



# The Community News

March 2015

## OUR VISION

*We will become a dynamic and nurturing religious community that celebrates our human diversity, supports lifelong spiritual growth, and acts for compassion and justice in the larger community.*

### PLANO EQUAL RIGHTS ORDINANCE submitted by Charlie Battista

I couldn't be more proud of my church! On **Sunday, February 8**, the congregation met in a special congregational meeting and unanimously passed a resolution to pledge our hearts, hands, talents and voices to support the Equal Rights Ordinance and those who defend both the ordinance and the people it protects.

On **Monday, February 9**, Community Church sponsored a press conference of local faith leaders in support of the ERO. In addition to ministers from the Oak Cliff, Fort Worth and Plano UU churches, the United Church of Christ, Midway Disciples of Christ and Out Ministry were also represented. Over 100 members of Community Church, Gay and Lesbian Association of North Texas (GALA NTX) and the Plano community at large were present. A special thanks to Sarah Reilling and Barb Salvo who helped set up the event and all who helped during the conference in welcoming visitors and making sure the event ran smoothly.

Press coverage may be found on the Community UU Church website or at the following links:

<http://www.dallasnews.com/news/community-news/plano/headlines/20150209-church-group-backs-planos-equal-rights-ordinance.ece>;

<http://cw33.com/2015/02/09/equal-rights-plano-plans-to-move-ahead-with-equal-rights-ordinance/>

The City of Plano issued a press release saying that the City received over 900 pages of signatures to recall the Equal Rights Ordinance. The City is verifying the signatures. A decision by the City Council either to rescind the Equal Rights Ordinance amendment passed in December or place the recall on the ballot for the **Saturday, May 9th municipal election**, will be made at the regularly schedule Council meeting on **Monday, February 23rd at 7pm**. Supporters of the Ordinance are asked to attend the City Council meeting at City Hall and wear red or yellow Standing on the Side of Love shirts. Early arrival is recommended and please sit together in the center front section of the chamber to create the greatest impact of solidarity and support.

The recall effort will not overturn the 1989 Equal Rights Ordinance as previously reported. If successful, the recall effort will rescind the December amendment including sexual orientation, gender Identification, genetic information and veteran's status, as well as specific measures of discrimination redress that were added in December and not included in the 1989 ordinance. **(Continued on page 2)**

### March, 2015

#### Sunday Services

#### Theme - Redemption

**March 1 - "Religion: Do You Take it With or Without?" - Guest Speaker - Rev. Annie Foerster.**

**March 8 - "Redemption; What Are We Saving beyond Daylight?" - Rev. Patrick Price**

**March 15 - "Sin and Redemption, UU Style" - Rev. Patrick Price**

**March 22 - "Redeeming Our Lives; Saving the World" - Rev. Patrick Price**

**March 29 - Moses: A Leadership Case Study - Harvest the Power Class**

*\*12:15 p.m.: Inquirer's Class held the fourth Sunday of each month*

#### Typical Sunday

**10:30 - 11:45 a.m.:** Worship, Religious Education for Children and Youth, and Nursery Childcare

**11:45 a.m.:** Coffee and Conversation

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## Patrick's Ponderings "Redemption"

In considering the idea of redemption, I am always running into the problems of the use of redemption as a reason or rationalization for really awful beliefs and practices by people. The one of the best in depth considerations of this is UU theologian Rebecca Parker's book *Proverbs of Ashes*. In considering what to share with you this month, I was also reminded of an excellent article, "Redeeming God" by the Rev. Marlin Lavanhar, who is the Senior Minister, All Souls, Tulsa, OK, our largest UU congregation. I include it and adapt it to speak to our community of faith. I hope you find it as helpful as I do in understanding and reclaiming our own ideas of "redemption." See you in church. Blessings, Patrick

"The central idea in traditional Christian theology is that the murder of Jesus was a blood sacrifice necessary to redeem the human family from its sinfulness. Has this belief become so normalized that people cannot see that the idea of a God who would require a blood sacrifice in order to save people from divine judgment and eternal torture is exceedingly violent and fear-based? It should be one of our goals to try to redeem God from such a cruel reputation and sadistic theology. If people can believe that God uses violence (e.g. crucifixion and hellfire) as part of His plan for human salvation, then they can believe violence is sometimes sanctioned, sacred, and saving. One definition of evil is that something bad is made to seem good. A God who uses violence as the central means to redeem the world, is not a God worth believing in. In fact, such notions of the Holy are the roots of much evil."

"Think about the rationale of the terrorists who flew planes into the World Trade Center on September 11, 2001. They believed that God wanted them to do it as a part of a divine plan to move the world toward goodness and Godliness. In fact, the Hebrew and Christian scriptures are filled with stories of God ordering and ordaining the killing of men, women, and children as part of "the divine plan." Someone might argue that, "... the victims of terrorism are innocent." Wasn't Jesus innocent? Weren't the children who died at God's command throughout the Bible innocent? The question before us is: "Does God use the death of innocents as a way of saving people?" I say no! Classical Christian, and some other fundamentalist theologies say God does. Terrorists say God does. Terrorists strike fear into society in an attempt to gain power and create change. Theologies that tell people that they will go to an eternal torture chamber called "hell" unless they act and believe a certain way also use fear as a means of control and power. The ends do not justify the means in either case."

"In the 21st century, people have an opportunity and responsibility to stop seeking the redemption of a violent God and instead to start working for the redemption of God. To redeem God does not require forsaking religion or even scripture, but it does require the abandonment of literal interpretations of scripture and exclusive claims of truth."

"At (*the Community UU Church of Plano*), we begin with the premise that each person has come into this life with unique qualities that can be developed and shared for the good of all. Of course, we recognize that we also have the potential to do great harm. Therefore, at All Souls, our religious focus is to help people of all ages discover their unique gifts and support and encourage them to share those gifts for the common good. Ours could be called a theology of "original blessing" rather than "original sin." In such a religion the role of redemption can be likened to redemption of a store coupon. The idea is that a coupon has value only when it is used for its intended purpose. If we bring a coupon into a store and use it for its intended purpose, it is redeemed for its full value. If we put a coupon in the trash or let it expire, its value is never redeemed. In the same way, when a person uses and shares his or her gifts to support the progress and evolution of human goodness, wisdom, and kindness, the person's life is redeemed for its full value. In other words, we are seeking to redeem our lives for their full value by developing and using the skills, talents, and resources we have been given. With such a theology, there is no need for blood sacrifices, violence, punishment, or fear. The goal is not to redeem an innocence that was supposedly lost before we were born, but rather to realize a potential that was created because we were born. Therefore, (*at the Community UU Church of Plano we pursue social action and social justice by such things as mentoring children, and supporting teachers at Barron Elementary School. We hold press events for Equality for All in Plano and the world. We give away the collection quarterly to good causes. We support the UU Service Committee in its efforts such as micro lending and human rights. We do these things in the hope of creating a world in which each person has the opportunity to realize and share his or her unique gifts. In doing so, we often redeem our own life's purpose and, we hope, help to redeem the human family as one. Who knows, someday we may even succeed in redeeming God.*)"

**(Continued from Front Page)** What can we do? Until we learn of the Plano City Council's official action, we can familiarize ourselves with the Plano ERO by going to our church website, talk to our Plano neighbors in a non-confrontational manner on how everyone deserves the opportunity to be treated equally, register to vote and get others to do the same. More updates will follow as new information is available.

# President's Column

## Demonstrating Strength

Too often, the social justice issues that our faith calls us to address are too big, too deeply embedded in social and economic structures, for us to feel we can do anything. And it's hard to feel powerless. So we do what we can: grow vegetables for a food pantry, tutor children and bring clothes for them, pay the electric bill for freezers in a food pantry.

But the Plano Equal Rights Ordinance (ERO) controversy is a big social issue coming home in a way we can address — must address. In December, the City of Plano revised its existing equal rights protection to extend to people based on sexual orientation, gender identity, genetic information and military/veteran status. There are exemptions for Churches, nonprofits, and small businesses. Nevertheless, a coalition of conservatives quickly formed to fight against it., and by the time you read this the City Council will have voted to either withdraw the revisions to the ordinance or put it to a citywide vote in May.

Assuming they pursue the vote, we have a job to do. Treating *every* person with dignity and respect is a pillar of our faith—specifically, the first of our seven principles. We are called by our faith to stand up for these rights, and that means campaigning to support the ERO in May. (At this writing, I don't know how the ballot will be worded, but whether the key vote is FOR or AGAINST, we are always FOR equal rights.)

You, the congregation, unanimously voted in support of a resolution to this effect, and I'm proud of both that and the overwhelming support you offered at a press event on Monday, February 8.

As the resolution says, "Therefore, as members of this community of faith, we pledge our hearts, hands, talents and voices to support the Equal Rights Ordinance and those who defend both the ordinance and the people it protects." (You can see the whole resolution on our website at [http://communityuuchurch.org/.](http://communityuuchurch.org/)) *This* is what stewardship is about. *This* is living our faith. *This* is what Unitarian Universalists are called to do.

Thank you for living our faith!

With appreciations and blessings, Elena Westbrook

### Annual Stewardship Drive And Our 40th Birthday - Rob Saxon

At the press conference held at our Church in support of Plano's Equal Rights Ordinance, a lady thanked me on behalf of our Church for stepping up to this issue head-on. She commented that there are many who are willing to let others take up the fight, or perhaps allow this opportunity for equality to wait for another day.

Supporting the City of Plano's ERO is just the latest example in how Plano Community UU Church works to safeguard our community. We take care of it in a number of other ways. We partner with Barron Elementary to help them with school supplies and winter coats, and donate fresh food to God's Food Pantry from our Community Garden, to name only two of many other examples.

And now it's about time to kick off our pledge drive and stewardship campaign. This is where we ask you to help support the work that we do, both for us as a congregation, and in the larger community. And the results of this drive will help determine how much we can do this next year. In light of the ERO and the other work our church does, please ask yourselves the following questions.

"Do I believe in what Community Church is working for in the world?"

"What gifts do I and my family receive here?" and finally,

"How can I participate in this community?"

And since this is our church's 40th birthday, "What gifts can we give ourselves going forward to make this year extra special?"

Nourishing spirits...Working for justice...Transforming lives. This is what we strive for. Help us achieve these worthy and necessary goals.

# March, 2015

**Simple Living Chalice Circle Meeting time and place** – The next meeting will be **Saturday morning March 14, at 11.**

**Theme/topic** – Learning together to live deliberately.

**Facilitator** – Contact Ona Tannehill at Email [simpleliving@communityuuchurch.org](mailto:simpleliving@communityuuchurch.org) for location.

## Rummage Sale Fundraiser

Several of you have asked when you could bring your goodies. The answer is NOW! Would you like to contribute but don't know what we're looking for? Here are some ideas for places to look for things you're ready to pass along to someone else for a good cause! Check your bookshelves for books, CDs and DVDs. Your game closet for games or puzzles. Your children's' rooms for outgrown toys or clothes. Your closets for clothes that no longer fit your life. The kitchen cabinet for duplicates or hard-to-fit, seldom-used appliances. If it's still useable, we'd like to sell it! You can bring in one item or a whole van full - we're grateful for everything you donate. There is a collection box in the church office and another in Founders' Hall, or you can put items directly onto the cart on the back patio. **You can bring large items between March 9-12 and put them directly into the sanctuary. Mark your calendars for the date of the sale: March 13 and 14.** The proceeds of the rummage sale will help send our Coming of Age class on their Heritage Trip to Boston. If you have questions or would like to help, contact the DRE, Kathy Smith, at [dre@communityuuchurch.org](mailto:dre@communityuuchurch.org)

**Friday Night Flicks - Founders Hall 7pm**

**March 6- Gone With The Wind - 1939**  
- Running time 3 hours

Celebrate the 75th Anniversary of the film that won 10 Academy Awards including Best Picture, Director, Actress and Supporting Actress. David O. Selznick's film of the Margaret Mitchell Pulitzer Prize winning book stars Clark Gable (Rhett Butler), Vivien Leigh (Scarlett O'Hara), Lesley Howard (Ashley Wilkes), and Olivia De Havilland (Melanie Hamilton). See it for the first time or the tenth time.

**MARCH 20 - Magic in the Moonlight**  
- 2014

In this deft romantic comedy, exposing a phony soothsayer proves harder than expected when the debunker (COLIN FIRTH) becomes smitten with the purported fraud (EMMA STONE). Directed by Woody Allen.

## Metaphysical Meanderings

A small group discussing the book **DYING TO BE ME: My Journey from Cancer, to Near Death, to True Healing**, by Anita Moorjani will meet on **March 23 at the home of Mark and Victoria Rachel.** This memoir is by a woman who was part of a traditional Hindu family residing in a largely Chinese and British society who had an epiphany on the other side. Anita freely shares what she learned about illness, healing, fear, "being love," and the true magnificence of each and every human being. She makes the case that we are spiritual beings having a human experience. Call Grace Morrison for directions if you would like to attend.

**Literary Ladies Book Club**

**Upcoming Meetings**

Women members and friends of Community UU Church are welcome to join us on the **third Tuesday of the month from 7 – 9 pm.**

**Date: March 17**

**Location: Nancy Barlow's home. Contact Nancy by March 13 if you plan to attend.**

**Selection: Blood Aces: The Wild Ride of Benny Binion, the Texas Gangster Who Created Vegas Poker Hardcover by Doug Swanson**

*The astonishing story of Benny Binion—a rip-roaring saga of murder, money, and the making of Las Vegas Benny Binion was many things: a cowboy, a pioneering casino owner, a gangster, a killer, and founder of the hugely successful World Series of Poker. Blood Aces tells the story of Binion's crucial role in shaping modern Las Vegas. From a Texas backwater, Binion rose to prominence on a combination of vision, determination, and brutal expediency. His formula was simple: run a good business, cultivate the big boys, kill your enemies, and own the cops. Amazon*



# Religious Education

## *Quotes to Live By:*

Stewardship connects how we understand:

- \* what we have been given and inherited
- \* what we have earned
  - \* how we track and account for those resources
  - \* what we decide to do with them  
(according to our values/beliefs)
- \* how we ensure they are skillfully used to those purposes.

Stewardship is integral to our spiritual, ethical, and philosophical lives.

*~Mark Ewert, on [www.generositypath.com/blog/](http://www.generositypath.com/blog/)~*

## Talking about Stewardship with your Children

One of the most powerful (and least-talked-about) ways we share our beliefs with our children lies in one of the most taboo subjects in America: how we spend our money. How many of us sit down with our children and go through the monthly budget, or talk about the percentage of our income that goes to living expenses vs. helping others? And yet, one of the most telling things we do, in terms of our values system, is decide where to put our limited funds. Make no mistake, our children are watching and absorbing our choices. So what can we as parents do to nurture good stewardship and generosity as a way of life for our children (and ourselves)?

This article started out with “Kathy wisdom” – that mix of experience and hard knocks that comes with 50-plus years of living and imputes a certain amount of knowledge, if not true wisdom. But as I wrote, I realized I was repeating information from one of my recent reading lists: ***Growing Up Generous: Engaging Youth in Giving and Serving***. So instead I will share with you the wisdom accumulated from 50 religious leaders across the denominations about children and generosity.

1. **Commit to the well-being of others.** Make helping a family a priority **because our faith calls us to it**. *If you need theological or historical background to help convince you that our faith is a faith of action, talk to me or Patrick.*
2. **Cherish children and youth.** Children learn what they live. If they are loved, they will seek to give that love back to the world. We make that possible when we invite them to participate, serve, give and lead in our social justice efforts.
3. **Connect to faith and traditions.** We give and serve not just because it is a good or logical or right thing to do, but because we are Unitarian Universalists, people of faith and commitment.
4. **Establish norms and expectations.** Make giving an accepted part of family life, not an option. Talk about how much the family will pledge – would the kids be willing to give up pizza once a month to increase the pledge by \$25 a month? Why or why not? And how will the family practice good stewardship with its time? Working at church on Odds N Ends Day or going to Samaritan Inn to prepare a meal makes a different statement about family time than another three hours of video games or soccer practice.
5. **Provide opportunities for youth to practice giving.** Children and youth have a responsibility as growing people of faith to think about how they earn, save, invest, and spend their money. Talk about healthy ways to handle money. Provide chances to give: a percentage of the allowance in the offering plate, change in the Guest at Your Table box, donating part of the babysitting money to someone in need.
6. **Offer opportunities for youth to practice serving.** Young people want and need to serve through acts of compassion, justice, or charity. They are idealistic and enthusiastic. Offer them thoughtfully planned opportunities to do so, and talk about it afterwards. What difference did they make? How did it feel?

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# Community News

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**7. Support your family.** Make generosity a family activity. Make friends with other families at church and do things together. Support your children's choices of friendships and activities that promote generosity and justice.

**8. Connect the generations.** Churches are perhaps the last place in America that are truly multi-generational. Take advantage of that. Nurture connections with others in the congregation. Bring them to events like the Spring Campout or Odds 'n' Ends Day where they will play and work side-by-side with several generations. Encourage your child to invite an elder to sit with them during coffee hour, help carry something for someone older, or help with tasks like clearing the table or putting out hymnals.

Children learn what they live. Come, let us live our way into the world we want to create. In faith, Kathy

## Family Events at CUUC in March

- Sun. 3/1** – Worship/Religious Education classes, 10:30 a.m.
- Sun. 3/1** – NTX Rally Planning Meeting, 2-4 p.m. (at First Jefferson, Fort Worth)
- Sun. 3/8** – Worship/RE Games Day 10:30 a.m. (no regular classes)
- Thurs. 3/12** – Rummage Sale open to church members, 6 pm.
- Fri. 3/13-Sat. 3/14** – Rummage Sale to benefit youth programming
- Sun. 3/15** – Worship/Religious Education classes, 10:30 a.m.
- Sun. 3/15** – NTX Rally Planning Meeting, 2-4 p.m. (at First Jefferson, Fort Worth)
- Sun. 3/22** – Worship/Religious Education classes, 10:30 a.m.
- Sun. 3/22** – NTX Rally Planning Meeting, 3-7 p.m. (at First Jefferson, Fort Worth)
- Fri. 3/27-Sun. 3/29** – NTX Rally (at First Jefferson, Fort Worth)
- Sat. 3/28** – Odds 'n' Ends Day (bring your child and come help!)
- Sun. 3/29** – Worship/Religious Education classes, 10:30 a.m.

## What's New in the Community Garden?

We are just beginning the 2015 harvest in the Community Garden, with kale and lettuce greens being the perennial producers in January and February of this very cold winter. Now that warm weather has arrived and all plots are beginning to green up nicely, we expect that we will be harvesting all sorts of new spring vegetables – carrots, radishes, greens, tiny beets and bunches of fresh green herbs.

We have several different demonstration plots – our two hugel kultur or mound gardens maintained by Lucinda Shahim and Jessica Morgan, the keyhole garden maintained by the Dallas Sai Center, the 55-gallon “tower garden” maintained by our RE classes, and the food forest maintained by a group of six volunteers – as well as pallet planting and square foot gardening techniques used in some of our plots. Come on out and take a look. There might be some ideas you could put to use in your home garden. Speaking of which, we gladly accept offerings of your organically grown produce from your home plots to add to our donations to God's Food Pantry and Minnie's Pantry on Saturday mornings.

We still have one plot available, and we always welcome helping hands at our harvests on Saturday morning. For more information about what's coming up this year, check out our web site and blog at <http://www.communityharvestgarden.org/> **If you are interested in learning more, contact Deb Bliss.** Visitors are always welcome at the monthly socials – second Saturday of the month from 10-12 noon. Contact Deb Bliss for location and more information.

Until next month – your Community Garden Correspondent

# Community News

## FREE MONEY!

**Albertson's:** Use Community Partners key chain tag or have them enter 49000109261.

**Kroger:** Update your Kroger Plus card to link to organization 83309 at [www.kroger.com/communityrewards](http://www.kroger.com/communityrewards).

**Tom Thumb:** Link your Rewards card to charity 8089 at Customer Service.

**Amazon.com:** Search for Community Unitarian at [smile.amazon.com](http://smile.amazon.com) and link to your account.

*The church will get a portion of all purchase amounts!*

**Our friend Mack McClendon from the Lower Ninth Ward in New Orleans, passed away Saturday, February 14. Cards of condolences can be sent to:**

Mack McClendon

**Deadline for the April newsletter is Friday, March 20 . Email your articles to [newsletter@communityuuchurch.org](mailto:newsletter@communityuuchurch.org)**

## Common Read 2015

The Common Read book for 2015 is *Reclaiming Prophetic Witness: Liberal Religion in the Public Square* by Paul Rasor (Skinner House Books, 2013), which asserts that conservative Christianity is not the only valid religious voice in our national social policy. The Common Read invites Unitarian Universalists to explore and claim our contribution, as religious liberals, to the pressing moral and ethical debates of our contemporary world.

Especially in view of our recent stand on the Plano Equal Rights Ordinance, this book should be of interest to all! Follow the Weekly UUpdate for more details about planned activities surrounding the Common Read.

If you would like to be part of the group order for a paperback copy of the book (\$15), please contact Nelah McComsey. Copies are also available from the UUA Bookstore and from Amazon. The book is also available in Kindle e-book version only (from Amazon).

## Women's Alliance Annual Retreat, "Discover YOUR self"

This year our retreat will be held on **April 17, 18 and 19, 2015**. We will be going to **Glen Lake Retreat Center in Glen Rose, TX**.

We have two price options:

Option 1 is a deluxe cabin, which will accommodate 9 persons on the bottom bunks. The cabin has a large lighted vanity area and a bathroom with showers. The mattresses are wide and firm. You will need to provide your bedding and towels. This price is \$100 for the weekend which includes 3 meals on Saturday and breakfast on Sunday.

Option 2 is an hotel style room available for \$150. These rooms are semi-private with 2 twin beds and a private bath in each and you do not need to bring bedding or towels. This price also includes your meals. There is a limited number of these rooms so it is first come, first serve. You must submit payment for a room to be held in your name.

Come join us for our annual gathering. It is a fun weekend filled with sharing, singing, activities and more. A chance to make new friends and visit with old friends. This is your chance to get away from it all!! We hope to see you there!

If you plan on joining us, contact Barb Salvo for more details or questions.

# Adult Religious Education

The Mission of the Adult Religious Education Program is to nurture and stimulate the religious and personal growth of the adult church community. We offer a varied and cohesive program within the context of the living Unitarian Universalist tradition and principles.

We offer a range of classes of interest to adults and youth on weekday evenings throughout the year. Each evening class begins at either 6:30 or 7 pm and ends no later than 9 pm. Sunday class begins at 12:05 pm and ends at 1:30 pm. Our programs include our continuing meditation group and a variety of topical classes.

CHILDCARE is available for all classes, upon request. **To reserve childcare call the Church office (972-424-8989) at least 48 hours in advance.**

## Sunday Mornings

**A Study and Discussion Group occurs on Sunday mornings 9 to 10am in Room F.** Join us for UU Discussion and Study (GUUDS), principally led by the **Rev. Patrick Price**. Child care is provided. This open ended, ongoing study and discussion group is for first time visitors as well as long time practitioners of Unitarian Universalism. Using books by UU authors, we will examine the wide and deep intersection of human longing and experience with that which is greater than our individual selves, and calls us to heed the "better angels of our nature." We are starting GUUDS with ***A House for Hope: The Promise of Progressive Religion for the Twenty-first Century***, by John Buehrens and Rebecca Parker.

## Monday Evenings - Vipassana Meditation - Clifton Rule

Clifton says, "Vipassana means insight into the nature of reality. It is a way of self-transformation through self-observation and introspection. Vipassana meditation is often referred to simply as "insight meditation." This is the backbone of our studies in Meditation on Monday nights. We invite you, as a beginner or as a practiced meditator, to join us on our exploration. We view Buddhism not as a religion but rather as learning the process of meditation to reduce the suffering in our lives and in the world around us. We explore through readings, dharma talks, questions and answers, group discussions and meditation. Join us and explore this process as we all grow together."

## Tuesday Evenings - Lu Jong: Mind Training.

The Ven. Tashi Nyima, an ordained monastic in the Jonang lineage of Tibetan Buddhism, will lead the group in meditation, followed by a discussion on Eight Verses on Training the Mind, a seminal Buddhist text. You are invited to learn a method for cultivating beneficial motivations and attitudes, developing antidotes to undesired mental habits, and making friends with your mind. Every third **Tuesday, first meeting is March 3, 7 – 9pm** at Community Unitarian Universalist Church . Free of charge.

## Wednesday Evenings

Coming attraction a new program. **"Guns, Germs and Steel." - March 18 - 7 pm- Founders Hall.** Mary Hrbek and George Hrbek are the facilitators.

## Thursday Evenings - The Origin of Civilization - Rev. Don Fielding - 6:30pm

Mar. 5 - Sumer and Afterward

Mar. 12 - Civilization & Pastoralism in Mesopotamia

Mar. 19 - The Development of Writing in Mesopotamia

Mar. 26 - The Gift of the Nile

Apr. 2 - The Egyptian Predynastic Period

Apr. 9 - **\*\*\*BREAK\*\*\***

**Humanists Group - The humanist group meets at 6:30pm at the Church annex.**



## *Community News*

Events listed on the calendar are subject to change. For more information and confirmation of these events, please visit the church calendar at <http://www.communityuuchurch.org/pages/calendar>.

**For our March 2015 calendar, go to our website at:  
CommunityUUChurch.org**

**Annual Reports for the Congregational Meeting May 17 are due April 13. If you are a Chairman of a Committee of the Church you will need to submit a report. A email will be going out to these Chairmen March 3.**

# UU Church Contact Email Addresses

Rev. Patrick Price:

**revpprice@CommunityUUChurch.org**

President, Elena Westbrook:

**president@CommunityUUChurch.org**

Director of Religious Education, Kathy Smith:

**dre@CommunityUUChurch.org**

Director of Music, Christopher Wolff:

**wolff08@gmail.com**

Church Secretary, Connie Meints:

**cuuc-office@CommunityUUChurch.org**

Church Bookkeeper, John Elder:

**bookkeeper@CommunityUUChurch.org**

Facilities Coordinator, Duane Mortensen:

**facilities@CommunityUUChurch.org**

Membership Coordinator, Cindy Pilcher

**mc@communityUUchurch.org**

Board of Trustees: **board@CommunityUUChurch.org**

*Trustees meetings are held the third Tuesday of each month at 7pm in Founders Hall. Members, friends and visitors are always welcome.*

Worship Programs (Sunday Services, Ushers Coordinator, Interior Arts)

**worshipteam@CommunityUUChurch.org**

Caring Committee Coordinator, Mina Daffinee

**Caring @CommunityUUChurch.org**

Communications Director, Rob Saxton.

**communications@communityuuchurch.org**

Personnel Coordinator, : **Vacant**

Committee on Ministry, Nancy Barlow, Chair

**Mincom@communityuuchurch.org**

Social Action Programs

**UUSInAction@CommunityUUChurch.org**

Bridge Group Coordinator, Clint Burleson:

**bridge@CommunityUUChurch.org**

Circle Suppers Coordinators, John Snyder:

**Circlesuppers@CommunityUUChurch.org**

Friday Flicks Coordinator, Alice Mayo:

**flicks@Community UUChurch.org**

First Friday Folksingers Coordinator, Dick Hildenbrand:

**folksingers@CommunityUUChurch.org**

Outdoor Adventure Coordinator, Dick Hildenbrand:

**outdooradventure@CommunityUUChurch.org**

Leadership Development Committee:

**ldc@CommunityUUChurch.org**

Capital Improvement Committee (Bill Daffinee, Chair):

**wrdaffinee@aol.com**

Strategic Planning Committee:

**planning@CommunityUUChurch.org**

Chalice Circle/Simple Living Coordinator Ona Tannehill:

**simpleliving@CommunityUUChurch.org**

Program Board: Chet Smith, Chair:

**programs@CommunityUUChurch.org**

Finance Committee: **finance@CommunityUUChurch.org**

Stewardship Committee (Tom Reid, Chair):

**stewardship@CommunityUUChurch.org**

Investment Committee: David Hollands, Chair, Carol Wise, Karen Bethel: **investment@CommunityUUChurch.org**

Young Religious Unitarian Universalists (Kathy Smith, Coordinator):

**yruu@CommunityUUChurch.org**

Adult Enrichment/Adult Education (Celeste Kennedy, Director): **adultre@CommunityUUChurch.org**

EarthSpirit (Janie McDermott, Coordinator):

**earthspirit@CommunityUUChurch.org**

Men's Fellowship (John Elder, Coordinator):

**men@CommunityUUChurch.org**

Religious Education Board (Amy Dessert, Chairperson):

**reboard@CommunityUUChurch.org**

Hospitality Committee (Coordinator):

**hospitality@CommunityUUChurch.org**

Women's Alliance: **women@CommunityUUChurch.org**

## UU Website Links

Unitarian Universalist Association (UUA): [www.uua.org](http://www.uua.org)

Unitarian Universalist Service Committee (UUSC): **[www.uusc.org](http://www.uusc.org)**

Southwest District (SWUUC): **[www.swuuc.org](http://www.swuuc.org)**

North Texas Unitarian Universalist Congregations (NTUUC): **[www.ntuuc.org](http://www.ntuuc.org)**

CUUC Representatives, Celeste Kennedy and Grace Morrison:

**NTUUC@CommunityUUChurch.org**

# January Financial Report

Finance Committee, by *Dick Hildenbrand, Treasurer*

Because of the early deadline for the March newsletter, the financials for January are not yet available. However, overall expenses for the fiscal year to date are within a few hundred dollars of budget and income is a few thousand dollars short, driven primarily by some fund raising that didn't meet expectations or were delayed: Parents' Night Out (-\$840), Raffle –moved from January to February) and the Free Money grocery program – see box on page 7 (-\$1,000). Before the end of the year, we'll also take a hit on Suburbia Parking (the event has been canceled) for \$2,000.

I'd like to use the extra space to discuss some items in the upcoming year's budget, which shows that we need to increase pledge income by about 15% - a lot, I know.

On the income side, except for pledge income, we project about \$15,000 less income, due to canceled or underperforming fund raisers – Parents Night Out, Raffle, Suburbia Parking, Coffeehouse and Grocery Programs (-\$8,270); the NTAUUS grant to fund our Membership Coordinator will run out mid-year (-\$1,925); and other tweaks amounting to -\$4,859.

On the expense side, as mentioned before, some salaries and wages have slipped below UUA Fair Compensation guidelines – Minister, DRE and Child Care Providers. Additionally, our DRE is in the process of becoming a Credentialed DRE, carrying a higher pay scale. Our budget includes a pay raise of 2% for all staff or an amount to just get them to the minimum on the UUA scale (which generally equates to entry level). The cost associated with these increases amounts to \$7,445. Note, too, that in each of the past five years, salary increases have been 0%, 0%, 0%, 1% and 0%. Is this fair?

Other expenses associated with staff have also increased – health insurance premiums up by \$4,330. Also a review of our insurance policy revealed that we were not carrying Workers Compensation coverage and the Board recently voted to rectify that, at a \$1,292 annual cost.

A few years ago, the UUA Southern Region started using a new method of calculating UUA and District

“dues”. Our congregation has always stayed “in covenant” by paying their Fair Share of these dues. However, the new calculation, based on total expenses instead of membership count put us at a 5.2% level versus the goal of 7%. At the time, the Board committed to getting to the 7% level over the course of 6 years by increasing the commitment by 0.3% per year – the upcoming year has us at 6.4%, numerically translating to a \$950 increase.

The remaining increases are facilities-related: Our Line of Credit was paid off late last year using a loan from the Investment Fund, and our plan is to pay that back at \$1,200 per year for 10 years. This is a net increase of \$600 per year from the interest payments that had been going to the bank. The other item of note falls under the category of “pay me now or pay me later”: Big things break but you never know when they're going to happen and funds are needed immediately when they do (may I mention HVAC units, water heaters, roof?). We need to regularly set aside funds for these eventualities, so the budget for this has increased from \$1,200 to \$4,800 (which still isn't enough in the long term).

The last increase is a “planned surplus” of \$5,000. “Why plan a surplus?”, you ask. To be financially prudent, we should have about two months' worth of expenses set aside for unforecasted revenue disruptions – what if a top quartile pledging family left the church?; what if an entire Balloon Festival weekend gets rained out?; what if there's an economic downturn and several members lose employment? Right now we have \$6,500 in operational cash reserves, representing less than one week of reserves, which scares me.

I hope I have given you here enough practical food for thought and will consider a substantial increase for your pledge for the upcoming year.

**Deadline for the April newsletter is  
Friday, March 20.  
Email your articles to  
[newsletter@communityuuchurch.org](mailto:newsletter@communityuuchurch.org).**

# Church Office Hours

**Monday:** church offices closed: **Tuesday:** 9 am to 3 pm  
**Wednesday:** 9 am to 2:30 pm: **Thursday:** 9 am to 2:30 pm  
**Friday:** 9 am to Noon : **Office Phone #:** 972-424-8989

## **Reverend Patrick Price**

**Monday:** Available for emergencies only.  
**Tuesday through Thursday:** Noon to 4 pm  
**Friday:** Available for emergencies only.  
Other times by appointment. Please contact Reverend Price for appointments and scheduling information.

## **Director of Religious Education Kathy Smith**

**Wednesday and Thursday:** 1pm to 5 pm, other times by appointment.

**Bookkeeper John Elder Tuesday and Wednesday:** 10:00 am to 3:00 pm, other times by appointment.

**Membership Coordinator Cindy Pilcher Thursday:** 9:30 to 11:30am.

## **Church Secretary Connie Meints**

**Tuesday** 9am to 3pm, **Wednesday & Thursday** 9am to 2:30pm, **Friday** 9am to noon.

**Music Director Christopher Wolff** available during church office hours.

## ***The Community News***

*The Community News* is distributed to Members and Friends of this church. Visitors who complete a visitor card receive issues for three months. To continue receiving issues, sign the "Welcome Back" book on each visit. Others may subscribe for an annual donation of \$25.00.

The editor encourages and appreciates submissions and on-time submissions are especially delightful. The Community News is published once a month.

**Email articles to  
[newsletter@CommunityUUChurch.org](mailto:newsletter@CommunityUUChurch.org)**

Please include your name on any news item submitted for The Community News.

Items may be edited for clarity and brevity



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