



Sunday, April 2, 2023 - 11:15 am

## Rise of Religious Fundamentalism in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century

Walter Norris, *leading*

My last message was related to indicators during the 19<sup>th</sup> Century of an impending world-wide phenomenon known as Religious Fundamentalism. My current message relates to the rise and evolution of this religious circumstance during the 20<sup>th</sup> Century, with most of us present today, witnessing this rise in the last half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. It will consider the start of this abnormality which began in the United States and particularly with evangelical denominations. In addition, we A morning to gather our tired and tattered energies, pulling inward to a place of rest, where our hearts and hands, usually filled with reusing, repurposing, recycling, saving butterflies, saving water, might relax. Instead of doing, let us take time to concentrate on being, on quieting our busy minds so we once again can breathe deeply and begin again.

powerhouse along with its spread internationally.

Sunday, April 9, 2023 - 11:15 am

## The Hope for Regeneration

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

Is it possible for us to bring new life and hope to the world in the midst of so many complex and sometimes seemingly insurmountable challenges? You can read Mark's bio [here](#)

Sunday, April 16, 2023 - 11:15 am

## The Ambiguity of Our Existence

Sunday, April 23, 2023 - 11:15 am

## Earth Day Is Over, Now What

Jana Norris, *leading*

A morning to gather our tired and tattered energies, pulling inward to a place of rest, where our hearts and hands, usually filled with reusing, repurposing, recycling, saving butterflies, saving water, might relax. Instead of doing, let us take time to concentrate on being, on quieting our busy minds so we once again can breathe deeply and begin again.

Sunday, April 30, 2023 - 11:15 am

## Amazing Young Peace Activists

Marla Loturco, *leading*

Many times, we think of people who have made a difference in the arena of peace as older and wiser. Today I want to challenge that perception by talking about three young women of color who have been making a difference despite their age, or maybe because of it.

These three women are:

Amanda Gorman (24),  
Malala Yousafzia (25), and  
Ameriyanna Copey (15).

Come join me for a refreshing and hopeful look young people are offering humankind.

## Today, following the Morning Assembly



A simple tradition ... bring a dish to share (whatever you want to bring) and plan on joining everyone for a no-agenda, informal, relaxed, and upbeat time.

Then when we're done, we share the cleaning up. A simple process and a lot of fun as well.

# Earth Day Festival

The festival is fast approaching, and all the parts are falling into place. We have four non-profit organizations providing children's activities in the Municipal Ballroom. In addition, our church sponsored Children's Clothing Swap and two art shows will be in the room. The Sherman Parks & Rec department is sponsoring a children's art show and contest, and we will welcome back the recycled sculpture show from Fred Douglass Early Learning Center families.

On the grounds, you will be able to find a nice variety of vendors, displays, music, demonstrations and other entertainment. We will have several new food vendors, including a coffee truck, a wood fired pizza vendor and a gluten free baker.

The entertainment schedule is filling up fast. We will have a nice variety of musical styles as well as belly dancing and karate demonstrations. Trashion VII, the annual trash fashion show, takes the stage at 3:10 pm.

We are adding a workshop tent on the lawn this year so we can move the workshops out of the ballroom kitchen. We have workshops on Monarch habitats and bee keeping scheduled and still hope to add one more. All of the workshops will take place in the afternoon after the shredder stops.

Recycling continues to be a major attraction to the festival, and we have managed to add to the items we can accept. This year, First United Bank will sponsor a shred truck from 9:00 am to noon. The other recycling options will be there the entire day. Those include cardboard, paper, plastics 1-2-5, tin/aluminum cans, Styrofoam, plastic bags/bubble wrap/shrink film, textiles, latex paint, electronic waste, and unused medications. Recyclers will enter Elm Street from the south on Pecan Street. Anyone who wishes to recycle at the festival should read the specific instructions and lists of materials accepted on the festival website.

The Earth Day Festival is Saturday, April 22<sup>nd</sup> Sherman Municipal Ballroom and Grounds from 9 – 4. Free and open to all, especially families and kid.

You can sign up to be a volunteer by filling out a [volunteer registration form](#) and by reading the [Volunteer Information](#) (so you know what to expect.)

# Search Team Update

In early March, we contacted NTUUC to ask them about when they think they may start awarding their grants for minister compensation. NTUUC is now looking at some time after the start of next year depending on how their investment portfolio stands. Because of this we decided to delay our next formal meeting until June, after the spring congregational meeting so we could see where Red River UU sits financially.

Meanwhile, we are working on putting together our church history (led by Jana) and putting together our church profile (led by Marla). This information will be needed once we formally pursue getting a minister.

In June we will review our financial status based on the outcome of our Stewardship Campaign and the end-of-year budget vs. actual projections. We also continue to receive pledges for the minister compensation package. To date we have commitments of \$15,400. If you wish to contribute to this fund, go to the Minister Compensation Pledge Form. Money will not be needed until a minister starts.

Jim Holmes  
*chair*

# Shelter Meals

We provide a meal to the residents of the Shelter once a quarter. Recently the shelter asked if we would supply dinner on Easter. Marion Hill coordinates this special outreach. The project is not complex. People choose what they wish to bring and often the food is left in the kitchen at church or take the food directly to the shelter. Often some volunteer to join the residents for dinner. If you're interested, please speak with Marion or email her [here](#).

# Moveable Feast

This month the Feasters are going to Restaurant 391, meeting there on Wed. Apr. 12 @ 11:30. If you would like to be included in upcoming feast, speak with Marion, as she and Elbert have been the lead Feasters for the last twenty-five years.

# Marilyn's Musings



April greets us with the joys of Easter Baskets and the dreaded income tax deadline. But here at Red River UU we celebrate Earth Day with a huge extravaganza that involves the entire Texoma community.

Red River is the reason there is Earth Day in Texoma. Amy and her team are busily organizing the event, which is Saturday, April 22. Check with Amy because I bet she has a job for you.

This month is also when we have our annual stewardship campaign to get pledges so we can finalize the budget for our church year that begins July 1<sup>st</sup>.

We must have a balanced budget and our budget is based on the amount of money that the congregation pledges. The finance team has developed a preliminary budget of \$44,700 in pledges and hopes that we can raise at least equal that amount. We need to grow and some of the additional request in the budget is for marketing especially to newcomers to this area. If we don't grow, we will slowly cease to exist. There is a need for our liberal religion to continue and to serve our Texoma community. We must find a way to get the information to those who are seeking a religious community that is liberal. They are out there. We just need to find them.

We held the Annual Appreciation Dinner on March 26<sup>th</sup> following the Morning Assembly. Adrian Hinman and Don Rogers received the Bruce Cameron Volunteer Service Award. You can read more about them in this newsletter. In addition to recognizing all the people who make Red River work, we also recognized paid staff: Elle Dyer for her work to initiate the children's RE program; Doug Strong for his work to create and disseminate our communications; Kerry Williams for groundskeeping; and Minnie Cantu for housekeeping and hospitality. We are few, but we are mighty. Everyone does a part and that makes all the difference in our operation. Thank you all!

Here are notes from the board meeting.

Jim gave a report on the need for marketing and joining the Durant and Pottsboro Chambers of Com-

merce. He detailed where we were meeting goals and where we were falling behind. He will give this report to the congregation.

The board began planning the Spring Congregational Meeting, with the packet due on May 1<sup>st</sup>.

The stewardship letter will be sent via email and snail mail to those who don't respond to the email. A link to the Stewardship Pledge Form will be in the UPDATE, website and mobile so people can make their pledges online, if they wish.

Amy reported that they were busy all day both Friday and Saturday at the Clothing Swap in March and that 25 people wrote 5 postcards each to the legislature against the proposed anti-LGBTQ legislation.

Three people filled out visitor cards and she noticed comments on social media that people were talking about our church being the one that is actively having events like the clothing swap, postcard writing and board games.

Marilyn donated 3 framed prints (11"x17") of the proposed 8 Principles of Unitarian Universalism. Amy asked that a larger copy be printed and attached to foam core board for use at Earth Day. Marilyn ordered it from Office Depot, and it is printed.

Jim reported that the siding is finished on the garages and that Bruce is completing the doors. When the doors are finished the garages will be painted.

Marilyn Alexander,  
*president*

## Caring Circle Updates

A slightly different slant for this month's caring circle update. The organization Aging with Dignity offers brief videos related to Spirituality and Aging. [Last week](#), counselor Margaret McGahon began a discussion on dementia for caregivers. [This week](#) she shares tips on how to adjust to the dementia diagnosis. "There is a misconception that a diagnosis somehow means life is going to change drastically and immediately," McGahon says. "When in reality, and more often than not, life changes gradually with this illness – and that can afford us more time and space for a lot of good stuff!"



## Three-Part Film Series

For decades, the utility industry has been a driving engine of the U.S. economy, contributing significantly to our progress and standard of living with a business model that focused on centralized generation. But now, because of reduced demand from a number of factors, including more efficient energy systems, power companies face a crisis that requires them to capture new market share to survive in the 21st century. The industry has its sights on the transportation sector, which means a chance to catalyze the electric vehicle industry, but which also sets it on a collision course with major petroleum interests. And with the need for a smart, cyber-secure grid, the tech and defense industries also have critical roles to play.

Through interviews, observational and archival footage with top executives, military personnel, utility workers, elected officials, and others -- from substations to gas stations, board rooms to military bases -- the film tells the story of a towering American industry on the brink of massive change. Whether it fails, prevails, or adapts, the outcome will profoundly affect us all.

We've partnered with Interfaith Power & Light to present a three-part film series addressing this important

issue. We will meet on **Thursday evenings, April 13, 20, and 27 from 7 to 8 in the chapel.** Open to all. A free series.

The films, from the American Resilience Project, are brief (23-27 minutes each) are well produced and highly informative. Episode 1: *The Transformation Cannot Be Stopped.* Episode 2: *Nation in Transition* Episode 3: *Workforce Rising.*

The trailer for each film will be in the UPDATE a week in advance.

## Letter writing feedback

Here's a nice update from the letter writing afternoon held during the last Clothing Swap: Kathleen Huston of the Texas UU Justice Ministry, reports on communication from Equality Texas. They hoped to receive 500 postcards and received more than 2000! We contributed around 125 of them, written by a few members and some from the community at large. Well done, friends!

## Money Matters

In the month of February, we had total receipts of \$1,548.87. Total expenses for the month were \$3,215.41, leaving us with a net loss for the month of (\$1,666.54). The net loss for the month was primarily due to the timing of pledge income, the annual fee for the church app, and the annual contribution to the Earth Day Festival. Net loss for the fiscal year-to-date was (\$625.82) primarily due to the timing of pledge income.

As of February 28, 2023, we had \$10,633.17 available in checking, including \$5,951.89 held in trust for Kat Walston from the sale of her personal effects prior to moving into assisted living. There is a total of \$19,822.68 in all savings accounts, which includes \$3,255.00 for the Minister Compensation Fund. There is a total of \$66,784.40 invested in the UUA Common Endowment Fund. The \$1,326.00 included in Other Current Assets, is the prepayment of our UUA Fair Share for this year.

A total of \$13,440 has currently been pledged for the minister compensation fund. Additional pledges can be made by contacting the minister search team.

Carole Harner,  
treasurer



# Bruce Cameron Awardees

The highlight of this year's Appreciation Dinner – beyond the warm atmosphere, multiple conversations and overall, widely wonderful fellowship – was the Bruce Cameron Distinguished Service Award, which this year was given to two people.



## Adrian Hinman

This recipient of the Bruce Cameron Volunteer Service Award has served as a worship associate and worship leader and has educated our congregation about social justice issues. They are a valuable member of the Welcoming Congregation Committee.

They work tirelessly and often with inconsistent support to bring more young people to the church by hosting free children's clothing swaps, the monthly board games group and Nerdy New Years. They address the needs of low income residents in our community and keep clothing out of the landfill through the clothing swaps. All of these commitments create a lot of stress for them, yet they continue to do it anyway.

Adrian Hinman, please come up to receive your award.

Amy Hoffman-Shehan, presented.



## Don Rogers

I volunteered to speak about this person but found myself with a difficult task. It's not because they don't do much but it's because they do a lot, but it's mostly behind the scenes - they go unnoticed while many of their accomplishments are seen and appreciated by all of us.

Here is a perfect example. The AV Team got a new digital sound board with lots of confusing bells and whistles. This person, on their own initiative, downloaded and studied the manuals and documents and watched several "how to" YouTube videos in order to understand how we could best use many of the options that our new sound board has. They then took this knowledge and helped train the rest of the AV Team on its use. Of course, by now you know I am talking about Don Rogers - our resident Buddhist. Don may go unnoticed behind the scenes, but we all know that Don can't hide when he enters the room. He's like a big teddy bear with a great mustache and twinkle in his eyes.

Don became a member of Red River on May 2019 and ever since then, Don has been doing what he does best - helping wherever help is needed.

Here is a list of a few of his duties: Past member of Nominating Committee, Current member Board of Trustees, Current member of the AV Team, Help with Facilities - especially anything with electricity, Good times team.

So, Don, the words now out. Like the wizard of oz, come out from behind the curtains and come up and get your well-deserved award.

Jim Holmes, presented.

You can watch the awards being presented [here](#).

# April Birthdays



April Birthday

07 - Bruce Cameron

18 - Carol Powell

18 - Joleen Whitten

29 - Michelle Haynes



The 2023 Stewardship  
Campaign  
April 1-16

# For the Easter Season

By Nathan Ryan

Opportunities to Say YES

[Braver/Wiser](#): A UU Weekly Message of Courage and Compassion

*There is something in every one of you that waits and listens for the of the genuine in yourself. It is the only true guide you will ever have. And if you cannot hear it, you will all of your life spend your days on the ends of strings that somebody else pulls.*

—Howard Thurman

For forty days, I refused to say no.

Last year for Lent, I decided to say yes to any request. I had only two rules: the request must do no harm, and to keep the practice authentic, I couldn't tell anyone about it until it was over.

When I came up with this Forty Days of Yes, which I thought of as a fast, I prepared myself for transformation. I imagined gathering sermon-worthy anecdotes that would melt hearts and change souls. I silently dared people to ask me for things that would lead me on great adventures and confront my assumptions.

Ash Wednesday came and went without a single request. Then several more days passed without a chance to practice my fast, then weeks.

In fact, I made it all the way to Easter without really having to honor my fast.

When I wondered how I went forty days without anyone making a request of me, I dismissed the self-congratulatory explanations (like, maybe I live a life of yes so consistently that I rarely tell people no).

More likely, it's my identities, both assigned and chosen, that are the culprit. I'm male and white: very few people ask me for things. Add "clergy" to the mix, and my guess is that people feel uncomfortable asking me for things.

On the rare occasion that someone does request something from me, I'm too often absorbed in my own privilege to even notice. Being a white man, for example, it's easy to forget the power I carry with me. Because I'm able to ignore the potential risks that a person from a traditionally marginalized community takes by asking me for something, I'm certain I overlooked opportunities to say yes because they weren't phrased as explicitly or directly as my cultural privilege demands.

I'm prone to think of my Lenten practice as a failure: I didn't pick something rigorous enough to help me grapple with the realities of my own mortality and the temporary nature of all of existence. Then again, maybe transformation shouldn't be measured in forty-day increments. What I do know is that to this day, I'm much more likely to say yes when someone asks, and I'm slightly more aware of my privilege.

## Prayer

God that we know when we experience love and justice and compassion, bless your people. Help us to be more compassionate, more engaged, and more committed. Help us to know the world as it is, and to work for it as it could be.

# A New Ad about Us!

This year's Earth Day Festival will have a new handout filled with information about recycling. Here's the details:

It's the **Recycling Guide for North Texas and Southern Oklahoma**. It's published by the Texoma Earth Day Festival. We had requests to publish a larger volume this year so it can be distributed to new residents. It will be a targeted distribution. A small number will go to area libraries, some will go to the Sherman Chamber of Commerce for new resident packages. Some will go to TCOG for their household hazardous waste events. The majority will be distributed through the City of Sherman utility billing office for new accounts who visit the office in person.

Our goal is to publish 3000-4000 copies. We are still selling ad spaces to fund the project. In the past 14 months, the City of Sherman had 3800 new residential accounts and close to 200 new business accounts.

And here's our ad:

Imagine ...  
a Religion that  
wants You to Think  
for Yourself!



We are Red River Unitarian Universalists. Ours is a community that honors the worth and dignity of every person. We gather without creed or dogma and come from every sort of religious background.

Our mission is straightforward: *We are a sanctuary for religious liberals celebrating Compassion, Diversity, and Spiritual Growth.*

As we call one another to spiritual growth, we also challenge ourselves to build Beloved Community. We side with love: for marriage equality, immigration reform, reproductive and climate justice, while striving to treat all with dignity and respect.

Longing for a church where your energy, ideas and enthusiasm can help improve this corner of the world while deepening your own spiritual path? Check us out. You may be surprised.

Red River Unitarian Universalists  
515 N. Burnett Ave in Denison TX  
[www.redriveruu.org](http://www.redriveruu.org) - FB: RedRiverUU - Mobile app



*Spiritually Alive ~ Radically Inclusive ~ Justice Centered*

# From our non-resident Poet

Did you know April 1 is [National One Cent Day](#)? Our non-resident poet did and here's his poem.

## A Thought for Your



by Don Mathis

Fortune, I did not have any  
Then I found a lonely penny

I checked to see who was around  
Before I picked it off the ground

I don't really believe in luck  
Nevertheless, I picked it up

Then I realized by this act  
I embraced the faith I did lack

Humans have hopes like dogs have fleas  
Belief grew in me by degrees

Ben Franklin's lesson I have learned  
A penny saved, a penny earned

But more than that, I realize  
Pennies from heaven bring a prize  
Picking up coins helps me lose weight  
And also lowers my heart rate

So now, unintentionally  
I pick up any coin I see



# Our Leaders

## Board of Trustees

Marilyn Alexander, *President*

Amy Hoffman-Shehan, *Vice-President*

Carole Harner, *Treasurer*

David Dyer, *Secretary*

Don Rogers, *Trustee*

## Committee on Ministry:

Carolyn Cameron, Elbert Hill, Jim Holmes

## Nominating:

Jana Norris, Jim Runnel, Linda Tracy

## Team Leaders/Members:

Adult Forum: Marilyn, Jim, Amy, Marion

Aesthetics: Doug

AV: Carole, Don, Jim, Marla

Caring Circle: Carolyn, David

Communication: Amy, Doug, Marla

Endowment: Carolyn, Dick, Doug

Facilities: Jim

Finance: Jim, Dick, Marilyn

Grounds: Marilyn

Long Range Planning: Jim, Marilyn

Membership: Marion

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

NTUUC Rep: Marilyn

RE Team: David, Marilyn

Safe Congregation Panel: Dan

Social Justice: Jan

Web Team: Hannah, Jim, Marla

Welcoming Congregation: Adrian, Amy, Lisa, Marla, Thomas

Worship: Dan, Jana, Marla, Michelle, Walter

# Contact us

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