



Second Unitarian Church of Omaha

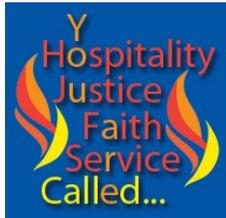
Second Thoughts

March, 2014

Join Us This Sunday!

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

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



Stewardship Commitment Sunday

March 2, 10:30 a.m.
(see page 4)

**Daylight Savings
Time Starts
Sunday, March 9**

**MidAmerica Region
Annual Conference**
April 11-13
Topeka, KS
(see page 7)

March 2

Rev. John T. Crestwell, Jr.
You Are Called

Join us on this special Sunday as the Rev. John Crestwell speaks to our congregation about how we can support Unitarian Universalism.

March 9

Rev. Scott McNeill
Fear of Failing? Try Failing to Fear!

From an early age when we first learn to walk, we also learn that falling down is a part of the process. Over time, we seem to prefer avoiding the fall altogether, even over the possibilities that come with taking a step towards your goal. Sunday's worship encourages us to take our falls with grace, boldly getting back up and trying again.

March 16

Strategic Planning Committee
All In

Commitments can be hard to make, but can also deepen our connections and relationships. Join Steve Abraham, Carol Johnson, Rich McArdle, Stephanie Peterson, and Craig Piquette as they offer their reflections on what it means to join and support a religious community.

March 23

Rev. Dr. Sarah Voss
Redemption

A new way of looking at how we fix the mistakes we've made.

March 30

Mike McMahon
A Lotus Blooming in the Church

Mike McMahon is a local chaplain and poet who identifies as both a Buddhist and a Christian, certified as a spiritual director at Creighton and ordained as a lay member of Thich Nhat Hanh's community. Mike will offer his reflections on how these two faith traditions have connected in his life, as well as offering some spiritual practices that we can do on our own.

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

The past month has been inspirational to many of us – though the ability to ski or skate quickly may elude us. The Winter Olympics offered celebrations and heartaches for people who have worked tirelessly to achieve the best in their professions. Some won, some failed – acknowledging winners can feel great for those who stand on the podium but a little bit harder for the ones who placed fourth or below.

It's in that spirit that artist Beth Evans created the following two images. Perhaps you saw the comics, too – they “went viral” in mid-February as several people posted on Facebook (<https://medium.com/the-nib/ecbf984d4c5f>). “Everyday Medals,” suggests that we receive awards celebrating common aspects of life that we make it through, often without getting credit for the hard work.



I don't know about you, but there are certainly days that I feel like I've accomplished a lot even if it would appear minimally important to the outside world. I'm not sure that I'd win the medals above – though some of them seem appropriate. What else might I win?

“Sometimes lets another car leave first.”

“Smiles at the employee rather than remarking on the time the line has taken.”

Your medals might be the same – or you might deserve recognition for something altogether different. Some things are easier for you than me; we all work hard, albeit at different parts of life.

We don't receive medals for completing everyday, mundane tasks things. Perhaps it's good that we don't – there's been plenty of ink spilled about how our society has lost its touch due to too many kids getting trophies merely for participating (full disclosure – I'm a member of the much-derided millennial generation – played sports as a kid, and received few, if any, trophies for *just* participating).

But instead of giving out trophies or medals just for participating or completing what's expected of us, perhaps we can give ourselves (or one another) a justified pat-on-the-back. Imagine what life would be like when the critic (self, or other) is silenced, when we are encouraged to acknowledge our limitations and failures and to move on from them. We don't have to celebrate everything and everyone – but sometimes (whether we're sick, or tired, or overworked, or just having a rough day) getting through the day is a success of its own. What's important about our religious community is that we are here and commit to support one another, on good days and bad.

Whenever you read this – consider yourself the recipient of a *very special medal*:



Congrats!
Rev. Scott



Planks and Slivers from the Board

By JoAnne Draper, Chair, Board of Trustees



2014, the Year of Transformation...

As I shared, the Treasurer position is being reinvented. Pat Caffrey, who has been our Treasurer for 6 ½ years, will be retiring this summer. I am delighted to announce that Vicki Pratt has graciously accepted to be our new Treasurer. Vicki has been a long time member of the Social Justice Coordinating Committee, the Library Committee, has served on the Board, the Finance Committee, plus others. When you see Pat and Vicki, please let them know how much we appreciate all their time and work.

Vicki served on the Prairie Star District board and from that experience is chair of Denominational Connections. Due to her new commitment, she is resigning from that position. If you are interested in this role, please let me know.

“*You Are Called*” is the theme for our Stewardship campaign. My husband Darrel and I were reflecting upon these thought provoking words. He, being a poet, came up with this.

*“You are called to be the person you authentically are
A person who stands up for right
Stands up against wrong
Who follows the creed you have formed in your heart.”*

What is *your* calling?

JoAnne



Share the Plate for March: St. Augustine Indian Mission

One half of Second Unitarian's offering received in March will go to the St. Augustine Indian Mission.

The St. Augustine Indian Mission and School in Winnebago, NE, has served the Native American people since 1909. The Mission teaches traditional Native American culture and language, along with a solid core of academic basics, to over 125 kindergarten thru eighth grade students from the Omaha and Winnebago Indian Reservations. The Mission celebrates and embraces culturally enriching programs and prepares students for a lifetime of inquiry and success. Visit <http://www.staugustinemission.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 January 31, 2014

YTD New Pledge Income/Current Year: \$4,933.00
reflects 54.18% \$9,104.00 (7) New Pledges for 2013-14.

FINANCIAL SUMMARY

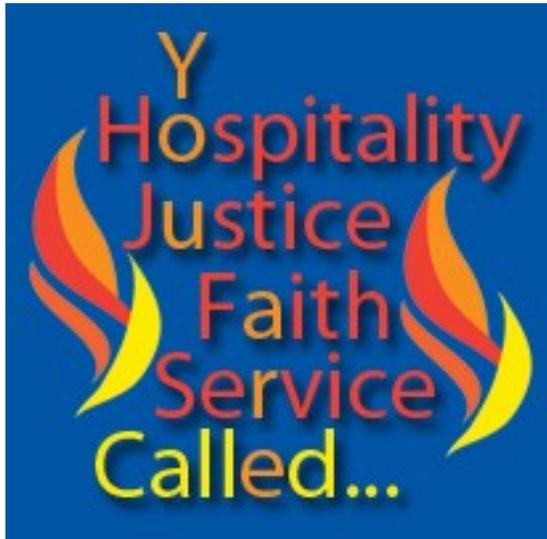
	January	Year-To-Date
Income	\$12,503.33	\$140,060.97
Expenses	-\$20,821.20	-\$114,529.60
Net Over/Short	-\$ 8,317.87	\$ 25,531.37

Contribution Statements for Tax Year 2013 were emailed or mailed if email not available during January, 2014.

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

Thank you!
Treasurer
Pat Caffrey

YTD Pledge Income/Current Year: \$116,022.81
reflects 63.80% of \$181,841.00 Total Pledged for 2013-14.



Special Single Sunday Service
10:30 a.m. on March 2
Stewardship Commitment Sunday
Beveridge Middle School, 120th & Shirley
(between Center & Pacific)
Special Guest Speaker is **The Rev. John T. Crestwell, Jr.**, Assoc. Minister of Outreach, Leadership, and Evangelism at the Unitarian Universalist Church of Annapolis, MD.

This special service is in lieu of a pledge drive
and will be followed by a **potluck**.

You will be called and invited to this special Sunday.
Watch for the call and please say "YES!" to attending.



Strategic Planning — All In!

By Craig Piquette

Once upon a time there was a small pastoral church of about 70 households that enjoyed each other's company and called a minister to lead them. The People looked around and said to each other, "We could do great things if we only had a bigger, better building!" They called an advisor who told them, "Review your long-range plan, update it and prepare the congregation to move." A group was convened to perform this task, thinking that it would take a few months and then off to the bank they would go to get the money to buy their new church home.

But that was not how it turned out. The group joined with the minister to review the plan and to their dismay, they realized, "This plan is nine years old and we are not the same church we were when this was written!" They decided to consult some resources on how to write and implement a strategic plan. They spent months poring over these resources and talking with each other about what they learned. They conducted house meetings to find out what the People wanted from their church. The more they talked and the more they learned, the more they realized that the People did not speak with one voice. The church meant different things and filled different needs for different people. The group began to ask each other what it meant to be a Second Unitarian. They realized that until the People could identify what it means to be a Second Unitarian, that the church would not grow. However, wanting it to grow and putting all one's energy into the effort were two different things. The strategic plan needed to help the People develop the common identity that would allow them to voice what it means to be a Second Unitarian.

The group continued to meet and developed a plan that would help mold that common identity. The plan needed to help the People develop the sense that they could not be whole without Second Unitarian in their lives and in the end would enable them to voice what Second Unitarian meant to them. **On Sunday, March 16, in a worship service with a gathering of the People, the group will tell the story of the strategic plan and how that process has transformed their lives. They are "All in!" Are you?**

Strategic Planning Presentations

By Carol Johnson

Are you curious about the direction of Second Unitarian Church for the next three to five years? The Strategic Planning Committee will be holding presentations that will include the "big ideas" of the Strategic Plan as well as strategies and tactics — and you're invited to attend.

OPTION 1: Sunday, March 16, from 12:45 to 2:00 p.m. after second service, including a light lunch.

OPTION 2: Wednesday, March 26, 7:00 to 8:00 p.m..

Beginning March 17, the full written plan will be accessible online.



Earth Day Omaha 2014

By Vicki Pratt, Green Sanctuary Committee

Second Unitarian Church of Omaha will again have an information booth at Earth Day Omaha at Elmwood Park. This year's celebration is **Saturday, April 19, 11 a.m. to 6 p.m.** Come out to enjoy sun, live music, demonstrations, variety of food from local vendors, and children's activities. The full schedule is at <http://earthdayomaha.com/>.



Second Unitarian's booth features demonstrations on "How to Vermicompost" by our own Larry Kurtz. We'll also distribute free packets of organic Oregon Giant Snow Pea seeds. These easy-to-grow plants produce 4-5" pods with sweet and tender peas.

How you can help: We are looking for volunteers to help package the seeds a week or so before Earth Day and volunteers to be in the booth for an hour at the park. Please contact Vicki Pratt. This is a great family project, an opportunity to talk with our members, and a way to meet like-minded people.

Retirees' Group

By Carol Johnson

Looking for some interesting places or events near Omaha? The well-traveled, well-spoken Darrel Draper will facilitate a presentation on Day Trips, **Tuesday, March 11, at 1:00 p.m.**

Bring your experiences of interesting places that can be reached in a few hours of driving—historical, exotic, fun, or scenic. Everyone is welcome!

Meditation Reincarnated

By Kevin Dunlop

Our meetings are composed of two parts. First, we discuss a meditation/Buddhist related text, then we follow with an actual meditation. We discuss the text at the meeting by bringing up interesting points and asking questions of each other about the text. We also discuss any other miscellaneous meditation-related issues that anyone would like to bring up. We end the meeting with a group meditation, usually about twenty minutes or so in length. Sometimes it is a silent meditation, and sometimes we use meditation-related music or vocally guided meditation.

Meditation Reincarnated meets in the church downstairs on the **fourth Thursday of each month at 7:45 p.m.** to learn about and practice meditation. This group is designed for everyone, whether monk or beginner. No previous meditation experience is necessary, and we invite you to come and check us out.



Connecting Our Congregation to Our Larger Faith

by Vicki Pratt, Denominational Connections Chair

It's time to register for the annual Unitarian Universalist regional conference. This year's gathering in **Topeka, Kansas, April 11-13**, features worship, workshops, social witness, and fellowship. The host hotel is the Ramada Hotel, \$81/night.

Details are at <http://www.midamericauua.org/events/regional-assembly/topeka>

Highlights include:



- ↑ Pre-conference Social Justice workshop, Friday afternoon at the **Brown vs Board of Education National Historic Site**, featuring “The Powerbroker.” This film documents civil rights leader Whitney Young’s approach to social justice.
- Opening banner parade Friday evening
- Rev. Dr. Paul Rasor’s keynote lecture on “Reclaiming Our Liberal Heritage and Embracing Our Hunger for Justice.” Rev. Rasor is the Director of the Center for Study of Religious Freedom and Professor of Interdisciplinary Studies at Virginia Wesleyan College.
- Anti-Bullying Social Witness march to the state capitol. →
- Youth programming.



Three members of our congregation can attend as delegates to the short business meeting. Everyone is welcome to all sessions. To carpool contact Vicki Pratt.

YRUU Wants Your Stuff!

By Ben Wallace and Shawne Johnson-Coonfare

Are you gearing up for some spring cleaning? Please save your donation items and books for the YRUU (Young Religious Unitarian Universalists)! The youth are planning a Garage Sale and Book Sale on **Saturday, May 3**, and would appreciate any and all donated items.

Proceeds will assist greatly in funding a YRUU trip to Colorado where members will commune with nature and participate in a Social Action project. More details will follow about the trip and dates to drop off your items.

Questions? Please phone Shawne Johnson-Coonfare or Ben Wallace or email omahayruu@gmail.com which reaches both Shawne and Ben.



March Service Learning Project

By Jaime Short

When we moved out on our own for the very first time, how many of us took with us a little piece of home? Mom’s old pots & pans, the ugly couch from the basement, a cozy blanket from Grandma’s house...

The March Learning Service Project needs your donations of new and gently used household items to help youth who are aging out of the foster care system and need to set up a new home.

Region 6 Behavioral Healthcare helps youth setting out on their own to transition successfully into the community and to achieve and maintain independence in areas of their lives including education, legal, medical, mental health, residential, and safety.

With our help, these youth can also have the “things” to set up a new home! Bring your donations from the Wish List to church by **Sunday, March 23**. Thank you!

Wish List Items:

- Hygiene products: soap, deodorant, shampoo, toothpaste, toothbrushes, etc.
- Laundry baskets & laundry detergent
- Trash cans, trash bags
- Toilet paper
- Shower curtains, bath mats, bath towels, and wash cloths
- Kitchen towels and dish cloths
- Cleaning supplies
- Sheets, pillows, blankets
- Lamps
- Pots, pans, silverware, cups, plates, bowls
- Microwaves & small kitchen appliances

MAC Question:

“Our group at Second Unitarian wants to put out a marketing piece and wants to know how we can involve the Marketing Advisory Council (MAC) and use its resources. What do we do? When should we get MAC involved? How should we get MAC involved?”

(answer on the next page...)

OTOC Spring Fundraiser: Food, Art, and Music at Hot Shops

By Vicki Pratt

You are invited to Omaha Together One Community’s (OTOC) annual Spring Fundraiser at Hot Shops Art Center, 1301 Nicholas Street, Omaha, on **Saturday, March 29, from 6:00 to 9:30 p.m.**

The fun evening features tasty appetizers, a variety of yummy gelato, soft drinks (cash bar for wine and beer), live music and entertainment, a wide variety of silent auction items, plus an opportunity to get acquainted with members of congregations throughout Omaha. OTOC works to improve living and working conditions for residents in the Omaha metro area, and Second Unitarian Church of Omaha is a founding member of OTOC.

As a bonus, many of the artists will have their shops open for browsing.

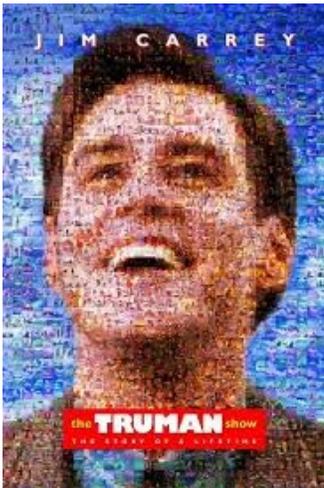
Tickets will be on sale during coffee hour between services: \$20 in advance; \$25 at the door.

More info about Hot Shops: www.hotshopsartcenter.com.



March Second Circle Teen Movie

By Anita Meyer



The March Second Circle Teen Movie is "The Truman Show" starring Jim Carrey.

The teens will be joined by Bob Fischbach, Second Unitarian Church member and entertainment reviewer for the Omaha World-Herald. They will continue their viewing and meaningful discussions of movies on **Sunday, March 23 (a week later than usual) at 4:30 p.m.** in the sanctuary.

The viewing and discussion will explore reality shows, whether exploitation of one another is fair, and other topics piqued by the movie.

A free-will donation will be taken for pizza.

Movie synopsis: *He's the star of the show--but he doesn't know.* Truman Burbank is a man whose life is a nonstop TV show. Truman doesn't realize that his quaint hometown is a giant studio set run by a visionary producer/director/creator, that folks living and working there are Hollywood actors, that even his incessantly bubbly wife is a contract player. Gradually, Truman gets wise and what he does about his discovery will have you laughing, crying and cheering.

The Second Circle Teen Movie selection for April is "In and Out" which presents issues of coming out as gay.

MAC Answer (from the question on the previous page):

That's a great question! The MAC (Marketing Advisory Council) always wants to be involved at the outset with any marketing pieces – anything that represents Second Unitarian Church in print, whether it is for an internal or an external audience. We have put together a style guide that includes editable templates for ads, slides, cards, brochures. You will find them in the **Member Resources** tab on the church website, www.2uomaha.org. Please ask any member of the MAC (Kathy Bell, Carol Johnson, Nancy Amsler, or Office Administrator Gary Emenitove) for assistance. Thank you – our mission is to be of service!

Weather-Related Cancellations

If weather or road conditions cause services or a major church event to be cancelled, we will notify you by:

1. Placing a message on the church phone (402-334-0537),
2. Sending a message to the weekly email list,
3. Sending a message on Facebook, and
4. Placing a message on the church website (www.2Uomaha.org).



In case of a service cancellation, we will also contact local media with our information.

If you arrive at church and experience patches of ice on the walks and parking lot, deicer and sand are located in the foyer under the coat rack. Feel free to use them or alert a member of Building & Grounds to treat the ice. A shovel and broom are also available for snow.



CONGREGATIONAL COVENANT OF RIGHT RELATIONS

Adopted May 23, 2010

To strengthen the bond of peace within and beyond the Second Unitarian Church of Omaha: We pledge

- to create a religious community where we freely explore our values and honor our diversity as a source of communal strength.
- to build healthy relationships by respecting our differences and assuming good intentions.
- to listen appreciatively and endeavor to speak directly, honestly, and compassionately, particularly when we are in conflict.
- to do our best to forgive if we hurt one another, to make amends and to reconnect in a spirit of gratitude and generosity.
- to abide by this covenant in celebration of the common purpose that unites us.

Faithfully done, our work carries forward the ministry of this church to create loving community and supports our mission to grow as a beacon of hope—sharing a vision of a world community that embraces diversity, justice, and respectful stewardship within the interdependent web of existence.

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!



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

<i>Attendance</i>				
Date	Adults in Worship	Adults in R.E.	Children in R.E.	Service Learning
1/26	84	—	—	15
2/2	60	9	14	—
2/9	73	6	9	—
2/16	67	10	15	—

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



Our Congregation's Vote on New UUA Study/Action Issues

By Vicki Pratt

Thanks to everyone who participated in our congregation's vote on selecting the new Unitarian Universalist Association Study/Action Issues! We ranked the potential list from top to bottom. There was a tie for the top spot.

Escalating Inequality and Gun Violence: A Public Health Issue
Renewing and Securing Our American Democracy
Ending the War on Terror
Pursuit of a Just Peace for Israelis and Palestinians
Empowerment: Age and Ability Reconsidered

UU congregations use the Social Witness process to call attention to a social or economic inequity. Part of the process is selecting an issue that all congregations support. These rankings will guide how our delegates vote on the final selection at this year's UU General Assembly in June.

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