

# Red River



March 2023 - Vol. 24 No 8

# Ramblings

Sunday, March 5, 2023 - 11:15 am

## What is Our Responsibility?

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

The social and ecological challenges facing the world today are far too complex for any one person to solve or fully address, so what then is our personal responsibility in a world where so much seems to be going wrong. In this discourse, we will reflect on wisdom from the Jewish religious text Pirkei Avot, which offers these words: “You are not obligated to complete the work, but neither are you free to abandon it.” You can read Mark’s bio [here](#).

Sunday, March 12, 2023 - 11:15 am

## The Wisdom and Dangers of Religious Myths

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

The scriptures of the world’s religions contain great wisdom for humanity, but they are products of their context, and when we attempt to take them literally and apply them without critical interpretation, they can be used in unhealthy, dangerous, and even deadly ways. the salvation of the whole ecological community. You can read Mark’s bio [here](#)

Sunday, March 19, 2023 - 11:15 am

## What's Your Story?

Elena Westbrook, *leading*

As soon as we can talk, humans ask for stories. Stories are how we make sense of our world. But have you ever thought about the story you tell yourself about yourself? In this service, we'll look at how the stories we tell shape our experience, and how changing them can perhaps reshape our future. Read Elena’s bio [here](#)

Sunday, March 26, 2023 - 11:15 am

*A Very Special Morning for Red River UU*

## Polish The Silver

The Worship Team, *leading*

Join the Worship Team as we put a final shine on the Silver Anniversary of the founding of our liberal religious congregation. We held our very first meeting on March 26, 1997, and it is a beautiful symmetry to celebrate our founding on another March 26<sup>th</sup>. In the past year, we have seen various “glimmers of silver” in our Sunday Morning Assemblies, and now on the final Sunday of this 25th anniversary year, we will put our silver history on full display as we reflect upon our past and anticipate a golden future.

*Followed by the Appreciation Dinner, postponed from last month. You are warmly invited to share this special day with us.*

# Search Team Update

The Minister Search Team meets each month at 2pm in the Alexander Room on the Thursday prior to the Sunday monthly Board meeting. It is an open meeting so join us live or on Zoom with the Zoom ID 989 0789 7878.

We decided not to meet in February but did continue to work on our assignments.

- Prepare the church profile that we will eventually post to the UUA website - Marla is working on this
- Create a packet of the church history - Jana is working on this
- Look for ways to better advertise our church to the Texoma area since it may be a while before we get a minister - Jim is working on this

Next meeting is March 16th

Jim Holmes, *chair*

# Earth Day News

The Earth Day Planning Committee will meet **Tuesday March 7 at 5:00 pm** in the Gil Alexander Room. We plan a one hour meeting. The festival planning is coming along well. Recycling services are lined up. We hope to add textile recycling but haven't managed to make contact with anyone with the company we identified yet. Linn Cates will repeat her monarch butterfly workshop, and we also have recruited a bee keeper for a workshop. The entertainment schedule is filling, and vendors are



registering. As always, we will need volunteers. YOU, dear reader, can sign up right now, right [here](#). Volunteer details [here](#). And did you know that our church started the Texoma Earth Day festival in 2009 and it is volunteers like you that has kept it going.

*Red River UU  
The reason Earth Day  
is in Texoma!*

# We're Off to Lobby Day!

Red River UU Social Action Team is joining with fellow North Texas UUs on **Monday, March 13** to Lobby in Austin. We will be joining with Horizon UU in Carrollton at 5 am to ride to Austin and present our messages to the Texas Legislature. You can learn all you want and need to know about how to lobby by joining this webinar. Tap/click the poster below to register.

**Legislator Action Day is March 13**

**LET'S GET READY TO  
LOBBY!**

A how-to webinar on best tactics and the bills we're working on this year

**Monday, March 6, 7:00 pm**

With Rev. Craig Roshaven & Rev. Erin Walter



Rev. Roshaven is a UU Minister with decades of experience in advocacy. He has led more than a hundred meetings with elected & appointed officials at every level of government.

Rev. Walter is Executive Director, Texas UU Justice Ministry; Interim Co-Minister, First UU Church of Austin; & singer/songwriter/bassist with Parker Woodland.

**Register at [ntuuc.org/TexasLege2023](https://ntuuc.org/TexasLege2023)**



CELEBRATING MORE THAN A CENTURY OF LIBERAL RELIGION IN NORTH TEXAS

If you are interested in being part of this tradition, please contact Jan Fletcher [here](#) immediately. This is your opportunity to share your UU Beliefs with our state elected officials.

# Lost a Photo

Within the last 2 -3 years someone snapped a photo of Ellie working with kids in the Craft Room on the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor. If you remember the photo, could you let Doug know where you saw it. He recalls it may have been in a newsletter or maybe in the UPDATE.



# Marilyn's Musings



Ahhh March! Flowers are budding, chocolate is on sale, and its major holiday, St. Patrick's Day, is just one giant party, with no gifts, green beer and minimal stress. Plus, it even turns math on March 14th, 3.14 as pi day, into a pie-eating celebration. I nominate Marion's blackberry cobbler for my choice of pie on March 14th. Too bad that March 14th isn't a Sunday and when Team 3 is providing Conversation & Calories!

At Red River, we are in the throes of detailed planning for the Earth Day Festival, which is scheduled for Saturday, April 22nd. The festival includes a key note address, workshops, children's activities, a trash fashion show, student art show, vendors, and recycling. Amy will provide signup sheets in the foyer soon. Everyone needs to find something to do to help with this, our most public opportunity to exhibit the environmental activism of our church. I'm sure that Amy has a job ready and waiting just for you. Check with Amy and find out what it is! Carolyn created the festival's tagline, "Red River Unitarian Universalists – The Reason Earth Day is in Texoma."

Highlights from the board meeting:

Jim has rewritten parts of the Policy and Procedures Manual that required revision. This is a large and detailed document that governs much of what we do at Red River. I appreciate Jim taking the initiative to bring it up to date.

Red River UU joined both the Sherman and the Denison Chambers of Commerce in order to increase our exposure through advertising.

The Welcoming Congregation Committee is hosting a postcard writing event on March 11 in opposition to numerous anti-LGBTQ bills before the Texas legislature this session. Postcards will be mailed to Equality Texas, who will hand deliver them.

Also on March 11, Adrian will be hosting another clothing swap.

Amy has been selling some items from the garages and other things are being discarded.

Because two people tested positive for covid on Monday and Tuesday after being at church on Sunday, February 19, we cancelled all activities until March 1st in an abundance of caution. Unfortunately, that meant

postponing the Appreciation Dinner. It has been re-scheduled for March 26 following the Morning Assembly.

The nominations Committee is beginning work to fill several positions that will become open. One is for Trustee at large and the other is for Vice President. Two committees will also have openings. If you are interest-ed in serving on either the Nominations Committee or the Committee on Ministry, please see Jana Norris, Lin-da Tracy, or Jim Runnels.

The finance team will meet the first week of March to discuss the budget for the next fiscal year.

Caring for each other: The Caring Team has beautiful cards that can be sent to people who are ill or having a stressful time or have lost a loved one. Having a team with members who strive to keep tabs on the pulse of our community, our Caring Circle needs an additional person to join the team. If you are interested, please contact David or Carolyn.

Marilyn Alexander,  
*president*

## Wearing of the Green

It's time to wear some "green" and have some fun. I will be the first Official car for the Grayson County Democrats and want to invite you to join me in the celebration! We line up at 10 am on Sat. March 11 at the Central Christian Church parking lot ([map here](#)) between 10-10:30. We will decorate the car when we get in line. I will have green decor and Celtic music for the car. If you plan to march beside the car, please wear your finest Irish! I also need to know who plans to join me as soon as possible to let Michelle know. Tony Beaverson plans to join us in his red Jag. If you plan to march with us and bring your pets, I need to know that as well. Let's prove to the city we Democrats like to have fun. Show your Blarney!

Jan Fletcher, 972-897-5796

## Want some \$\$ next fiscal year?

Every year at this time the Finance Team meets to prepare the budget for our next budget year that runs from July 1st to June 30th each year.

This year's budget process has extra stress on it due to:

An increase in utility and building maintenance insurance costs Inflation impact on several other expenses. The need to save and divert some money into the Minister Fund. The desire to be more active in community outreach with the added benefit of attracting new members

On February 26th, we sent out a request to several of our Teams and Committees requesting their budget needs for the new year. We also asked that they consider the cost of any new ideas or outreach that might attract new members and add that amount to their request for funds.

The Finance Team looks forward to getting the input from our Teams and Committees so please get this information to the Finance team as soon as you can. We hold our first official meeting on March 3<sup>rd</sup>. Please send your feedback about how much you want to increase/decrease your committee/team budget to [finance@redriveruu.org](mailto:finance@redriveruu.org) **no later than March 15**. This information will help us set a goal for our Stewardship Campaign that will run in the month of April.

Once we get an approved budget by the Board, the new budget will go out in the May packet for our Spring Congregational Meeting on May 21st.

Marilyn Alexander, Carole Harner, Jim Holmes  
*Your Finance Team*

## Caring Circle Updates

The Caring Circle strives to keep tabs on those among us who find themselves ill, hospitalized, in need of transportation, or even a friendly call or visit. Recently the Caring Circle has learned that Jim H., Marla, Carolyn and Bruce are recovering from Covid and that Joyce has been hospitalized with blood clots. Also, our sympathies to Marion and Elbert on the death of Marion's sister. As Marilyn wrote in her Musings, the Caring Circle is in need of members who can help keeping tabs and sending cards to those who might appreciate receiving one. Please speak with David or Carolyn if you would like to lend a bit of time and energy assuring those in need are never forgotten.

## Clothing Swap Saturday

Several times each year, we have children's clothing swaps. Anyone may come to the swap and exchange gently used children's clothes for other donated clothes for the children in their lives. We do require that any clothes that are brought in to be clean, in good condition, and free of stains or holes. We also welcome members of the community who are in need but have no clothes to swap - ensuring that all kids have access to clean, fitting clothes is the priority. Below is a list of all our children clothing swap events.

Adrian is the lead person for assuring the Swaps happen. They would appreciate help during two special times: Set up on Friday, Mar 10 and during the day on Saturday, March 11. If you would like to participate, please reach out to them via email [clothingswap@redriveruu.org](mailto:clothingswap@redriveruu.org)

## General Assembly Info

Each year UU's from across the country gather for an annual convention. Having attended 27+ GA's, I can with some authority report the experience is, frankly, life changing for first-time attendees. Imaging attending worship with up to 2,000 UUs and those folks sing. Scads of intriguing workshops, astonishing keynote speakers including this year the author of our 2021 common read *Letters to My Sons*, Imani Perry. Being in the company of so many like-minded people can be enthralling and mind boggling. This year at the business sessions, the delegates may well vote to change our 7 principles. Think about going in person or via Zoom. There are funds to help with cost through NTUUC (info [here](#)). If you want to become more involved with Unitarian Universalism, going to GA could not be a better starting point. Speak with Marion or Elbert (or me) as all 3 of us have been to many GA's.

Doug

# Welcoming Congregation



Welcoming Congregation Committee is Back!

Starting in Nov 2022, some of our former members decided to get together & get the group back up & running post-COVID. So, Starting Jan 2023, Amy, Marla, Jack & Adrian sat down & hammered out how the group was going to organize & what our general goals for the group were going to be.

We felt like a loose structure with some specific tasks prioritized was the best way to go for 4 busy people. Jack is the leader of our merry band & has taken responsibility for communication. Adrian will run our FB operations, Amy & Marla will help with finances & RedRiverUU policies & procedures. As you can see, we need more people willing to give their time & energy to our cause!

We also determined that with limited personnel, time & funding, we need to concentrate on just a few direct goals:

1. Maintaining our certification as an LGBTQIA Welcoming Congregation
2. Grayson Gay Pride Festival

Those that can will March with First Church in the Dallas Pride Parade as well as volunteering for the annual Earth Day festival in Sherman.

So watch for upcoming events that educate about & showcase the LGBTQIA community & our Congregation! Join us on the 4th Sunday of every month, after Calories & Conversation to offer support & services!

# The Adult Forum

Is exploring the histories of Unitarians and Universalists using *The Long Strange Trip: Two Thousand Years of Unitarian Universalist History* now through April 23<sup>rd</sup>. They always welcome newcomers. **Sundays 10-11 am** in the Alexander Room and on Zoom (mtg ID 989 0789 7878).

# Money Matters!

In the month of January, we had total receipts of \$2,767.00. Total expenses for the month were \$5,020.33, leaving us with a net loss for the month of (\$2,253.33). The net loss for the month was primarily due to materials for garage repairs and timing of insurance payments. Net income for the fiscal year-to-date was \$1,039.72.

As of January 31, 2023, we had \$11,884.82 available in checking, including \$5,413.00 held in trust for Kat Walston from the sale of her personal effects prior to moving into assisted living. There is a total of \$19,697.68 in all savings accounts, which includes \$3,130.00 for the Minister Compensation Fund. There is a total of \$66,784.40 invested in the UUA Common Endowment Fund. The \$1,326.00 included in Other Current Assets, is the prepayment of our entire UUA Fair Share for this year.

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

Carole Harner, *treasurer*

# March Birthdays



- 12 Jan Fletcher
- 13 Lillie Pauline Peterson (youngster)
- 14 Marilyn Alexander
- 19 Carole Harner
- 21 William Lloyd Fridley
- 22 Elbert Hill
- 23 Dawn Beeker
- 25 Lanan Shelton

# It Happens Weekly

**CHAIR YOGA** – Each Tuesday morning @ 10 am in the chapel is your ongoing opportunity to stretch, reach out and limber up – without straining anything. Newcomers are always encouraged to show up. Try it once and you will return, folks tell us.

**SPIRITUAL SELF HELP GROUP/BOOK CLUB** – gathers each Tuesday evening @ 6:30, at church. This group is currently exploring the work of Eckhart Tolle in his book *The Power of Now*. Open to newcomers (and you do not have to had read the book to participate).



# Social Action Update

This is urgent! Please watch and share! From Jan Fletcher A Texas judge could issue a ruling that eliminates or restricts access to mifepristone — one of two drugs used in the most common type of abortion — as soon as tomorrow.

Jacqueline Ayers,  
Senior Vice President of Policy, Campaigns, Advocacy  
Planned Parenthood Action Fund

Here's the short video: **Note: it takes a bit for the video too load**



The above was submitted by Jan Fletcher.

If you missed the article elsewhere in this issue, how about joining Jan for the St Patrick's parade as together people can know and see life-and-in-the-flesh people who probably do not vote the way most do in our communities..

Just remember to take lots of photos, we always need them to highlight stuff the church is involved in.

## Filler

(Short news or information items used to fill small spaces in the news columns.)

### Only People with Perfect Color Vision Can Read These Words

Do not adjust your monitor (unless you're a cheater).  
Tap/Click [here](#) to take the test!

How did you do?

Maybe a True or False test is better.

1. Moveable Feast events are really nice ways to get together without having to sing.
2. I'm don't come to church often, but I don't know why 'cuz when I come, I really like it.
3. I like to be asked to help rather than just volunteering.
4. I'm shy and wish more people would reach to me.
5. I'd rather have a root canal than come to the Appreciation Dinner on Mar 26.

How did you do?

OK, a pretty lame way to urge you to come to the Appreciation Sunday Dinner. Sure hope you will be coming. It means a lot to many people.

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# From our non-resident Poet

Take a Walk in the Park Day, March 30, 2023, is an opportunity for exercise and relaxation. Here's a poem by Don Mathis that may encourage you to get up off that easy chair. (Note: This month's masthead is a photo from Eisenhower Park in Denison TX.)

## Eisenhower Park Poem

by Don Mathis

High hilly trail allows a view of the ground  
above the dell where life abounds.  
It takes some work to take a walk  
along the rocks to get to the top.  
And when you do, the windy view  
rewards your soul and makes you whole.  
Put on your boots. Don't trip on the roots.  
I think you ought to bring your water.  
Take a drink, don't even think,  
and you will find it eases the mind.  
We're high as the trees in the cross-breeze,  
up the rocky stair to the lake-side air.  
Relax your care, and you are there!  
To be there for another  
is to have another there.  
And that is great, to change your pace,  
to give a smile, to offer an embrace.



# Our Leaders

## Board of Trustees

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

## Committee on Ministry:

*Carolyn Cameron, Elbert Hill, Jim Holmes*

## Nominating:

*Jana Norris, Jim Runnel, Linda Tracy*

## Team Leaders/Members:

Adult Forum: *Marilyn, Jim, Amy, Marion*  
Aesthetics: *Carol, Doug*  
AV: *Carole, Don, Jim, Marla*  
Caring Circle: *Carolyn, David*  
Communication: *Amy, Doug, Marla*  
Endowment: *Carolyn, Dick, Doug*  
Facilities: *Jim*  
Finance: *Jim, Dick, Marilyn*  
Grounds: *Marilyn*  
Long Range Planning: *Jim, Marilyn*  
Membership: *Marion*  
Minister Search: *David, Jana, Jim, Marilyn, Marla*  
NTUUC Rep: *Marilyn*  
RE Team: *David, Marilyn*  
Safe Congregation Panel: *Dan*  
Social Justice: *Jan*  
Web Team: *Hannah, Jim, Marla*  
Welcoming Congregation: *Adrian, Amy, Lisa, Marla, Thomas*  
Worship: *Dan, Jana, Marla, Michelle, Walter*

# Contact us

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