

Here's a few updates for the June Newsletter

Photos of the Incoming Church Leaders
will be held **IMMEDIATELY** following the Morning Assembly on Sunday,
June 19th.

This involves the following folks:

The Board of Trustees
The Nominating Committee
The Committee on Ministry

***Civics 101 -
How America Works***

Please note:

**This class has been canceled because of a scheduling conflict. Jan
hopes to reschedule soon.**



STOP BY THE CHURCH BOOTH AT THIS YEAR'S PRIDE EVENT

THIS SATURDAY, JUNE 11 9-5

**WE WILL HAVE TWO BOOTHS – ONE GIVING INFO ABOUT OUR CHURCH
AND THE OTHER A FREE CHILDREN'S CLOTHING GIVE-AWAY!**

Here's the rest of the newsletter




Red River Ramblings

Sunday, June 5, 2022 - 11:15 AM

Love, The Final Frontier

Ashley Newlin, *guest speaker*

In 1966 Gene Roddenbery introduced the world to Star Trek, a series that continues to light up our imaginations almost 60 years later. I avoided watching the show for one reason: the word Frontier. Do we really need another TV show praising the evils of colonization, only in space? I recently gave the show a chance and realized that my assessment might have been wrong. So, I ask two questions: What if frontier was redefined? And how can the UU faith lead the way in navigating this frontier? Read Ashley's bio [here](#).

Sunday, June 12, 2022 - 11:15 AM

Fighting Theocracy

The Rev. Dr. Mark Y.A. Davies, *guest minister*

With reproductive justice under attack, “don’t say gay” laws gaining traction, and a warped view of religious freedom threatening civil rights; the real possibility of theocracy is at our doorstep, and the Supreme Court of the United States can no longer be counted on to stop it. What can be done to stop the increasing influence of theocratic visions and practices within our society. Read Mark's bio [here](#).

Sunday, June 19, 2022 - 11:15 AM

Love Calls Us On

The Rev. Dr. Bill Sinkford, *guest minister (video message)*

Love Calls Us On: Our national narrative and our faith's story present us as both innocent and wise. The facts on the ground tell a more complicated story. What does faithfulness require when the wisdom of the past seems to be failing? What is love calling us to do in these divisive times when innocence is no longer an option? Read Bill's bio [here](#).

Sunday, June 26, 2022 -11:15 AM

Fighting The Merchants of Death

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

When there is money to be made, human health and safety often come second, and the environment usually comes third to profits. In many cases government agencies and corporations work closely together to keep it that way. What can be done to break this collusion between government and corporations that continues to put profits over people and the planet? Read Mark's bio [here](#).

Jim's Jabber

This will be my last Jim Jabber column. As of July 1, 2022, I will no longer be president of the Board of Trustees. I am passing that honor on to Marilyn Alexander who I know will be excellent in that position.

As I look back over these last 4 years as president one thing stands out in my mind that sums up this time for me. WE SURVIVED!

These are the events that we had to survive and manage:

In one budget year we had to replace an AC unit, fix a major roof leak and the water damage it caused, repair a collapsed sewer pipe, and repair basement bricks that support the entire central chimney structure of our building. Thanks to the support of special donations and 2 grants from NTUUC we were able to pay for these repairs with only a minor hit to our savings.

In March of 2019 we had to close the church doors because of the pandemic. Fortunately, we had just received a grant to add video streaming to our Sunday morning assemblies and we were trying to understand how we could make it work. We had to quickly transition from "how does this work" to broadcasting our first live Morning Assembly in five days. We started by sending a special UPDATE giving everyone the Zoom Meeting ID and inviting them to join us. That first Sunday recording was done in Doug's living room using Dan Althoff's Zoom account we began a sixteen-month project of virtual Morning Assemblies. The effort became the work of a newly formed production team.

Our Sunday morning worship recordings eventually moved from virtual only to live worship in the Chapel with only a few people (with masks) allowed as well as streaming them on the church Zoom

account. We quickly learned that our older sound equipment would be inadequate going forward.

We applied and received a grant from NTUUC to help us transition our brick and mortar building into our hybrid church of the future. We replaced our old sound board with new state-of-art equipment, added faster and more powerful computers to support all that we wanted to do, added a second camera, replaced our projectors with new laser projectors, and installed new recording and camera management software. Our desires and needs quickly exceeded the grant money but fortunately friends and members stepped in with added financial support to help us make all this happen. A big thank you to the AV team for learning how to setup and use all the new equipment and to the Worship team for creating quality worship experience that we now live stream through Zoom and post to YouTube and Facebook by the next day. We also added new TVs in the Gil Alexander room, Nursery, and RE library so that people could watch the live stream or use the equipment to support whatever activity they wanted.

Not only did we survive, we thrived! And, during the last four years we added 11 new members!

Thank you to everyone that helped make my presidency a fun one for me.

And Keep on Truckin'.

Jim Holmes
president

Spring Meeting Report

We held our Spring Congregational meeting on May 15. We started with a potluck lunch after the service. Thank you to everyone for all the wonderful food.

In the meeting we elected new officers, approved a new budget and introduced the newly formed 5-person minister search team, reviewed reports from key committees, and had a lively conversation about our church name.

We approved an operating budget of \$48,840. We elected the following folks to leadership positions:

Board of Trustees:

- President - Marilyn Alexander - term ending 2024
- Vice President - Amy Hoffman-Shehan – term ending 2023
- Treasurer - Dick Powell – term ending 2024
- Trustee at Large - Donald Rogers – term ending 2023

Committee on Ministry:

- Elbert Hill - term ending 2025
- Carolyn Cameron - term ending 2023
- Jim Holmes - term ending 2024

Nominating Committee:

- Linda Tracy - term ending 2024
- Jana Norris - term ending 2023
- Carole Harner - term ending 2025

The minister search team, appointed by the board include Jim Holmes, chair, Jana Norris, secretary, David Dyer, Marla Loturco and Marilyn Alexander.

In our lively conversation about what to call ourselves we discovered that *In the Beginning* 25 years ago the founders eschewed the word Church thinking people would be more likely to check us out when realizing we didn't call ourselves a church. When the State of Texas comptroller denied our non-profit status as a religious institution her rationale was that our bylaws did not require members to believe in a supreme being reports Dan Althoff who was president during the fight with the comptroller. Some people liked RedRiverUU, others like Red River Unitarian Universalist Church and while our bylaws state "Red River Unitarian Universalist Church, **Inc.**" no one favored including "Inc." Some members liked RRUU as it is easy to say and write. The final conclusion, as printed in the meeting minutes: "What do we call ourselves? The membership decided it was ok to use the names Red River Unitarian Universalists, Red River Unitarian Universalist Church, Red River UU, and Red River UU Church."

We also came up with a new list of congregational goals. Our bylaws require that we create annual congregational goals during our spring meeting. The goals presented were essentially the same goals we've approved for the last two years, we brainstormed new goals that centered on a theme of making our church more vibrant and known in the Texoma area.

NOTE: The Paths to Success thoughts listed below were not part of the spring meeting, they came from your editor. I rarely indulge in such whims, but I believe annual congregational goals help to keep a congregation engaged.

The comments are solely mine.

DMS

Goal 1 - Become more visible in the community through participation in community events

Paths to Success – There are lots of community events. What if we had someone who selected some events and arrange for a group from church to attend. (Examples: Annual Local NAACP annual dinner; Upcoming Pride festival; Local Theatre plays/concerts)

Goal 2 - Promote the use of our building for outside organization events

Paths to Success – On our website we list the 'rules' for outside groups using the building and the building usage fees. They are reasonable. Research what groups are in your town, maybe we can create a flier promoting using our building and share the information.

Goal 3 – Have a Tidy Up Our Church Home event 4 times next year (The aesthetics committee volunteered to lead this)

Paths to Success – We're friendly, loving, caring people but we're sloppy as hell! Any flat surface is grist for that box of stuff people are bringing/returning to church. There it sits forever. Once a quarter the aesthetics committee will tidy things up, put away or THROW OUT that which doesn't belong where it landed. This goal is not related to those "Labor of Love" all-church workdays which tend to happen every couple of years (often on Labor Day Sunday)

Goal 4 - Explore outside funding opportunities to augment the minister fund

Paths to Success – Who among us has written a grant? Who has knowledge of funding sources that might be tapped? This goal needs a consultant, ,might that be you?

Goal 5 - Increase voting membership by 10%.

Paths to Success – Talk to visitors. – Be brave, walk right up to a stranger and introduce yourself. Maybe ask if they enjoyed the morning assembly, or the speaker. Invite them to Conversations & Calories. Would they like a tour of our historic building? What brought you here today. Invite a friend to church Deep in your heart you know someone who would be excited to know about RedRiverUU. Many UU's first experience was by personal invitation of a church member. When attending an organization, you belong to, look at whose there and think, "I bet xx would enjoy coming to church." Time was we placed ads in the Sherman theater group programs. We quit because no visitors said they saw the ads.

Goal 6 - Set up a team to respond to comments on YouTube, Facebook, Website, Meetup, etc. This team will respond to comments weekly

Paths to Success – We have 300+ people who like our Facebook Page. We get a few comments each month on our YouTube channel. YouTube Analytics report viewership increases when we reply to each comment! When people like our FB page, engaging with them via a comment is a statement of thanks, appreciation and an invitation. If you'd like to be part of the Path to Success, send your interest to news@redriveruuu.org.

Goal 7 – Hire a Minister

Paths to Success – Tell the Search Committee you're willing to volunteer to do some tasks for them. Their collective plate is overflowing with things that need to be completed. The more of us who can be their 'gofers' the less they will burn out and get discouraged.

Caring Circle Updates

Members of the Caring Team have been aiding Kat Walston, taking groceries and cat food, managing her funds, and coordinating doctor appointments. Kat has moved to The Terrace at Denison Rehabilitation and Skilled Nursing Facility. She is no longer capable of managing her medications, taking good care of her cat Kittenish or managing daily activities on her own. An adopter has been found for Kittenish.

She is scared of the changes but is able to agree that she needs help. She will need visitors and encouragement. The address is Kat Walston, 1300 Memorial Drive. Denison, TX 75020

So, we are all on the same page, Kat has been told that she will be able to have her cat back once she is able to manage her medications and caring for him again.

Visiting Kat can be a lot of fun, even if at times she may be confused. She enjoys company and catching up on life beyond her environs.

Money Matters

During the month of April 2022, we had receipts somewhat lower than in the prior month (\$1,938.00 compared to the \$2,394.06, that was received in March). Expenses were \$5,152.82, leaving us with a net loss in April of (\$3,214.82). Net income for this fiscal year-to-date remains very positive at \$21,876.99.

As of April 30, 2022, we had \$8,760.02 available in checking. We also have a total of \$19,105.48 in all savings accounts, including \$2,545.00 in the Ronda DeCaire Memorial Fund. I still haven't made any adjustment, but, as reported last month, the total market value of our investment in UUCEF funds has declined a bit further, from \$81,847.52 to \$75,839.72, a market value decline of \$6,007.80 (7.3%).

Dick Powell, Treasurer

Adult Forum

Continues exploring *My Favorite Universe*, an ongoing series from The Great Courses. Each week the group watches a video, followed by a lively discussion. Sunday, 10 am in the Alexander room and streaming on Zoom (Meeting ID is 989 0789 7878). Read details [here](#).

Birthdays in June

No active members celebrate birthdays in June. Now, if you were born in June, share your good news with a quick email to news@redriveruuu.org and next June you'll be listed.

Civics 101 ~ How America Works

REGISTRATION, BALLOTS, AND YOUR VOTE



*Are you still confused about Voter Registration rules?
What is voter registration? Can you use mail-in ballots?
Why is your vote important?*

Join us learning about these and major voting issues for the 2022 elections.

Monday, June 6 from 5—6:30

First United Bank, 401 E Taylor St, Sherman

Community Room is in back

All CIVICS 101 sessions will be nonpartisan led to help educate us on the issues we all need to know in order to vote responsibly. Join us monthly on the first and third Mondays. Voter Registrars will be on hand.

Future topics are Education, Environment, Federal vs State, County vs City, Women's Issues, Gun Safety, Healthcare, Immigration, Campaign Reform, Race Relations & more.

Dear Friends,

This is my invitation to the first of my upcoming series "CIVICS 101 – How America Works". The series will run the first and third Monday each month at least till the election in November. These nonpartisan events are to provide information on an endless variety of topics. This first topic is presented by a staff member from the Grayson County Election Office. We will learn more about immigration, education, regulation, women's rights, how the branches of government function, gun safety, campaign reform, the differences of city, county, state and federal government and returning to study more facets of many.

Join us starting Monday, June 6 from 5 – 6:30 pm at the First United Bank at 401 E Taylor St in Sherman. The bank has asked me to remind people the Community Room is in the back of the building. Please, park on the side or in the back as the bank doors in front will close.

I have created a Facebook page -- Civics 101 – How America Works – where I will post information about this effort. There will hopefully be thoughtful and respectful discussion posts on the page as well. I welcome your suggestions of topics and speakers by phone, email or messenger. Please remember to share the posts with your Grayson County friends. Thank you for your interest.

Jan Fletcher,

Civics 101: How America Works Administrator

972-897-5796



Monarch on Gregg's Mist Flower

Web of Life Monarch Way Station

It's time for some late spring maintenance in our church's Web of Life Monarch Garden. Come outside on Sunday, June 5th after our Morning Assembly and Calories and Conversation to join your church friends in our Monarch Waystation. It's nestled in and among the roses, evergreen shrubs, and Irises that have anchored our church beds for years. Anyone and everyone are invited to take part by doing a little planting, a little weeding, a little pruning, even digging a little as we enlarge slightly the south facing bed -- our Fall Aster needs a bit more room to show and bloom this fall during the southward fall Monarch migration . AND our **Gregg's Mist Flower**, the best nectar plant butterflies could wish for, deserves a larger space in the Meditation part of our Web of Life Garden.



Monarch and queen butterflies on Gregg's Mist Flower

Your project leaders, Michelle Haynes and I, Linn Cates, are eager for all our church community to come out on June 5th, even simply to look, learn and enjoy. We'll have some chairs placed around the beds for our on-lookers. We often have plants (this time Fall Obedient plant and Frostweed) you may take home to add to your own native plants or to get started in letting our native plants reclaim some homeland. Birds, bees and butterflies all need these plants to successfully complete their life cycles.

I'll be dressed to garden that Sunday, June 5th -- excuse my workaday style. You may want to, too. If you have garden tools, garden gloves, a hat, secure shoes, you might consider bringing or wearing.

Check out the 5 little sunflower tire gardens welcoming our children to their playground. Michelle designed and built them with help from Angus Peterson, Hannah Peterson, Jana Norris, Susie Norris, Don and Darleen Rogers have all gotten their hands in the dirt or watered gently and often the little transplants the past few weeks. while adding more Green Milkweed and Butterfly weed, both used by the Monarch butterfly for its very hungry caterpillars. We also divided our **Purple Coneflower** to spread its beauty around. You'll soon be seeing more of its striking pink/purple blooms in the front. One other Friend of the Web of Life Garden



Monarch on Purple Coneflower

I want to recognize this time is Jeanie Beam, who has often done behind the scenes work in the garden and advised and taught me much about gardening.

Earth Day Report

We had a very successful 14th annual Texoma Earth Day Festival and Recycling Event, after a two-year hiatus with holding only recycling events. The festival offered children's activities, vendors, displays, workshops, entertainment, and a wide variety of recycling opportunities. Red River UU members Linn Cates and Michelle Haynes offered workshops that were well received. Linn's workshop was on monarch way stations, and Michelle's workshop was on vermicomposting of food waste. Angel Ridge Roofing & Solar provided workshops on selecting an energy provider and solar energy. Our attendees were more interested in the gardening related workshops.

Children's Activities were provided by Grayson County 4-H, Circle Tree Community School, Grayson College Art Department, and Austin College Entomology students. The Earth Day Planning Committee created an art activity (Community Flower Vase) to round out the selection.

We had a nice variety of vendors, despite challenges in obtaining registrations. We were able to attract more crafters than we have in recent years, but non-profit organizations who usually take part in the festival couldn't because of lack of volunteers.

Recycling continues to be a major draw to the festival. Paper shredding was sponsored by First United Bank, and the shred truck reported they shredded 8000 pounds of sensitive documents. The City of Sherman provided separate containers for assorted papers, Styrofoam, plastics 1,2,5 and tin/aluminum cans, plastic bags/bubble wrap/shrink film and cardboard. We collected 4 cubic yards of assorted papers, 8 cubic yards of Styrofoam, 6 cubic yards of plastic bags/bubble wrap/shrink film, 8 cubic yards of plastics & metals, and 26 cubic yards of cardboard. TCOG sponsored a latex paint collection and collected more than 700 gallons of paint. Keystone Enterprises reported having collected 6000 pounds of scrap electronics recycling. The figure was lower than the past 2 years because we asked that people and businesses with large appliances or large quantities of electronics contact the company directly for pickup.

We updated our recycling guide and printed and distributed 500 copies of the 3rd edition. We are currently seeking funding for a second printing of this version. We appreciate the volunteers who keep the Earth Day Festival going during the year and on the day of the festival.

The planning committee met the week after the festival to evaluate the festival, list the things that went well and identify areas we can improve. We also organized our materials in the garage and removed some items that would do better stored indoors.

We would like to express our appreciation for all of the volunteers who organized the event and volunteered at the festival.

Our GA Rep

Marion Hill will be RedRiverUU's delegate at this summer's General Assembly. While it will be in Portland OR she will be at home attending virtually. Sometime during the 1980's a planning committee member Rev. Alan Egly suggested inviting each congregation to make a banner because we were meeting in a hall that needed some beautifying. Each banner needed to be the same size – a requirement that many free-loving, independent UUs refused to honor (those banners weren't hung!)

This year the Planning Committee invited each virtual delegate to send an image of the delegate with their banner. Thus, the image – Marion with our banner (that was not made to the specifications).



Scam Alert! Be Aware

Spring is in full bloom and so are the many security threats. In just one week in May I have gotten the following emails:

- From Home Depot: Congratulations, you have been selected to receive a \$100 gift card - **Continue for Free**
 - Actual sender email address: 13990@ns8.*ns2.ascio.net*
- From iPad Pro: Congratulations - **Rewards Here**
 - Actual sender email address: 56637@ns7.*ns2.ascio.net*
- From Costco: \$500 Gift card: Answer and win ... - **Get Started**
 - Actual sender email address: 70084@ns1.*ns2.ascio.net*
- From Walmart - Air Pods: Congratulations Get brand new Air Pod for free - **Continue for Free**
 - Actual sender email address: colverine@Pvgok.nqlverine.com
- From Dick's Sporting Goods: Get a free YETI Hopper M20:- answer and win **Get Started**
 - Actual sender email address: public@dananerepublic.com

In the above examples the **Bold** words are what you would click on to proceed to get your exciting offer - DON'T DO IT!!!

If you highlight the email address of the sender for a questionable email and right click on it, you will see the actual email address that the sender of the email used. None of the above email addresses are from the company they appear to stand for.

It is important to remember that if you receive an email that sounds like a wonderful opportunity to get something for free. IGNORE IT. It is spam and when you click to respond they will ask you questions or have you fill out forms that will allow them to hack your personal accounts or use the information to impersonate you to get loans or credit cards in your name.

Some other things to look out for:

If you receive an email or phone call or text from anyone claiming to be a business that you do not know, hang up or don't answer. If it is a business that you use, call them and ask about how you were contacted.

I set my phone to have all calls that are not in my contact list go at once to voice mail. Almost all of the callers never leave a voice mail and if they do it gives me a chance to verify its authenticity.

No Government agencies will contact you by voice (IRS, local police, etc.) claiming that you are about to be arrested or your service cut off unless you pay them immediately over the phone. If they give you a phone number to call back on, do not call. If you are curious, Google the agency to get a valid phone number and call them.

Occasionally I will get an email that looks like it came from my bank or credit card company saying there is a problem with my account and to click here to correct the problem. Do not click. Call the bank or credit card company directly to see if there is really a problem.

Also, the African Prince is not a real person!

Jim, the I.T. nerd
Jim Holmes

Our Leaders

Board of Trustees

Jim Holmes, *President*
Marilyn Alexander, *Vice-President*
Dick Powell, *Treasurer*
David Dyer, *Secretary*
Amy Hoffman-Shehan, *Trustee*

Committee on Ministry:

Elbert Hill, Carolyn Cameron

Nominating:

Kelly Cofield Dyer, Don Rogers, Linda Tracy

Team Leaders/Members:

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

Aesthetics: *Carol, Doug*

Caring Circle: *Carol, Carolyn, David*

Communications: *Doug*

Endowment: *Carolyn, Dick, Doug*

Facilities: *Jim*

Finance: *Jim, Dick, Jan, Marilyn*

Grounds: *Marilyn*

Long Range Planning: *Jim, Marilyn*

Membership: *Marion*

Minister Investigation: *Dick, Marla*

NTUUC Rep: *Marla*

RE Team: *David, Ellie, Marilyn*

Safe Congregation Panel: *Dan*

Social Action:

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

Worship: *Dan, Doug, Jana, Marla*

Contact Us

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