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# Red River Ramblings



January,  
2015  
Volume 12  
Issue 7

## Sunday mornings ~ for your mind, body and soul

Sunday, January 4, 2015

### On Gratitude

Marla Loturco, *speaking*

An attitude of gratitude can improve your physical, psychological and emotional well-being. Do you have a practice that can make a difference?

Refreshments: A-G

Sunday, January 11, 2015

### Shaking like a Leaf

*The First Sunrise Reflection*

The Rev. Dr. Don Fielding, *speaking*

If I were asked to sum up what this whole series is about, I would have to say “religious naturalism”; a growing and popular form of UUism.

My “reflections” tend to be very secular. If they are religious at all, they are religion wrapped within a scientific worldview. Many UUs like their religion is such a manner. And one advantage of a 4-part series is that you can come to the first reflection to decide whether the remaining reflections are worth attending. I’m betting you will feel they are.

I am also betting you will like the idea of an “Intermission” (something not usually associated with church services). Who knows, this just might be the beginning of a new and distinctive form of a UU Sunday Service.

There are many reasons why you might find this service much to your liking. I’m looking forward to seeing *you* on the 11<sup>th</sup>.

Refreshments: H

Sunday, January 18, 2015

### Infinity by Threes: New Trinities for Unitarian Universalists

The Rev. Dr. Christine Tata, *preaching*

Even though our denomination moved beyond the Christian Trinity centuries ago, we may still need to account for the mystical, magical power of things that come in threes. In art, literature, psychology, science, philosophy, and, yes, religion, the number three guides us to harmony, growth, and wisdom.

Refreshments: Out to Lunch Bunch

Sunday, January 25, 2015

### Black Lives Matter

The Rev. Doug Strong, *preaching*

Words swirl around us: *Hands Up. Power. Freedom. Rights. White Privilege.* Words challenge us: *Don’t Shoot. I Can’t Breathe. Can We All Get Along?* Our society, it seems me, is acting in ways that clash with our first principle: *the worth and dignity of every person* when people of color – especially Black men – become, all too often, victims of police brutality. What’s an (admittedly privileged) middle class white congregation supposed to do?

Refreshments: I-Z

Morning Meditation: 9 – 9:50

Adult Forum: 10-11

Worship: 11:15 – 12:15

Fellowship Gathering: 12:15

Red River Unitarian Universalist Church ♦ Denison, TX

We are a sanctuary for religious liberals celebrating compassion, diversity and spiritual growth.





## Dan's Dispatch

Wow! It's already the New Year of 2015! For many of us, a New Year means new resolutions. But that's not the case for all of us. The truth be told, for many years I simply stopped making New Year's resolutions because I was flat-out terrible at keeping them. But those were always personal resolutions, involving only me. I was the only one who would benefit and I was accountable only to myself.

It was entirely too easy to "forget" about those unkept promises I had made only to myself. And I won't make any "resolutions" this year, either. Instead, I prefer to think in terms of "recharging my pledges." As a member of this community, I have already made a financial pledge and a pledge of time and of service. And my pledges for this fiscal year, which began last July, are already half complete; that glass is already half full. So what is this "recharging" thing?

As I'm using it here, that means I personally want to fulfill my pledges not only dutifully and responsibly, but also enthusiastically. I vow to remind myself more frequently of how special this congregation is and how we truly are, in the words of our Mission statement, "a sanctuary for religious liberals celebrating compassion, diversity, and spiritual growth." As we approach our 15<sup>th</sup> anniversary as a member congregation of the UUA, I remind myself to not take this *sanctuary* for granted; to be aware that we offer a place that not only is life-changing, but possibly life-saving for some; and that spiritual growth is found not only in private practice, but also in community.

Fortunately, there are many models among us for me to emulate as I strive to "recharge" my personal pledges with. I am very pleased and proud that Elbert Hill has been

so deservedly honored by our local organization, North Texas Unitarian Universalist Congregations, for the Marty Robinson Volunteer Recognition Award for his unstinting service and devotion to Red River UU and to the cause of Unitarian Universalism in north Texas. He is only the latest of a string of outstanding individuals from this small but mighty congregation who have been so recognized. I know you join me in congratulating him and thanking him for everything he has done for the life of the congregation.

The next time I enter our very own building on Burnett Street in Denison, I know the "zap" I feel won't come just from a wintertime build-up of static electricity! Happy New Year to all!



## NTUUC honors Elbert Hill

Elbert Hill will be honored at the North Texas UU Congregation's Sixth Annual Recognition Awards Luncheon on Sat. Jan 31<sup>st</sup> at the UU Church of Oak Cliff. He will receive the Marty Robinson Award for Volunteerism.

Each year congregations can nominate a volunteer who it feels is worthy of appreciation for the difference he or she has made. It is noteworthy that Red River UU Church is the *only* NTUUC congregation to receive the Marty Robinson Award for Volunteerism every year.

Previous RRUU'ers to be honored are:

- 2010 – Amy Shehan-Hoffman
- 2011 – Marla Loturco
- 2012 – Bruce Cameron
- 2013 – Carolyn Cameron
- 2014 – Marion Hill

The luncheon also is the time when we will learn if the grant applications that we submitted will be approved.

Tickets for the luncheon are \$16.00 and are available starting this week from our NTUUC rep, Marla Loturco. The speaker will be Rev. Dr. Christine Tata, UCC minister and a favorite guest preacher of ours, and her title is **Radical Gifts; Radical Faith**.

Read the citation on the church web page. Click [HERE](#).

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spiritual growth."**

# NTUUC is chartering a bus to Austin for TEXAS UU LEGISLATIVE ACTION DAY

Texas Capitol, 1100 Congress Avenue, Austin

**January 20, 2015 • 8:30-4:30**



## JOIN US ON THE NTUUC BUS!

**Boarding 6:15 a.m.** at the UU Church of Oak Cliff,  
3839 W. Kiest, Dallas

**\$10** suggested Love Offering  
more if you'd like, less if you need

Please **sign up by January 10**

so we know if we need a second bus. Register at [ntuuc.org/socialaction](http://ntuuc.org/socialaction)

We should arrive around 10am, in time for part of the TXUUJM organizing meeting, which will include:

- Rev. Carlton Smith, UUA Southern Region Life Staff  
*"How Our TX Issues Connect To The Larger UUA Picture"*
- Rep. Donna Howard (fellow UU)  
*"What To Expect And How We Can Best Advocate Our Values"*
- Lobbyist Karen Neeley (UU from Austin)  
*"Lessons (via role-playing) In How To Conduct Advocacy Meetings With Our Legislators"*

Distribution of flyers for us to leave with legislators that tell about both Unitarian Universalism and our main issues:

- Women's Reproductive Justice,
- Medicaid Expansion,
- Economic Justice

Everyone is invited to join the Common Ground Street Choir in letting the capitol folks know who's in the House!

From 11 a.m. – 3 p.m., we'll visit legislators from our districts, and then reconvene as a group to debrief. We'll board the bus for home at 4:45 p.m.

You should also register with TXUUJM— they will provide you with a printed name tag, and introductions to your legislators: [www.evite.com/I/NUd45kUWem](http://www.evite.com/I/NUd45kUWem)

## New Church Directory ~ soon

We've needed a new church directory for months and the Communications Team has made it a resolution for the new year. Sooo... please respond quickly when you receive your email asking you to verify (or edit) your contact information. The goal is a new directory by Valentine's Day!

## Refreshments ~ is it your turn?

The Fellowship Gathering each week is decidedly more rewarding when we can chew while we chat, right? We all share in the rotation of bringing snacks so no one has to do it all. A gentle reminder that if we each step up to the plate and bring a bit of cheer when it is our turn, we've achieved 'work equality' – a worthy goal, right?

## Adult Forum ~



### Science and Religion

a 12 week  
Great Course  
series starts 1/11

Two crucial forces, science and religion, helped shape Western civilization and continue to interact in our daily lives. What is the nature of their relationship? When do they conflict, and how do they influence each other in pursuit of knowledge and truth? Contrary to prevailing notions that they must perpetually clash, science and theology have actually been partners in an age-old adventure. This course covers both the historical sweep and philosophical flashpoints of this epic interaction.

Each week the group will watch one segment of the series, followed by an open discussion.



*Professor Lawrence M. Principe unfolds a surprisingly cooperative dynamic in which theologians and natural scientists share methods, ideas, aspirations, and a tradition of disputational dialogue. He holds two doctorates: a Ph.D.*

*in Organic Chemistry from Indiana University, Bloomington, and a Ph.D. in the History of Science from Johns Hopkins University.*

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*Science and theology  
have actually been  
partners in an  
age-old adventure.*

## A Poem for the New Year ~

I always enjoy RR Ramblings, particularly the December issue. Here's a poem for your January issue.

Don Mathis,  
San Antonio (former RRUU member)

### 2014 Abecedarian by Don Mathis

*Aircraft in Malaysia disappeared and caused a futile investigation.  
Baseball's Giants beat the Royals in the World Series.  
Comet landing was the latest in outer space exploration.  
Dalai Lama meets with Barack Obama. Was it predestination?  
Ebola outbreak is a crisis with no cure or medication.  
Ferguson protests highlight racial profiling and discrimination.  
Global Warming is a real threat according to United Nations.  
Heat is beat by Spurs in the National Basketball Association.  
ISIS militants disgust the world by practicing decapitation.  
Japan comes under fire for whaling commercialization.  
Korean ferry capsizes and hundreds die of suffocation.  
Latvia adopts the Euro in the spread of Europeanization.  
Marijuana use rises to new highs as states vote for legalization.  
Nigerian Girls School is the site of Boko Haram depredation.  
Obama Care goes into effect; opponents call it Socialization.  
Palestinian Gaza Strip dislikes Israel's Protective Edge Operation.  
Questions of gay marriage are resolved in most of the population.  
Rock & Roll Hall of Fame has a KISS and Cat Stevens inauguration.  
Seattle Seahawks defeat Denver Broncos in the  
Super Bowl elimination.  
Texas Governor Rick Perry's indictment gives him indignation.  
Ukraine protesters react with violence to Russian troop's  
mobilization.  
Voters favor Republicans over Democrats in the electoral  
ordination.  
World Cup in Brazil; Germany is the winner of the Soccer Federation.  
XXII Olympics in Sochi, Russia, bring a touch of modernization.  
Yemen is in turmoil from the Houthi faction insubordination.  
Zehaf-Bibeau brings violence to Canada's peaceful confederation.*

## Board Bits ~ from the December Board of Trustees meeting

Board Bits from December 11, 2014

The following items came up for discussion or action at the last Board of Trustees meeting:

- Dan reported that he had met the new Director of the Grayson County Shelter; that there had been no response to date for the DRE position but it is ongoing for at least a while longer; and that we have located two vocalists who will be singing at certain services.
- We agreed to take out a semester-long advertisement at the Southeastern student newspaper, beginning in January. We have already had contact and response from the SE Freethinkers group.
- Gil offered to host the next Board retreat (to be scheduled early next year). Thank you, Gil and Marilyn! One topic proposed is the status of the current Policy & Procedures manual.
- Doug and Dan volunteered to begin making an inventory of items that belong to the church. There has not been an inventory made since we moved to our current location.
- The Agendas for Board of Trustees' meetings will be published in the weekly e-news at least a week in advance of meetings so that members will be able to suggest items and be aware of the topics coming before the board.
- We determined to explore a more methodical way of keeping track of kitchen and coffee supplies, as well regular maintenance (cleaning, vacuuming, etc.) of our downstairs spaces.
- The next Board of Trustees meeting will be on Thursday, January 15, at 2:30 p.m. The Agenda will be distributed online in the e-news no later than one week before.

## Treasurer's Report - for October & November

In the month of October, we had income of \$2,349 from general operations. After operations expense of \$1,950 for the month, we had a net income from operations of \$399. In October we had a donation of \$500 for the musician's fund, \$100 for building maintenance, and \$40 for the Wi Fi fund. There was no renovation expense. For the year to date period of October 2014, we had net income of \$3793 from operations. The total change in cash for the year to date period was a decrease of \$1,119. As of the end of October 2014, we had cash of \$47,301 and debt of \$33,326. The cash amount includes \$2,690 reserved for grants. In October we donated \$76 from the Share the Plate program to the Earth Day Festival.

In the month of November, we had income of \$2,145 from general operations. After operations expense of \$1,373 for the month, we had a net income from operations of \$772. In November we had a fund raiser for the endowment fund which came to \$340. For the year to date period of November 2014, we had net income of \$16,493 from operations. The total change in cash for the year to date period was a decrease of \$4,687. As of the end of November 2014, we had cash of \$48,373 and debt of \$33,326. The cash amount includes \$3,592 reserved for grants. In November we donated \$89 from the Share the Plate program to the Grayson County Shelter.

## Out To Lunch ~ Sunday, Jan. 18<sup>th</sup>

This month we will return to Angela's Café, at the Denison Country Club (5216 FM 84 Denison, TX 75020. (903) 337-0414.) The food is terrific as is the view. Our reservation is for 12:35 and everyone is welcome to come and break bread together. We each pay our own fare and the menu has lots of options.

It is a wonderful way to share fellowship and enjoy lively conversations!

Do come.



## Leaders

### Board of Trustees

Dan Althoff, *president*  
Gil Alexander, *vice president*  
Robert Shelton, *Treasurer*  
Doug Strong, *Secretary*  
Paula Blackshear, *Trustee*  
Elbert Hill, *Past President*

### Committee on Ministry:

Carole Harner, Gerry Shehan,  
Peter Schulze

### Team Leaders/Members:

Adult Forum: *Gil*  
Aesthetics Team:  
*Bruce, Joyce, Maura, Paula*  
Building & Grounds: *Marilyn*  
Communications: *Doug*  
Chalice coordinator: *Open*  
DRE: *Open*  
Finance: *Open*  
Good Times:  
*Carole, Marilyn & Marion*  
Long Range Planning:  
*Amy, Gil, Marilyn*  
Membership: *Marion*  
Nominations: *Helen, L.D., Marla*  
NTUUC Rep: *Marla*  
Safe Congregation Panel: *Dan*  
Social Action: *Gil*  
Ways & Means: *Open*  
Worship:  
*Dan, Doug, Faye, Marla*

## Green Team Meeting ~ Jan 8<sup>th</sup>



Earth Day 2015

The date is no longer creeping up on the Green Team as they prepare for the April 25<sup>th</sup> Texoma Earth Day Festival, it feels like tomorrow. There is much to do. If one of your new year resolution was to become more involved in the larger community and if you believe in sustainability for the earth, please come to the next Green Team meeting and walk the walk of involvement as we work hard making the 7<sup>th</sup> annual Texoma Earth Day Festival. We meet at Amy Hoffman-Shehan's home @ 7 pm on Jan 8<sup>th</sup>.

## Booked For Lunch ~ Jan 15<sup>th</sup>



What have you been reading lately? Our next meeting will be on Thursday, January 15, at 1:00 at RRUU. Everyone is invited to come and join in the fun conversation. A snack will be provided.  
Carole

## Chalice Circles / Interest Groups

**GREEN TEAM**, an Environmental Action Circle usually meets on Thursday evenings @ 7:00 PM. Next meeting Jan. 8 at Amy Hoffman-Shehan's house. Facilitator: Amy Hoffman-Shehan.

**MOVEABLE FEAST**, a Cooking and/or Eating Circle will be meeting TBA.

**BOOKED FOR LUNCH**, is an informal book discussion group which usually meets the second Thursday of the month at 1 p.m. in the Barton Parlor. The next meeting is Jan. 15. 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 Out to Lunch heads to Angela's Café, at the Denison Country Club (see page 5). Email **announce** [+suffix]\* if you have a restaurant suggestion.

## Contact Us

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