sneak Peek: Nov 8<sup>th</sup> Promo!



## Sneak Peek: Nov 15<sup>th</sup> Promo



## Contact Us

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### How to reach us:

- Phone: 903.231.3232
- [Mobile App](#)
- [Email](#)
- [Website](#)
- [Facebook](#)

The church calendar is now merged with the EVENTS listing on the church website home page

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