



In this issue:

**A Morning of
Music with
Andrew
McKnight**

**UUA's new
branding cam-
paign**

**Back Again!
Meditation
Group and
"Booked For
Lunch"**

**The Feasters
Explore Dallas**

**Plus Five
Intriguing
Sunday
Mornings**

REMEMBER...

You can access the
church calendar by
clicking on the picture
below.



Adult Forum ~ 10:00

Worship ~ 11:15

Children's R.E. ~ 11:15

Fellowship Gathering
12:15

Red River Ramblings

Meaningful and Spirited Sundays ~ Each Week!

Sunday, March 2, 2014

Embracing Our Whole Story

UU Singer Andrew McKnight, *in concert*

We are indeed the sum of many parts; not all of them are so attractive to us. Yet as Andrew often jests self-deprecatingly in concert, "if we don't have a laugh at ourselves every now and then we're missing a mighty big source of humor!". During this program Andrew weaves humorous and poignant moments together in a beautiful tapestry, helping to appreciate our perceived faults as gifts as well as our talents.

Sunday, March 9, 2014

What's It All About?

The Rev. Dr. Don Fielding, *speaking*

Don takes his motivation for this Reflection from the movie and the popular song *What's It All About, Alfie?* and tries to answer that particular question. He examines several answers and decides that they are just not very satisfying. He confronts reality and decides that Unitarian Universalism can provide a pretty good answer. Come and hear his solution, and find out what it really is all about.

Sunday, March 16, 2014

Family-Directed Home Funerals and Natural Death Care: An Old, Familiar Path

Patricia Eagle, *Speaking*

Patricia Eagle, a Life-Cycle Celebrant, will share information from recent trainings she has completed in Boulder and San Francisco on home funerals, natural death care, and green burials. A home funeral is a family or community-centered response for caring for our dead in personal, sacred, and environmentally sound ways, as legal-

ly supported by state laws. "This is not really creating a new pathway," echoes Patricia, "just clearing away the weeds from an old, familiar path."

Sunday, March 23, 2014

Who's Who In UU

The Rev. Doug Strong, *preaching*

I've never been prone to rush out and procure something simply because some famous idol or politician or celebrity wears, eats, drives or uses a product (that they no doubt get paid to tout). But, I do smile when I learn that someone I admire and respect shares the same faith as we. I nod knowingly and think, "Yup, makes sense to me." It is nice to know in whose company we find our faith. A look at Who's Who in UU.

Sunday, March 30, 2014

An Experiential Discourse on Gender Identity and Race in a Democratic Society

Dr. Rachel Tudor, *Speaking*

When Dr. Rachel Tudor's colleagues at SOSU recommended her for tenure, the administration rejected the recommendation. It was a heartbreaking conclusion to decades of academic achievements in the face of prodigious obstacles. The Equal Employment Occupation Commission determined in September 2012 that Dr. Tudor was separated from SOSU in violation of the Civil Rights Act. The EEOC specifically found that SOSU violated the sections of the Civil Rights Act protecting citizens from sex discrimination, religious discrimination, and retaliation. After SOSU rejected the EEOC's best efforts at conciliation, her case was forwarded to the Department of Justice. The DOJ is presently conducting an investigation into SOSU's misconduct.

Speaker Biographical sketches on page 6



Elbert's Epistle ~ Update from the president

After an unusually harsh winter—we had to cancel church two different Sundays because of icy weather, and we had never cancelled before for weather reasons—we are looking

forward to Spring and, hopefully, to renewed growth of several kinds. At the last board meeting, we looked at the 5-year plan that was approved at last May's Congregational Meeting, and projected growth was a big part of our plan. As a reminder, the goals expressed in that plan are:

1. Increase Community Service Projects from 4 to 8
2. Develop Religious Education program for youth with average attendance of 20, paid part-time Director of Religious Education, playground, and paid child-care in our nursery
3. Growth in membership to 60 members
4. Operate at a profit
5. Attendance, including friends and visitors, to average 50 per week
6. Worship services with 3 ordained or professional speakers per month
7. Increase interest groups from 5 to 8
8. Improve building and grounds
9. No minister planned in 5 years

After nearly a year, we realize that real progress has been made on some goals. For example, we are operating at a (small) profit, as #4 states; and on #2 we have an R.E. program for kids, a paid part-time DRE, and a playground (even have children attending some Sundays). We also continue to make improvements to our building and grounds (#8). However, little progress has been made on meeting other goals. Regarding #3, we have had new members join, but we have lost almost the same number, due mostly to the moving away of members, so we are in almost the same place we were a year ago. Regarding #5, our average attendance at Sunday services also is little changed from last year. While it is encouraging to note that we haven't lost ground in these respects, we'd like to see growth on both counts. We welcome any ideas from the congregation in helping meet any of these goals.

The Nominating Committee is looking for a few good people to serve on the board and on other committees and teams of the church for the next year and the following year. If you are willing to serve in any capacity, please let [Marla Loturco](#) know.

Also, pledge time is just around the corner. Please be thinking about how much of a financial contribution you can make to help in accomplishing the mission of our church. Remem-

ber, RRUU is US. If we want this church to be here for present and future congregants, and to serve our communities even better than we are now doing, please commit to the most generous contribution you can manage.

I've heard that some in the congregation feel intimidated out of volunteering to bring after-church snacks on Sundays. Please don't. We have some terrific cooks at RRUU, no question. But speaking for myself, I'm perfectly happy with cheese and crackers or baloney and bread—it's the chance to chat and chew with fellow congregants that's important! So if you've been holding back for fear your offering won't meet some standard that most of us don't care about anyway, be brave. I bet we'll like whatever you bring, and we'll appreciate you for bringing it!

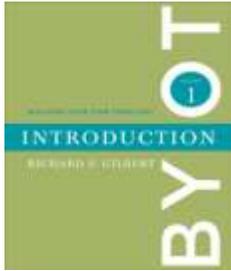
Earth Day Texoma is coming up again, April 26 this year. For any who may not know, RRUU's Green Team chalice circle organizes this annual day-long festival, which has drawn up to 4,000 people in prior years. RRUU also contributes funds through our share-the-plate Sundays; in fact, this church is its main sponsor. We also contribute many of the volunteers who run the event. If you'd like to get involved in before-festival planning and/or volunteering to help that day, please contact [Amy](#) or [Marla](#).

We have a really good program to offer people in our communities in north Texas and southern Oklahoma. The Worship Team has been bringing us Sunday-morning services that are interesting and varied. We now have a real Children's R.E. program in place, so when families with kids visit, we don't have to apologize that we've nothing to offer their youngsters. Instead of suggesting nearby U.U. churches to them as places that serve entire families, we can now welcome them to RRUU's whole-family program of services. Our Adult Forum is popular, and some consider the lively discussions we have there the most valuable part of their weekly church participation. But we'd love to see more people attending all of these. There are bound to be many more in our various communities who feel "lost" without a liberal church to attend, and who would appreciate what RRUU offers. Let's not keep RRUU a secret, folks!

See you in church, friends,
Elbert

The Nominating Committee is looking for a few good people to serve. If you are willing to serve, please let Marla Loturco know.

Adult Forum ~ Sundays @ 10 AM



March 2 ~ BUILDING YOUR OWN THEOLOGY... motivation, the internal factors that cause people to act...discussion of ethical decisions based on motivation

March 9 ~ BUILDING YOUR OWN THEOLOGY...The Difficult Art of Doing Good...discussion of examples

March 16 ~ BUILDING YOUR OWN THEOLOGY...The Harm That Good Men Do and ethical discussion of faithfulness

March 23 ~ BUILDING YOUR OWN THEOLOGY...The Difference Between Right and Wrong and discussion of principles as examples

March 30 ~ THE GREAT COURSES ... Transcendentalism...Lecture #6

Meditation Group ~ March 30th



After taking the winter off (it was just too cold to meditate!), our meditation group will start meeting the last Sunday of each month @ 12:35 in the Chapel. Meditation is a wonderful way to unwind, relax and enjoy the

peace that comes from meditation. If you have never tried it, come and check it out. You may well find meditating can be a worthwhile and rewarding experience.

Booked For Lunch ~ March 20th

We're starting back up at 12:30 on Thursday, March 20. I'm looking forward to hearing what everyone has been reading over the winter. A snack will be provided. Everyone is welcome to join us. It's a fun way to connect and get inspired. I hope to see you there. Carole



Let's Break Bread Together ~ Sunday, March 9th



There is nothing like breaking bread together, just ask those who join the *Out To Lunch* adventure! But, sometimes it is nice to stay home for lunch - as in our church home! In March, rather than heading to a restaurant for lunch, we'll have an **ALL-CHURCH POT LUCK LUNCH**, on Sunday, March 9th.

All-Church means *everyone*. Don't be shy, bring something to share (if cooking isn't your thing, something to drink, maybe some rolls, or even jam for bread) and we'll set it all out after Dr. Don Fielding finished his remarks on *"What's It All About"*.

Board Bits ~ from the February 2014 Board Meeting

At its February meeting, the board voted to separate the Endowment Committee from the Finance Committee, so that the different functions of each would be clearer. The Finance Committee oversees financial operation of the church generally, including the budget process, periodic auditing of the books, etc. The Endowment Committee is primarily responsible for generating and investing monies for the purpose of continued advancement of the church. We discussed ways to seed our endowment fund through holding fund-raisers, educating the congregation about projected needs of the church, etc.

We discussed plans for the upcoming Appreciation Dinner on February 26. It will be catered, may include the awarding of the Bruce Cameron Distinguished

Service Award for volunteerism to one or more congregants, and will give each of us an opportunity to express appreciation for the many contributions individuals make.

We discussed the Worship Team's schedule for the rest of the year. Programs are set through June, with some programs planned beyond that month.

Vice-President and Social Action Chair Gil Alexander announced that he will be participating in a roundtable conference call with representatives of our fellow churches who belong to the Texas UU Justice Ministry on February 25.

We discussed the church's current 5-year plan and ways to implement the goals expressed in it over the next few years.

We discussed plans for the sixth annual Earth Day Texoma Festival, scheduled for April 26 at the Sherman Municipal Grounds, and ways that the church will be participating in it.

We discussed the need for more of our members to serve on positions in the church (committees, board, teams, etc.), and the fact that the Nominating Committee is currently seeking candidates for several offices. (We elect new officers at our May Congregational Meeting, and those chosen will begin serving on July 1.)

We reviewed bids obtained so far on a heating/air-conditioning system for the top floor of the church. Other bids are being sought. The church received a grant last month from NTUUC (North Texas Unitarian Universalist Congregations), of which RRUU is a member, and that grant should pay for most of the cost of heating and cooling that floor.

Unitarian Universalist Association's New Logo



A new logo for the Unitarian Universalist Association is only part of an initiative to help congregations reach out to the millennial generation and others who are unchurched.

The Rev. Dr. Terasa Cooley, the UUA's Program and Strategy Officer, said the new initiative developed out of a growing realization that the UUA and its congregations have been sending "inconsistent" messages about Unitarian Universalism into the larger world.

"We have not been very good about speaking to people who don't know anything about Unitarian Universalism," said Cooley. "We've never come up with a succinct way to share our faith."

"We want congregations to think about the messages their congregations are sending out to the world that doesn't know anything about them," she added. "That includes thinking about how their building looks to guests, the structure of their services, their programs, whether they're inward-oriented or serving the community, and what their online presence is like."

Children's Religious Education ~ Exploring, Learning, Growing!

March 2 ~ *The Boy Who Was Afraid to Try From Long Ago & Many Lands.* Practice forming bowls and vessels from Pla-Doh.

March 9 ~ *The Birth of Buddha from Long Ago & Many Lands.* Cartoon strip of Buddha and his childhood. Miniature Buddha statues.

March 16 ~ *Guatama Finds Out For Himself from Long Ago & Many Lands.* Make Tibetan Prayer flags.

March 23 ~ *The Whale and the Big Bronze Statue from Long Ago & Many Lands.* Drawings of Buddha and the whale.

March 30 ~ *The Blind Man and the Elephant from Long Ago & Many Lands.* Blindfold and identify shapes and objects by feel



Treasurer's Report ~ A Monthly Update on our Finances

In the month of January, we had income of \$2,541 from general operations. After operations expense of \$1,770 for the month, we had a net income from operations of \$771.

In January, we received two new grants from NTUUC: \$6,250 for HVAC for the top floor and \$1,200 for guest musicians. We had grant expense of \$689 for worship and religious education. There was no renovation income or expense

For the year to date period of July 2013 through January 2014, we had net income of \$11,645 from operations, net expense from renovations of \$5,857, grant income of \$7,450 from the new NTUUC grants, grant expense of \$5,518 and principal payments of \$2,961. The total change in cash for the year to date period was a decrease of \$4,760. This was better than our budget primarily due to the new grants received in January.

As of the end of January 2014, we had cash of \$56,048 and debt of \$36,376. The cash amount includes \$487 reserved for renovations and \$12,232 reserved for grants.

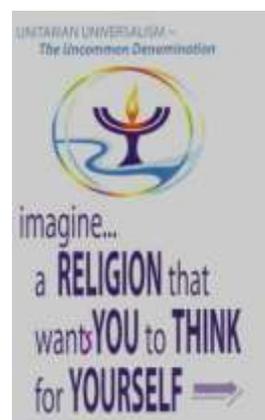
In January we donated \$104 from the Share the Plate program to the Grayson County Shelter.

Carole Harner, Treasurer

Drop a business card

Pick up a few of our new "business cards" and leave them along with all those business cards at restaurant checkout counters etc. The cards are two sided and are an easy way to let others know who we are.

Cards are on the counter outside the chapel. Help yourself!



Sneek Peek (and listen) to Andrew McKnight sing
"Western Skies"
(Click the image)

then come hear him on March 2nd

Introducing our Guest Speakers ~ With us this month



Andrew McKnight

Sunday, March 2

Since permanently leaving his corporate environmental engineering career in 1996, award-winning folk and Americana artist Andrew McKnight's musical journey has traced over half

a million miles of blue highways, and earned him a wealth of critical acclaim and enthusiastic fans for his captivating performances and five CDs.

In addition to his passion for community causes, he is a longtime advocate for preserving American landscapes and heritage. Several of McKnight's songs are rooted in Appalachian history and culture, including the haunting Civil War ballad "The Road to Appomattox".

While no stranger to elite stages like the Kennedy Center, the Rocky Mountain Folks Festival or the Katharine Hepburn Theater, McKnight's music seems to spread most rapidly through many of the diverse causes that have embraced his music over the years. Andrew is a member of the UU Church in Loudoun, VA.



Patricia Eagle

Sunday, March 16

Patricia Eagle was delighted to have a profession called "Life-Cycle Celebrant®" lure her away from a long career as an educator, legitimizing her life-long penchant for creating ceremony and ritual (www.horizonsceremonies.com). She carries a fascination with excavating stories lived and revealed, whether of a couple getting married or someone who has died, weaving story into the heart of a wedding or funeral in ways that authentically acknowledge the paths our lives have taken. This April she completes her training as a Home Funeral Guide. Patricia also directs the San Luis Valley [Threshold Choir](#) in Alamosa, CO, a not-for-profit group that offers soothing, comforting songs to those who are dying. In addition, she has organized the Alamosa [Death Cafés](#), joining this global movement dedicated to taking death out of the closet and discussing it publicly while enjoying tea and cake as people share thought-provoking, life-affirming dialogues. Patricia is a member of the UU Fellowship in Alamosa.

JOIN ANDREW SUNDAY AFTERNOON AT HARMONY HOUSE CONCERTS



After his morning service with us, Andrew will be in concert Sunday afternoon, March 2, at Harmony House

Concerts in Bonham. He will not be performing the same songs that we will hear in church, as he is a prolific writer of songs about "just plain folks" and extraordinary persons being good stewards of the planet. There will be suggested door donation for this show of \$15 per person, all proceeds going to Andrew. **Please call Harmony House Concerts, even after the service, to make reservations, if interested at 903/583-2661.** We can give directions over the phone to anyone who has never been here or we will give them our physical address if they have a GPS.



Rachel Tudor

Sunday, March 30

Dr. Rachel Tudor is a professor of English at Collin College. She is a graduate of the University of Houston and the University of Oklahoma. She was awarded *Writer of the Year* by Wordcraft Circle of Native Writers and Storytellers for her dissertation on Native American literature, appointed a Visiting Professor of Native American literature at the University of Idaho, and received a residential fellowship from the Virginia Center for the Arts. Her essay, *Romantic Voyeurism and the Modern Idea of the Savage*, was published in *The Texas Review*. She is also an enrolled citizen of the Chickasaw Nation.

Leadership

Board of Trustees

Elbert Hill, *president*
 Gil Alexander, *vice president*
 Carole Harner, *Treasurer*
 Doug Strong, *Secretary*
 Paula Blackshear, *Trustee*
 Marla Loturco, *Past President*

Committee on Ministry:

Gerry Shehan, Peter Schulze

Team Leaders or Team:

Adult Forum: *Joyce*

Aesthetics Team:

Bruce, Joyce, Maura, Paula

Building/Grounds: *Marilyn*

Communications: *Doug*

Chalice coordinator: *Open*

DRE: *Joyce*

Finance: *Dan*

Good Times: *Carole,*

Marilyn & Marion

Long Range Planning:

Amy, Gil, Marilyn

Membership: *Marion*

Nominations: *Helen, L.D., Marla*

NTUUC Rep: *Marla*

Safe Congregation Panel:

Elbert

Social Action: *Gil*

Ways & Means: *Open*

Worship:

Dan, Doug, Faye, Marla

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Phone: 903.231.3232

Web: www.rruu.org

Facebook:

RedRiverUnitarianUniversalist
 Church (all one word)

Green Team & YOU ~ Mar 13th & Mar 20th

The count-down has begun! The Earth Day Festival is on Apr 26th and there is a lot to get done. The Green Team will meet at 7:00 pm on Mar 13th & 20th and YOU are encouraged to come help plan the day, which is our congregation's largest community project. The meetings are at Amy Hoffman-Shehan's home in Sherman.

Moveable Feast ~ Exploring Food in Dallas

Movable Feast will make a "foodie" excursion to Dallas on March 13. Those who wish to car-pool should meet at the church by 12:30 p.m. (We won't be stopping for lunch, so eat before you come.) We'll get a tour of the BuzzBallz production center at 2114 McDaniel Dr. in Carrollton at 2:00 p.m. (The owner, Merrilee Kick, is the daughter of Feasters Gil and Marilyn Alexander, and has built a thriving business from a simple idea: delicious alcoholic drinks in various flavors, packaged individually. Those who've had the tour say it's well worth doing.) Then we'll go to Super H shopping center in Carrollton and shop for seafoods, Korean food delicacies, and other Korean merchandise. Feasters David and Cylvia Lawrence and Judy Donahue have recommended this ethnic shopping experience. We'll eat supper at the Korean food stalls in Super H. If you wish to go, emailing the Fearless Feast Facilitators (AKA [Elbert and Marion Hill](#)) or calling 580-924-7715.

Chalice Circles/Interest Groups ~ for you!

GREEN TEAM, an Environmental Action Circle usually meets on Thursday evenings @ 7:00 PM. This month the team meets twice, see details above. Facilitator: Amy Hoffman-Shehan.

MOVEABLE FEAST, a Cooking and/or Eating Circle are having a "foodie" outing to dallas on Mar 13th. Details above. Facilitators: Elbert & Marion Hill.

OMMMM... Meditation Group, meets the last Sunday of each month @12:35 in the Chapel, which this month is Mar 30, 2014.. Open to all who wish to learn more about meditation and to participate in meditating. Facilitator: Paula Blackshear.

BOOKED FOR LUNCH, is an informal book discussion group will meet in the Barton Parlor on March 20th. Join in the conversation. Facilitator Carole Harner.

OUT TO LUNCH, One Sunday a month after things we go out for a Dutch-treat lunch. There is no agenda, no reports, no minutes - just everyone heading out and breaking bread together. This month OTL will shift and be an all-church potluck at church. Email announcements@rruu.org if you have a restaurant suggestion.