



Second Unitarian Church of Omaha

Second Thoughts

November, 2013

Join Us This Sunday!

Worship Services
9:30 and 11:30 a.m.

**Fellowship and
Refreshments**
10:30 - 11:15 a.m.

Daylight Savings Time Ends

**2 a.m., Sunday,
November 3**

*Remember to set your
clocks BACK one hour.*

Thanksgiving Dinner

**Saturday,
November 23**

(see page 5)

Interested in Church Leadership?

(see page 9)

- November 3 Rev. Scott McNeill
Liberalism is Dead. Long live Liberalism
Our faith is centered on the belief that we are to be open to new truths; but, does that mean we are to deny the truths we've already found? Part of our covenant is to walk together, even as we diverge – join us as we seek to both ravel and unravel our connections.
- November 10 Rev. Scott McNeill
Always Go to the Funeral
I have a love/hate, agree/disagree reaction to this idea about always showing up to funerals. There are many times we're asked to do things we'd rather not do – but why do we show up? With November's theme of **Covenant**, I thought we'd use this opportunity to wrestle with the idea that we show up because of our responsibility to those with whom we are in relationship.
- November 17 Dr. Rev. Charles S. Stephen, Jr.
Minister Emeritus at the Unitarian Church of Lincoln
November Song
There are those who think November is the worst month, but the poet Archibald MacLeish called it "the human season." The sermon will ponder which is correct.
- November 24 Rev. Scott McNeill
Who Gets the Last Piece of Pie?
Holidays often bring up images of families – for better or for worse. As we enter the season (joyously or nervously), we take a moment to celebrate what binds us together on different levels (what makes a family; what makes a church; what makes a nation?). The good news is that even though we may feel divided, pie (like life) is not a zero-sum game – we can always make more pie.

Second Thoughts is a publication of Second Unitarian Church of Omaha.

Please send articles and submissions to info@2Uomaha.org.

Deadline is the fifteenth of each month.



Minister's Musings

By Rev. Scott McNeill



In the coming months, our congregation will hear a vision of where our ministry is headed, if we choose to heed the call. For years, leaders of the church have wrestled with finding the best way to lead our church to be the best version it can be, knowing that we're always a work in progress. Over a year ago, the Board and the congregation (at its annual meeting) nominated a committee to grapple with crafting a vision of how we can intentionally grow and change our church in the near-future.

Soon, the Strategic Planning Committee will work with the Board and church to discuss what it heard, learned, and (now) envisions. While it's important to learn about our history, we are called to look toward the future, moving from past to present and even toward the future.

The details of the plan are being hammered out – but I can give everyone a sneak peek of what we aim to do with our ministry at Second Unitarian. We hope that members of our congregation will actively engage with their church, to strengthen their spiritual lives and the religious community we have.

There are many books and blogs written about church life and leadership, but one writer is gaining a solid following right now. Carey Nieuwhof (<http://careynieuwhof.com>) is the lead Pastor in a Toronto church, and has written a couple of books on ministry and parenting, as well as speaking and consulting with many different congregations. Many of the people who read his work actively disagree with his ideas, though they find some benefit in hearing his ideas about church work. And still yet, many folks agree with him.

In a post entitled, "5 Tensions Every Small & Mid-Size Church Encounters," Carey writes of these five concerns that arise:

1. *The desire to keep the church one big family.*
2. *The people who hold positions don't always hold the power.*
3. *The pastor carries expectations no one can live up to.*
4. *Tradition has more pull than vision.*
5. *The desire to do more, not less.*

Some of you may see how these apply in our church (or don't), while others may be wondering what the fuss is about. As the church grows in maturation, we hope to have a spiritual community that welcomes new people and ideas while connecting to our religious traditions. That, in essence, is what Unitarian Universalism is about – connecting our individual experiences to the wisdom and support of the larger community.

And we can best do that – we can best offer Unitarian Universalism to Omaha and Nebraska – by our intentional church work. Our church exists not as a place where people come and receive an experience of worship or social time in exchange for their money or talents. Rather, we create worship and relationships by the choices we make, by offering more than what we have – by offering who we are.

As we look at the future, we hope that the members and friends of Second Unitarian work together in building a church of religious freedom and spiritual growth, where we join together in fellowship, learning, and creating justice.

Throughout this city, throughout the world are people longing to explore their religious questions while being grounded in Love. There are people who seek to "make the earth fair and all her people one," repairing the damage we do to the environment and one another. There are people who believe that the Sacred is found not in any one place, but rather in all of us and in the relationships we build.

Our church is for them – may we continue to grow so that all who would be comforted and challenged by our message may be able to hear it.

In faith,
Rev. Scott



Planks and Slivers from the Board

By JoAnne Draper, Chair, Board of Trustees



And now we are whole! I am delighted to announce that Judy Eller has joined your Church Board. She has been actively involved with Fellowship which provides us the most important ceremony we have, coffee hour. Here's a quote for Judy, who's a teacher:

"We expect teachers to reach unattainable goals with inadequate resources. The miracle is this: they often do."

- Haim Ginott

That is one of the many gifts Judy brings to the board. When you see her please thank her.

I want to express my gratitude to the Nominations and Leadership Development Team, headed by Carol Johnson, and to Denominational Connections, chaired by Vicki Pratt. They promoted the October 15 webinar called "Leading a Congregation During Times of Anxiety" from the MidAmerica Region of the UUA and led by Nancy Heege. Thank you for involving us in the excellent programming that MidAmerica provides. We are indeed a church that is filled with talented people. I would like to share this poem by Tom Rundquist.:

*We want you to become a part of our community, and with your involvement share in the ownership of this church.
We want you to find your niche here to add depth and breadth to your life.
We want you to find friendship here that will be deep and lasting.
We want to support you on your spiritual journey.
We want to share with you the experience of life*

JoAnne



Share the Plate for November: Inclusive Communities

One half of Second Unitarian's offering received in November will go to Inclusive Communities.

Inclusive Communities is a human relations organization confronting prejudice, bigotry, and discrimination through educational programs that raise awareness, foster leadership, and encourage advocacy for a just and inclusive society. They envision a society that is strengthened by diversity, inclusion, respect, and justice for all people. Since 1938, this organization has served Nebraska, Iowa and the region with youth programs, community programs, workplace human relations, and leadership programming.

Visit www.inclusive-communities.org.

To nominate an organization for our Share the Plate program, visit the church website or contact the Social Justice Coordinating Council or Rev. Scott.



Treasurer's Report

By Pat Caffrey, Treasurer

Second Unitarian Church
Treasurer's Report
Month End for September 30, 2013

Thank you to all who made the Yard / Book sale a success!

FINANCIAL SUMMARY

	<u>September</u>	<u>Year-To-Date</u>
Income	\$15,480.68	\$73,982.80
Expenses	-\$13,990.03	-\$46,034.81
Net Over/Short	<u>\$ 1,490.65</u>	<u>\$27,947.99</u>

YTD Pledge Income/Current Year: \$59,998.97
reflects 33% of \$181,841.00 Total Pledged for 2013-14.

YTD New Pledge Income/Current Year: \$2,817.00
received of (6) New Pledges for \$9,000.00 for 2013-14.

If you would like more detailed financial statements, please contact me.

Thank you!
Treasurer
Pat Caffrey

Please Remember the Memo Line!

By Clyde Anderson, Chair, Finance Coordinating Council

When you write your checks to the church, please be aware that we have members and friends who neglect to write on the memo line what the check is for. Writing the purpose of the contribution in the memo line of the check makes the jobs of the Treasurer, Assistant Treasurer, and Money Counters easier, and hopefully eliminates errors.

Here are some typical notations to be used on the memo line:

- **Pledge** – Apply the funds to your annual pledge. However, if you didn't turn in a pledge for 2013-2014, we must treat your donation as Offering. That means 50% goes to our Share the Plate partner for the month and 50% goes to fund the operations of the Church. Since some members had to make low pledges during our Canvass Campaign because of financial uncertainties, it is always okay to make payments exceeding your pledge goal.
- **Offering** – Apply the funds to Share the Plate Offering.
- **Gift** – A special donation to the Church not to be included in your pledge account.
- **Endowment Fund** – Contributions to the Church Endowment Fund.
- **Memorial Gift for _____** - Donations in memory of a loved one or deceased member or friend of the Church. Unless the family of a deceased member specifies otherwise, memorial gifts are deposited in the Church's Endowment Fund.
- **Fundraisers** – The Church holds several fundraisers during the year. On your check please note the fundraiser; examples: KIOS, Book Sale, or Auction.

Always make your checks payable to **Second Unitarian Church**.

If contributing cash, please use one of the offering envelopes available in the backs of the gray hymnals and on the Welcome Desk. Please be sure to write your name on the envelope and explain what the money is for (Pledge, Offering, etc.).



THANKSGIVING DINNER
SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 23, 6 P.M.

It has been a long-standing tradition here at Second Unitarian to share a Thanksgiving meal the weekend before Thanksgiving Day. **This year our Thanksgiving dinner will be on Saturday, November 23, at 6 p.m.**

Please bring a salad, vegetable, or dessert that can serve 10-12 people.

Fellowship will provide turkey and beverages.

Donation is \$5 per adult or \$12 per family.

This is a wonderful feast that you won't want to miss!

If you can help with setup, please come at 5.

Please contact Janet Nichols or Judy Eller if you have questions.



Connecting Our Congregation to Our Larger Faith

by Vicki Pratt, Denominational Connections Chair

This month features regional staff. Regional staff are employees of the Unitarian Universalist Association who are assigned to geographic regions. The role of regional staff is to support the congregations in their region. Most of Nebraska is in the MidAmerica Region.

Each staff member is trained as a "deep generalist," which means they all can help committee chairs with most questions, plus each has in-depth knowledge of specific areas.

All regional staff can address a number of areas, including membership and growth, leadership, multigenerational involvement, conflict transformation, governance, human resources, and youth programming.

					
Nancy Combs-Morgan	Ian Evison	Phil Lund	Nancy Heege	Lisa Presley	Dori Davenport Thexton

Staff email addresses and specialty areas are available from the MidAmerica Region website: www.midamericauua.org/about-us/staff.

November 6 Training: "We Covenant to Affirm and Promote " webinar at 7:00 p.m. This webinar led by Christopher Buja covers coping with difficult members, unclear boundaries, and poor interpersonal relationships. Sign up at <https://ohiomeadville.wufoo.com/forms/mpe191113582xd/>

Up Next: It's time to start thinking about nominations for regional awards to be presented at the Regional Assembly in Topeka, Kansas, April 11-13, 2014. I'll let you know as soon as information becomes available.



Retirees' Group

By Carol Johnson

Economist James K. Galbraith said in his recent Holland Lecture that Social Security may well, once again, be threatened as Congress attempts to negotiate the current financial impasse. Pat Hart, a member of Second Unitarian Church, is an Iowa representative to Social Security Ambassadors, a state-based nonpartisan initiative being coordinated nationally by the Center for Community Change in Washington, D.C. The Center has provided ambassadors with training and resources for presentations about Social Security.

On **Tuesday, November 12 at 1:00 p.m.** at church, Pat will present information about Social Security. Pat will cover basic facts and personal stories about the importance of Social Security to working people's retirement security, the role it plays in keeping seniors out of poverty, and its importance as a life insurance and disability program for younger workers and their families. The presentation will address myths that are being spun about the solvency of Social Security and ways to assure long term solvency and strengthen benefits.

The fundamental message of the presentation is that Social Security is a strong program that can and should be strengthened for current and future generations and may, therefore, be of interest to people of all ages. Everyone is invited to attend Pat's presentation.

Meditation Reincarnated

By Kevin Dunlop

In his book Savor, Buddhist monk and author Thich Nhat Hanh writes, "We all have bad days when everything seems to go wrong. After such a long day, we feel tired, discouraged, and down. We might have an urge to have some comfort food - a pint of ice cream, say, or some chocolate chip cookies or a bag of chips. At times like these, it is best simply to return to our body through mindful breathing, cut off all external contact, and close the door of the senses. Following our breathing, we can collect our mind, body, and breath, and they will become one." Mindful breathing is a simple and basic skill that the Meditation Reincarnated group is always learning about and practicing. We are currently using the book Savor as a study tool.

Meditation Reincarnated meets in the church downstairs each month. Learn about and practice meditation, whether monk or beginner. No previous meditation experience is necessary, and we invite you to come and check us out. Our next meeting is on **Thursday, November 21, at 7:45 p.m.** at church, when we will discuss chapter 5 of the book Savor.

PRIVACY POLICY FOR CHURCH PUBLICATIONS

As stated in church policies: *Respect for the privacy of members, friends, and visitors is a primary consideration. When newsletter submissions contain personal information (phone number, street address, email address, etc.), it is the author's responsibility to get the subject's permission to publish this information.* Since many of our communications are transmitted electronically and information therein may more easily be re-transmitted, it's essential that any personal information be approved for inclusion.

In general, it's preferable to omit personal information, but in those cases where it's necessary (such as a location for an offsite meeting), those who submit articles should ask for permission to publish the personal information. An alternative is "Please call or email the church office for contact information." Contact the Office Administrator for more information.

Regarding published photographs: If you do not want your photo published (including in the newsletter or on the website), please inform the Office Administrator in writing. Thanks!



Lifespan Religious Growth & Learning

By Molly Kliment-Jenkins, Interim Director of Religious Education



The school year for the children has started. Our elementary students are working through a curriculum that is Montessori-based. We will be saving activities from week-to-week so when the children complete the lesson, they can return to previous weeks and explore a topic more.

If you have any old shoe boxes you'd like to part with, we'd love to have them! We can use them to sort and organize these lessons so that the kids can easily find the various lessons and we can keep our downstairs organized. Please drop them off in the Director of Religious Education office.

Teacher training was held in the middle of October. We had good turnout both days and many thoughtful questions were asked. Those of you who have volunteered to help lead the classes and assist, a big 'THANK YOU' is in order. We hope that this year proves to be an enjoyable and eye-opening experience!

If you are interested in helping set up during the week or assisting on Sunday (either service time), please contact me at dre@2uomaha.org or 402-334-0537, ext. 112. We have our primary leaders set up but they could use a helping hand!

With hope and joy for the future,
Molly

Yard Cleanup Days Scheduled for November/December

By Clyde Anderson, Co-Chair, Building & Grounds

We've scheduled late fall Church Yard Cleanup Days on the mornings of **Saturday, November 2, and Saturday, December 7, from 8:00 a.m. to noon** to rake leaves and clean out the flower beds for winter. In case of bad weather, we'll reschedule to a later date.

We were greeted with beautiful weather for our Fall Cleanup Day in October. Fourteen volunteers got a lot accomplished! In addition to pruning trees, edging the lawns, and removing weeds, the Yard Team relocated the Doggy-Potty Station to a site near the parking lot sign, planted grass and bulbs where the two tree stumps were removed. Team members included Rick Bell, Dave Jenkins, David Johnson, Roger Nicolaisen, Tom Rundquist, and myself.

Inside the church, another team cleaned windows, dusted (wow, there were a lot of cobwebs!), installed weather stripping on the lower level double door, replaced burned out light bulbs, cleaned the furnace filters, spot cleaned the sanctuary chairs, removed audio-visual equipment from the Library and adjusted the Library shelves, removed spots on carpets, and cleaned out the refrigerator. Team members included Gay Robinson Abraham, Kathy Bell, Carol Johnson, Bill Kuhn, Mike & Cindy Lynne, Tom Peterson, and Shirley Rundquist.

Thanks to all of our volunteers who helped!

Blackstone Book Club

by Gwen Eurich

Join us for a discussion of the bestseller Unbroken by Laura Hillenbrand at our meeting on **Tuesday, November 26, at 7:30 p.m.** at church. If you would like to see what we are about, please come. Every month we discuss a book of choice when we meet on the fourth Tuesday of the month.

If you are interested and would like more information, email me, Gwen Eurich.



- Travel and stay in homes of people who share your ideals
- Learn about hosting people in your home to earn extra money

The UU bed and breakfast directory *UU're Home* (formerly *Homecomings*) offers a network of hosts in the United States (and a few abroad) who enjoy meeting new friends and are happy to open their home to like-minded people. Travel to different cities and stay in reasonably priced accommodations or become a host and enjoy meeting new friends.



www.UUreHome.com
43 Vermont Court
Asheville, NC 28806
828-281-3253

For more information, visit
www.UUreHome.com
or write to
info@uurehome.com

SAVE THE DATE - March 2, 2014

Special Joint Sunday Service for

Stewardship Commitment Sunday, Followed by Potluck

Beveridge Middle School - 120th & Shirley

Membership Journeys

By Leslie Briar Harvey, Membership Committee Chair

The October Pathways to Membership class has been postponed to Saturday, November 2.

Are you thinking about becoming a member of Second Unitarian Church? We invite all who are interested in joining us to attend our next Pathways class, which is being held on **Saturday, November 2, from 8:45 a.m. to 12:45 p.m.**

After breakfast, you will learn about the history of Unitarian Universalism and our church. You'll also have an opportunity to share your own religious journey, hear about our ministries, and learn about the benefits and expectations of church membership. Following lunch, you'll also have an opportunity to officially sign the Membership Book if you wish.

If you're interested or have questions, please contact Katie Tessin at membership@2uomaha.org to reserve your seat and also sign up for childcare. We look forward to seeing you!



Staff

Rev. Scott McNeill, Minister

Office hours by appointment
402-334-0537 ext. 111
minister@2Uomaha.org

Rev. Sarah Gettie McNeill, Affiliated Community Minister

communityminister@2Uomaha.org

Molly Kliment-Jenkins, Interim Director of Religious Education

402-334-0537 ext. 112
dre@2umaha.org

Gary Emenitove, Office Administrator

402-334-0537 ext. 114
info@2Uomaha.org

Donna Zebolsky, Music Director

music@2Uomaha.org

Katie Tessin, Connections Coordinator

membership@2uomaha.org

Second Thoughts Staff: Rev. Scott McNeill,
Nancy Amsler, Richard Koelling, Betty Segell,
Tom Peterson, Gary Emenitove

Attendance				
Date	Adults in Worship	Adults in R.E.	Children in R.E.	Family Service Learning
9/29	60			3
10/6	74	4	13	---
10/13	72			---
10/20	62	---	---	10

Second Unitarian Church of Omaha
3012 South 119th Street
Omaha, Nebraska 68144
402-334-0537
www.2Uomaha.org

Nominations and Leadership Development Committee

By Carol Johnson, Chair

In the by-laws of Second Unitarian Church, the Nominations and Leadership Development Committee is charged with nominating eligible members for positions on the Board of Trustees, the Endowment Committee, and Nominations and Leadership Development Committee. These nominations are presented to the congregation for vote at the annual meeting on May 18, 2014. The by-laws also indicate that the committee is to make an "open and active call" for candidates.

The Nominations and Leadership Development Committee will be talking with potential nominees for these positions beginning in January. According to the by-laws, candidates for the Board must have been a member in good standing for at least two years as a minimum requirement. The Committee will be holding interviews with potential candidates to determine interest and skills of the candidates and to help the candidates to develop an understanding of the expectations of the position.

At present, the Nominations Committee is gathering information from past board members and reviewing covenants, by-laws, and other governing documents to be able to convey the mission and vision of the Church to our potential candidates.

If you are interested in serving on the Board of Trustees, Endowment Committee, or Nominations and Leadership Development for the next three years, or know of a member you want to recommend for any of those positions, please don't hesitate to contact a member of the Nominations Committee: Carol Johnson, Richard Koelling, or Tom Peterson.

Second Unitarian Church

3012 S. 119th Street

Omaha, NE 68144

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

***MISSION STATEMENT
SECOND UNITARIAN CHURCH OF OMAHA***

“Our Mission is to be Authentic, Compassionate, and Transformative in our lives, in our faith, and in the world.”

Adopted May 20, 2012