



# RED RIVER RAMBLINGS

JUNE 2024 ~ VOL 25, No. 12



Sunday, June 2, 2024 - 11:15 am

## **The Worth of Dignity**

Byron Allison Miller, *leading*

Have you ever said, *you're worth it!* or *I'm worth it!* or *you better believe it!*? While such affirmations come with a past and a present, their deeper reality is that they are most significantly something else. They are a *Prelude*. It is their future that carries the most weight. What did Captain Jean Luc Picard always say? "Make it so!"

Sunday, June 9, 2024 - 11:15 am

## **Reflections on *The False White Gospel***

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

In this discourse, I will reflect on Jim Wallis' most recent book, *The False White Gospel*, and discuss his perspectives on the historical and current expressions of white Christian nationalism in the United States and what must be done to preserve a multi-cultural and multiracial participatory democracy.

Sunday, June 16, 2024 - 11:15 am

## **Infinite Rainbows**

The Rev. Dr. Christine Tata, *leading*

The image of the rainbow has been rising in our consciousness these days, replacing, and healing harmful binaries in our ideas about gender, neuroscience, and religious experience. Let's consider together the

nearly infinite rainbow models we encounter in our human experience—from the ancient promise of the rainbow seen in the heavens, to the rainbow lore found throughout our religious and cultural history, to the expansion of the visible rainbow as a model for our actual interactions with the world. actual interactions with the world. actual interactions with the world. actual interactions with the world.

Sunday, June 23, 2024 - 11:15 am

## **Working to End Homelessness**

Leigh Walker, *guest speaker*

We welcome to the free pulpit this morning Leigh Walker who works with helping reduce homeless families in Grayson County. She is the executive director of Family Promise, a nonprofit organization serving families in transition. Its mission is intersecting faith and community to empower Grayson County families to end child homelessness by helping families facing or experiencing homelessness. You can read Leigh's bio elsewhere in this issue.

Sunday, June 30, 2024 - 11:15 am

## **Rejecting the Hubris of "America First"**

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

As we reflect on our existence as a nation, let us move beyond the hubris of an "America First" mentality and instead ask ourselves what our country can do to contribute to a more beloved community throughout the world.

# Marilyn Musings

This is my last musing after two years as president. This has been a great adventure and one that has taught me a lot. I want to express my appreciation for the board members who have been instrumental in making our progress. I also want to thank Jim Holmes for his support and guidance and all the other things he helped with. Doug has been invaluable as editor of my musings. The current board members will be continuing and will be working with Jana who is our incoming president. I appreciate Jana for agreeing to take this position. I began as NTUUC Rep. and will continue in that position.

During these two years as a church, we have moved beyond the pandemic's stifling shutdown. The Policy and Procedures Manual has been revised. New nametags have been designed. The kitchen has been reorganized with carts for ease of use. The garages have been repaired and sided. New outreach programs have been instituted and some like the Spiritual Book Club, Rainbow Committee activities, and Free Clothing Swaps are continuing. Conversation & Calories and potluck dinners have been made available again. HELP cards for Texas and Oklahoma have been distributed to assist people with finding essential aide services. Items in the garages and basement were inventoried and items that were not needed were sold. The 8<sup>th</sup> Principle was approved for our church. We joined the Sherman and Denison Chambers of Commerce. We held an open house and ribbon cutting to introduce us to the Denison community. We became active with the Texas UU Justice Ministry. We placed an ad in the Recycling Guide that is given to all new water customers in Sherman. As we have done for 15 years, we produced the Earth Day festival. We established a Minister Search Team. We received a large grant from NTUUC for minister compensation. We evaluated current goals and revised and proposed new goals each year. We added members. All of this and more was accomplished while still maintaining a balanced budget and supporting the activities of our church, holding exceptional worship services, and maintaining our site.

At Red River UU we continue to make concerted progress! On May 12<sup>th</sup>, we held our first choir practice and selected music to sing. We aren't ready to perform yet but are hopeful that we can get it ready along with other songs to sing for you soon. I was

encouraged by the singing during the Morning Assembly prior to the Spring Congregational Meeting. Let's keep it up, sing out and make a joyful noise!

Prior to the Spring Meeting, we had a wonderful array of delicious potluck items to delight our eyes and warm our bellies. I thank all of you who brought your finest recipes.

During the Spring Congregational Meeting, we had rousing discussions concerning the following.

- Current outreach efforts and progress on several fronts to grow membership were reviewed.
- What are our options moving forward if we don't find a suitable and affordable minister?
- If we do find a minister, then what is our status when the 2-year contract ends?
- How can we increase outreach to grow membership?
- Could we use the extra funds to hire a PR/Marketing Consultant to increase our visibility in the community?

The proposed vision statement was discussed, amended, and approved. It reads:

**"To create a beloved community that is spiritually alive, joyfully inclusive, and justice centered."**

Current goals were discussed, some removed, others revised, and new goals were added for the new fiscal year. We were directed to make the goals sustainable, achievable, and measurable.

The following goals were approved for 2024-2025.

1. Expand increasing visibility online and at large.
2. Bring in three outside speakers for programs that are not a part of the Morning Assembly.
3. Hire a music leader.
4. Maintain current membership and increase new membership by 8 or more.
5. Continue work toward hiring a contract minister.
6. Seek two outside groups to meet in our building and pay rent.

The nominations from the Nomination Committee were approved.

## **Board of Trustees:**

President: Jana Norris for a 2-year term

Treasurer: Carole Harner for a 2-year term

*Marilyn Musings continued next page*

Secretary: Don Rogers\*, for a 1-year term  
Trustee-at-Large: David Dyer\* for a 1-year term  
(\* Don and David are merely exchanging positions on the Board)

**Committee on Ministry:**

Jim Holmes for a term of 3 years

**Nominating Committee:**

Liz Rapp for a term of 3 years

Marilyn Alexander to fulfil the two remaining years of Jana's term

I thought that the back-and-forth participation in discussion was lively, informative, and productive, although it ran the legs off David carrying the microphone around to everyone. The thoughtful and caring discussion of how we see each other in our church and how we want it to progress was enlightening and warmed my heart, making me so enormously proud to be a part of this congregation.

Marilyn Alexander, *president*

## Come Make a Joyful Noise 🎵

No Audition Necessary! Singers wanted to create a small choir for Red River Unitarian Universalist Church. A small group of volunteers met after Conversations and Calories on May 12. We worked on just one song for a brief time. It was fun, and surprisingly good! We're on a roll and know that others like making a joyful noise (a pity the Good Book used 'noise' rather than 'song').

We will meet again this **Sunday June 2** at 1 pm at the church. Please consider sitting in with us and become a maker of noise! 🎵

Jan Fletcher, *singing for our lives!*

## Free Dishes & a typewriter!

FREE DISHES to someone who needs them! Marion Hill has cleaned out her cupboards and found dishes she no longer needs mostly dinner plates, soup bowls, and rice bowls in Asian-themed patterns; also, a tall pitcher and four matching glasses, clear with gold pattern. If you know someone who needs to equip a kitchen--perhaps

after having fire or storm damage--get in touch with Marion at [marionh3719@gmail.com](mailto:marionh3719@gmail.com). She also has a working Smith Corona electric portable typewriter to give away.

## Money Matters

Treasurer Report as of April 30, 2024

In the month of April, we had total receipts of \$4,899.39. Total expenses for the month were \$3,521.07, leaving us with a net profit for the month of \$1,378.32. The net profit for April was due to the prepayment of some pledges for next year, partly offset by an additional donation to the Earth Day Festival.

We had a net profit for the fiscal year-to-date of \$9,321.90. The year-to-date net profit was primarily due to higher other income and the prepayment of some pledges for next year. We also had lower worship expenses, lower costs for copying and supplies, and lower costs for the church app. These savings were partly offset by costs to improve building security and an additional donation to the Earth Day Festival.

As of April 30, 2024, we had \$19,381.99 available in checking. There is a total of \$20,752.52 in the bank savings account, including \$4,871.08 restricted for the Minister Fund and \$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 \$66,784.40 invested in the UUA Common Endowment Fund. The congregation voted to use up to \$51,000.00 of the Savings Fund for minister compensation.

Carole Harner, *Treasurer*

Remember Earth  
Day  
is June 15th

# Minister Search

We had a very lively and constructive discussion about the minister search at our Spring Congregation meeting on May 19th. The main concern in getting a 2-year contract minister is the overall cost of the compensation package that will be Red River's share. The congregation voted in a prior meeting to allocate up to \$51,000 from available savings to help cover the compensation cost. Should we spend all those funds we would be left with around \$10,000 remaining in available funds. This estimate is based on our current financial position and the UUA recommended compensation package that grows 3% per year to cover inflation.

Some members voiced their concerns that we cannot get in a bidding war with wealthier UU churches for an experienced minister. One of our major goals in getting a minister is to have them improve our community outreach to help increase our visibility in the Texoma community and thus help us bring in more members, especially younger members with families. If we decide to settle for a minister with less experience in outreach, we may end up at the end of two years with not reaching our outreach goals and with truly little money left in available funds.

It was asked if we could maybe divert our minister funds to hiring a PR firm and spending more on outreach. Unfortunately, the NTUUC grant is only available to use for minister

compensation. We have around \$5,100 in savings that have been reserved for the minister. compensation. We have around \$5,100 in savings that have been reserved for the minister. That money can be redirected by the Board. We have an additional \$15,400 in pledge commitments toward the minister compensation. The people who made those pledges would need to be contacted to see if they would change their pledge use to outreach projects. The \$51,000 in savings is only available for the minister compensation. We would need another membership vote to reallocate all or part of it for other expenses. Of course, we would need to produce well-defined outreach programs (new or existing) before we decide to proceed down this path.

Meanwhile, we still have our open request for minister on the UUA Minister portal. We do not expect any activity on this until next fall. We do have a contact at Brice Divinity We do have a contact at Brice Divinity (TCU divinity school). We plan on contacting them to see if they have any candidates that might be interested in our position.

David, Jana, Jim, Marilyn, and Marla, *Minister Search Team*

**Presenting the**  
**16th Annual Texoma Earth Day Festival and Recycling Event!**  
**June 15, 9am - 4pm**

**Items accepted for Recycling:**  
electronic waste, appliances, batteries, cardboard, cell phones, paper, textiles, styrofoam, plastics 1, 2, and 5, eyeglasses, plastic bags, ink cartridges, canning jars

**Sherman Police Unused Medicine Collection 9am-4pm**  
**Paper Shredding Collection 9am-12pm**

**Featured Events!!**  
- Children's Clothing Swap  
- Vendors - Workshops  
- Habitat Restore Truck - Music  
- Friends of the Library Used Book Sale  
- Demonstrations - Children's Activities - Plant Swap

**For details log on to: [earthdaytexoma.org](http://earthdaytexoma.org)**

**Where: Sherman Municipal Ballroom and Lucy Kidd Key Park**

  
**June 15, 2024**

  
**think**  
AUSTIN COLLEGE. THINKING GREEN.  
[www.earthdaytexoma.org](http://www.earthdaytexoma.org)



# Social Justice Update

TXUUJM is ending the season with Special Guest Speakers. On Thursday, May 23, Rachel Myslivy, Climate Justice Organizer with UUA Side with Love and Rev. Kelly Dignan, Co-Director of UU Ministry for Earth, shared more about how to deepen our work for climate justice. "Moving from Environmentalism to Climate Justice" taught me another way to look at this problem. Check out "Green Sanctuary 2030" on Side with Love UUA.

TXUUJM is thrilled to announce a Zoom talk by New York Times bestselling author, columnist, and political commentator Steve Phillips on Thursday, June 6, 7-8:30 PM CT. Mr. Phillips will share about his new book, *How We Win the Civil War: Securing a Multiracial Democracy and Ending White Supremacy for Good*. As we lean into the work of building multi-racial democracy where all can thrive, we must understand and confront the legacy of White Supremacy. Steve Phillips is a national political leader, civil rights lawyer, and a senior fellow at the Center for American Progress; this author talk provides a unique opportunity to equip us for the work ahead.

That closes the season. I will continue to share items as they come up. Some of these months are Juneteenth and Earth Day Texoma Festival June 15<sup>th</sup>. A Women's March Strike in Denison on June 22<sup>nd</sup> and/or a Women's March Strike on June 24<sup>th</sup> in Sherman. And there is the Pride event on June 29<sup>th</sup>. Keep in touch and save the planet.

Jan Fletcher  
Social Justice Chair

# Simpsons poke fun at UUs

This is a terrific filler for this month. It sometimes happens and you might enjoy several short clips about Homer's views on Unitarians. The clips were made by Pop Dumpster who has 425 subscribers.

Enjoy.



Tap/click [here](#) to start the video (it will be in a new window)

(365,327 views • Apr 6, 2023)

The writers have made quite a few jokes ribbing Unitarians. Obviously, the jokes here are meant to be ironic, and a criticism of the squabbling among different sects of Christianity. (I even read somewhere that Matt Groening might be Unitarian Universalist.)



HOUSTON - We Have a Problem! We have many gifts that assure our success as a congregation. We have one vision, recently approved in our vision of being a beloved community. So, what's the problem?

The problem is the soon-to-die "Conversation & Calories" simply because too many of us are enjoying many gifts that others are providing. Our Good Times Teams are dwindling. Currently we need two people to become part of the G.T.T. Here's what it involved: 1. Bring something to eat once a month, on the same Sunday each month.

2. Arrived early to do the setup in the Servedy before the Morning Assembly. Immediately after worship ends, help to set out all the food, and dishes to the Upper Foyer round table. 3. Stay after people leave and clean up. Each team has 3-5 people. How about trying it for say 4 months, starting in June. Pls speak with Marilyn.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF WE DO NOT GET NEW BLOOD ON THE G.T.T's? **Most likely folks head out on their own or just go home. We will lose our friendly, engaging ways of getting to one another. The dynamics will change.**

# Our UU Proud Pride Work!

June is PRIDE month. We kick things off by sharing a snapshot of the Unitarian Universalist Association's work on equality which started over a half century ago.

- In 1969 the first UU minister came out as homosexual on the national scene: Rev. James L. Stoll. He never served in a congregation again. Prior to that, ministers discovered to be gay were fired from their congregations (though once one was rehired as a custodian).
- In 1970 The first General Assembly resolution on this topic passed urging the UUA to work to end discrimination against homosexuals and bisexuals.
- In 1971 Unitarian Universalism began teaching about gay issues to youth the UU curriculum *About Your Sexuality* (now called *Our Whole Lives*).
- In 1979 the first out gay men in the UU ministry were called to serve congregations: Rev. Douglas Morgan Strong, called to All Souls Church, Augusta, ME, and Rev. Mark Belletini, called to First UU Society of San Francisco, CA.
- In 1980, a General Assembly resolution urged the UUA to end discrimination against lesbian, gay, and bisexual people regarding employment, and assist in the settlement of lesbian, gay, and bisexual religious leaders.
- In 1984, a General Assembly resolution affirmed the practice of conducting services of union for gay and lesbian couples.
- In 1989, a General Assembly resolution urged the UUA to implement the Welcoming Congregation program (proposed by the Common Vision Planning Committee and approved by the UUA Board of Trustees), and the first edition of the curriculum was published in 1990.
- in 1988 the first openly transgender person was ordained.
- The UUA has been ordaining people regardless of sexual orientation since the 1970s.
- In 2002, the first openly transgender person in the UU ministry was called to serve a congregation: Rev. Sean Dennison, called to South Valley UU Society, Salt Lake City, UT.

• In 2003 Massachusetts was the first U.S. state to legalize same-gender marriage without the decision being overturned. The first same-gender couple to get a marriage license in MA, in May 2004, was a UU couple and it was issued by the UU city clerk.

• In 2009 *Standing on the Side of Love* was launched, a public advocacy campaign that seeks to harness love's power to stop oppression. The campaign provides a platform for freedom to marry efforts, among other causes.

• The UUA has received more publicity on its work for freedom to marry than any other issue.

# Support Earth Day

Here is a double treat! Stop by Craft Pies and eat your heart out in terrific pizza's knowing you're feeding your soul and supporting Earth Day. You can download the image [here](#)



**CRAFT PIES**  
PIZZA COMPANY

## FUNDRAISER

Please present this flyer at the register for 25% of your check to be donated to the organization you're supporting.

Earth Day Festival

Wednesday, June 5, 2024

5101 Gateway Blvd, Denison

Do you have a cause you would like to support? Scan here.



# It Happens in June

## EVERY SUNDAY

- **Adult Forum - 10-11 am**
- **Morning Assembly - 11:15-12:15**
- **Conversations & Calories 12:15 - 1**

## EVERY WEEK

- **Mondays - OverEaters 6-7 pm**
- **Tuesdays - Spiritual Practices 6:30-8 pm**

## DURING THE MONTH

- **Jun 05 - Craft Pies Pizza supporting Earth Day**
- **Jun 09 - RedRiverUU Rainbow Team 1-2:30 pm**
- **Jun 14 - Setup for Earth Day Festival**
- **Jun 15 - Earth Day Festival 9-4**
- **Jun 16 - Board of Trustees meeting 1-2 pm**
- **Jun 20 - Minister Search Team 2-3 pm**
- **Jun 22 - Newsletter Deadline 10 pm**
- **Jun 26 - Worship Team Meeting 6:30-7:30 pm**

# June birthdays

- 03 Rebecca Crystal
- 03 Thomas Garland
- 17 Minnie Cantu
- 20 Sherilyn Bolerjack
- 26 Walter Norris

*If you add a year each May and do not find yourself listed here, tis because we don't have your birthday (month and day only, please) in the church database. You can update this by sending Marla an email [here](#).*

# Bio for Leigh Walker

Leigh Walker, our guest speaker on Sunday, June has been the Executive Director of Family Promise of Grayson County since the organization began serving guests in 2018. Prior to that, she worked for the District Courts, doing home studies for adoptions and disputed custody cases. She has enjoyed being a social worker for over 40 years. She, her husband (Jim), and their two grown daughters (Sarah and Hannah), share a love of hiking, camping, reading, traveling, and playing games.

# Mourning Roe v. Wade

I am going along to a meet-up of Women's March members in our community. Would you like to come along?



Here are the specifics:

**Mourning Roe v. Wade 2nd Anniversary Monday, June 24, 2024, from 5:00 PM to 6:00 PM**  
**100 W Houston St, Sherman, TX 75090, USA** Full Details [here](#):

Women's March members know that when we come together, we can achieve change. And the more people that come along to these kinds of events, the more our movement will grow. Hope to see you there,  
Jan Fletcher

# Money Matters

In the month of February, we had total receipts of \$1,712.00. Total expenses for the month were \$2,867.63, leaving us with a net loss for the month of (\$1,155.63). The net loss for February was primarily due to the timing of pledge income.

We had a net profit for the fiscal year-to-date of \$2,904.68. The year-to-date net profit was primarily due to higher other income and lower worship expense, partly offset by costs to improve building security and the pm

As of February 29, 2024, we had \$12,967.35 available in checking. There is a total of \$20,749.94 in the bank savings account, including \$4,771.08 restricted for the Minister Fund and \$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 \$66,784.40 invested in the UUA Common Endowment Fund. The congregation voted to use up to \$51,000.00 of the Endowment Fund for minister compensation.

Carole Harner, Treasurer

# From our non-resident Poet

Superman Day is June 12. Who is your favorite superhero? And why?

Superman Was My Teacher

by Don Mathis

When I was a kid, I learned a lot from Superman.

From the television series, Adventures of Superman (1952-1958), I learned honesty. George Reeves' character battled thieves and gangsters. Truth and justice were virtues of Superman and I strived for the same ethics.

I learned courage. Superman was not afraid of anything, and I wanted to be like him.

Especially the flying part. I was not the only kid to leap off a garage roof with a towel around his neck.

When it was announced in 1959 that George Reeves committed suicide, I learned reality. I learned that people are vulnerable, that even the strongest have their weaknesses.

Then I learned how to read. With the TV show off the air, I continued my interest by following Superman comic books or Action Comics. I learned about maturity by reading about Superboy.

And by reading comic books, I learned value. I could find five empty soda-pop bottles worth two cents each. This was enough for the latest issue which sold for a dime.

Inflation was another lesson. When comic prices went to fifteen cents, bottle deposits rose to three cents. It still took five bottles to purchase one comic.

I learned about identity and about accepting other nationalities and cultures. On the planet Krypton,

Superman was known as Kal-El. But because he always used his powers for the benefit of humanity, he was not considered an alien.

Superman's secret identity was Clark Kent. Clark was a mild-mannered journalist.

Sometimes people didn't treat him with respect but that didn't bother him. He knew his strengths. Maybe my decision to become a writer was because of Clark Kent.

Superman taught me the value of teamwork as well. If faced with a super-villain, Superman might join forces with Batman. If there was an organization of evil, Superman would call his friends from the Justice League of America.

Sometimes, it's easier to share a task. But it's always important to surround yourself with people who use their powers for good.

Superman doesn't harm anyone. I try not to either. He doesn't lie. I try to be honest. He is not possessive. I'm still learning this part. Superman is not obsessed with grudges from his past. I've learned to let go of negative feelings too.

Though I may not have superpowers, I can still emulate the qualities of Superman. One could do worse.



# Our Leaders

## Board of Trustees:

Marilyn Alexander, *President*  
Amy Hoffman-Shehan, *Vice-President*  
Carole Harner, *Treasurer*  
Don Rogers, *Secretary*  
David Dyer, *Trustee*

## Committee on Ministry:

Carolyn Cameron, Elbert Hill, Jim Holmes

## Nominating:

Jana Norris, Jim Runnels, Walter Norris  
(not related to Jana)

## Our Various Teams:

*The first name is the team leader*

**Adult Forum:** Marilyn, Jim, Amy, Marion

**Aesthetics:** Amy, Jana, Adrian

**Audio Visual:** Jim, Carole, Don, Marla

**Caring Circle:** Carolyn, David

**Earth Day Planning:** Amy, Marla, Jan, Megan, Cristin

**Endowment:** Carolyn, Doug

**Facebook Admin:** Amy

**Facilities:** Jim

**Finance:** Jim, Carole, Marilyn

**Grounds:** Marilyn, Paula

**Historian:**

**Long Range Planning:** Jim, Marilyn

**Membership:** Paula

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

**Monarch Way Station:** Lynn

**Moveable Feast:** Elbert & Marion

**NTUUC Rep:** Marilyn

**Publications:** Doug

**RE Team:** Jack

**RedRiverUU Rainbow Team:** Jack, Adrian, Amy,

Billie, Cristin, Jana, Olivia, Sherilyn, Thomas

**Safe Congregation Panel:** Marilyn

**Social Justice:** Jan

**Web Team:** Hannah, Jim, Marla

**Worship:** Marla, Dan, Jan, Jana



## Stay connected...

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