



Second Unitarian Church of Omaha

Second Thoughts

June-July, 2014

Join Us This Sunday!

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

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

Lifesaver Party
Tuesday, June 3
(see page 7)

Summer Potluck
Saturday, June 21
(see page 5)

June Service
Learning Project
Sunday, June 22
(see page 5)

Heartland Pride
Parade and Festival
June 26—28
(see page 8)

**Have a
Great Summer!**

- June 1 Shawna Foster
Step 1: Human Rights, Step 2: ???, Step 3: Peace
For the last fifty years, social justice has been about agreeing and advocating for human rights. The next fifty years will be about implementing those rights.
- June 8 Music & Worship Committee
Plant Seeds, Grow Beauty
We will use this week to find the divine in the beauty and mystery of flowers with our annual intergenerational flower communion service.
- June 15 Rev. Scott McNeill
Only a Firefly to the Light of the Sun
This line from the song *Reasons for Living* is central to my theology and ministry. Everything has importance, even if it seems small.
- June 22 Rev. Scott McNeill
Ships in the Night
This worship will offer ideas on how we can both share our experiences and thoughts, and listen and understand where another person is coming from.
- June 29 Rev. Scott McNeill
DIY has evolved, Welcome to DIT
Sometimes we feel the need to be alone and work individually; and, sometimes we need to be together and work as a community. I want to explore the importance of collaboration.
- July 6 Michael Lynne
- July 13 Tom Peterson
- July 20 Rev. Michael Dowd and Connie Barlow
- July 27 Chris Peters

This newsletter is for June & July. The next newsletter will be August.

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



By now, most of you have heard the bittersweet news: I'll be leaving as the settled minister at Second Unitarian, wrapping up my work over the summer (dates and details to be determined, still). I hope you know how grateful I am for each of you and the church. In the four years I've been here, I've felt very lucky to be a part of this congregation. You all are committed to the church, and with that commitment comes a sense of ownership. That you would welcome me (and my family) so graciously means a lot to me.

Some of you were around when you first brought on the Rev. Dr. Josh Snyder and some were here when he left. Perhaps you were around for one or both of the interim ministers, Rev. Stephen Sinclair and the late Rev. Nancy Haley. It can be hard to understand how to relate to ministers – are we friends, mentors, spiritual leaders, prophets, none of the above, all of the above, or some mixture? Different ministers provide different skills and fulfill different roles.

I hope that I filled the role of cheerleader, encouraging the congregation to keep growing and maturing as an organization, as well as members themselves. The greatest joy in my work was found in meeting with members and visitors one-on-one, or as families. Learning more about the lives we live is a blessing – and I hope that you take on the task of inviting people to lunch, dinner, to plays, or picnics, to meetings or whatever you can think of – so you can learn more about one another. Building strong relationships is one of the fundamental roles a church fulfills.

Some of you wonder why I'm leaving. The average first settlement for a UU minister is four years; whereas the average settlement for a UU minister is seven. Saying this doesn't make the change any easier – but transitions like this are common in churches and obviously in the professional world. Common or not, it is still hard – very hard.

As with any situation, there are complexities (even paradoxes). I had a certain expectation of how long I would be here, especially as I worked and got settled in. It took me a few years to get things down, even if I still didn't do them perfectly. Still, this spring provided a confluence of events that led me to considering a new ministry. First, let me offer some information on how we got here, before I share some reflections on the past four years. Most UU congregations who are looking for ministers use a process called "search", which is how you all brought me to Omaha. The process typically takes place between October-March (+/- a month). I did not enter the usual search process, as I did not intend to leave Omaha in the near future.

In mid-April, the UUA Transitions Office shared an update about the normal search process, indicating that more churches than usual were still looking for a minister after the first round. With that email came a list of 10-20 churches, all around the country. In late April, I contacted Manassas to read more about their congregation and to share with them resources about my ministry. In early May, I interviewed with the search committee and in mid-May, I was invited to be the candidate for their settled ministry. Like we did in Omaha in 2010, I will participate in a candidating week where I meet with members and committees of the church; after the second Sunday that I'm there, the congregation will meet and vote on whether to call me as their minister or not. As is the case in Unitarian Universalist churches, I cannot accept a call with less than 90% voting in affirmation – and there are many times where a vote needs to be above 95%, though there are different circumstances for each vote.

(continued on page 4)



Planks and Slivers from the Board

By JoAnne Draper, Chair, Board of Trustees



Yes, the month of May can be crazy busy with graduations, weddings, and, at church, the Annual Meeting. Your Board, Rev. Scott, Committee Chairs, and Office Administrator Gary have all been working hard getting prepared for this event. As crazy as it has been, it could be worse! Just imagine reading announcements like these...

"Pot-luck supper Sunday at 5:00 PM – prayer and medication to follow."

"For those of you who have children and don't know it, we have a nursery downstairs."

"The church will host an evening of fine dining, super entertainment and gracious hostility."

"The pastor would appreciate it if the ladies of the Congregation would lend him their electric girdles for the pancake breakfast next Sunday." (Oops, that spell check, ugh!)

Anyway, by the time you receive this, the Annual Meeting will be over and we will have elected three Board members, voted on bylaws changes, and conducted other business. Our future looks very bright!

JoAnne

Shop at Amazon.com and Help Second Unitarian Church of Omaha

Your online purchases can help the church!

Visit the church website at www.2Uomaha.org, under **Quick Links** select **Books**, and then select the link for **Amazon.com**. *A percentage of your purchase will be donated to the church!*



Share the Plate for June: Table Grace Café

One half of Second Unitarian's offering received in June will go to Table Grace Café.

Table Grace Café is a restaurant with a mission to feed people nutritious, tasty food no matter their ability to pay. There are no set prices and people can pay what they want, or they can volunteer. Table Grace Café allows people in need to eat a healthful meal with dignity. They also train people how to work in food service. In addition to serving people who are experiencing homelessness and poverty, the restaurant serves downtown professionals; it is a vibrant, democratic scene. Their goal is that everyone, regardless of economic status, deserves the chance to eat wonderful food while being treated with respect and dignity. Visit www.tablegracecafe.com.

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

Watch your Weekly eNews for information on the Share the Plate recipient for July.



Treasurer's Report

By Pat Caffrey, Treasurer

Second Unitarian Church
Treasurer's Report
Month End for April 30, 2014
FINANCIAL SUMMARY

	<u>April</u>	<u>Year-To-Date</u>
Income	\$12,287.47	\$179,953.24
Expenses	-\$15,768.59	-\$164,927.46
Net Over/Short	-\$ 3,481.12	\$ 15,025.78

YTD Pledge Income/Current Year: \$150,641.94
reflects 82.84% of \$181,841.00 Total Pledged for 2013
-14.

YTD New Pledge Income/Current Year: \$6,814.00
reflects 72.00% of \$9,464.00 (8) New Pledges for 2013
-14.

Contribution Statements for 07/01/13 through 03/31/14 were emailed or mailed if email was not available. If you have not received it or if you need an updated one, please let me know.

We are nearing the end of the church year which is 06/30/2014. Receiving contributions fulfilling your pledge prior to that date will be appreciated!

Committee Chairs: Please ensure that check requests for expenses are submitted in early June so that they can be paid during June.

For detailed financial statements, please contact me.

Thank you!
Treasurer
Pat Caffrey

Minister's Musings

(continued from page 2)

Regardless of whether I am the next settled minister in Manassas, VA, or not, I have tendered my resignation, and already the Board of Second Unitarian is working to find an interim minister to lead the next stage of ministry here. On a personal level, I still struggle with letting go, of knowing I won't be an active part of this congregation. But that's the way it goes with communities – when you need to step away, you need to fully step away.

Over the summer, there will be lots of occasions to reflect on my tenure and for you to share your hopes of the future with one another. We'll talk about how we will relate to one another after I leave – using best practices and covenants that are in place for other ministers. But for now, in the immediate wake of the news of this transition, all I want to say is thank you. From the bottom of my heart, now and forever: thank you.

In faith,

Rev. Scott



FAMILY FUN NIGHT SUMMER POTLUCK

Everyone welcome for food and fun!

Saturday night, June 21, 6:00 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.

We will meet downstairs and on the east lawn, so bring lawn chairs.

We will have board games for inside and fun activities outside for all ages. Please bring a dish to share that can serve 12 people.

You won't want to miss it!

June Service Learning Project

By Anita Meyer, Religious Growth & Learning

Our June Service Learning Project is Heading to the Forest

June's Service Learning Project will be held **Sunday, June 22, at 10:30 a.m., at Fontenelle Forest, 1111 Bellevue Blvd. North, in Bellevue.** From I-80, take Hwy 75 (Kennedy Freeway) south to Chandler Road. Turn left onto Chandler. Stay on Chandler approximately 1 mile until the road ends at the stop sign at Bellevue Blvd. Turn right onto Bellevue Blvd. Continue approximately .5 of a mile to the Nature Center (on the left).

Some of us will be moving and spreading mulch while others from our group may choose to stain some picnic tables. Please join us in the great outdoors as we learn about this fabulous nature preserve while giving back to them some of our time and energy.

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

Thank you!

During the past fall, winter and spring, some of you have participated in a journey. A journey of the self. A journey of extending yourself into sometimes uncomfortable territory. A journey that has helped all involved grow — teachers, children, and adults who join us in discussions, projects and service.

I would like to take a moment to thank each of you who has helped out in our lifespan religious education program. Some of you were active on the committee, working behind the scenes and up front. Others helped lead classes or workshops (child, youth and adult), set up, clean up, soothe little ruffled feathers and so on. Here's a list of those who have helped in the past year. Probably by no means complete, but a decent start:

**Farryl Bertmann, Stu Burns, Pam Curtis-Smith
Donna Dudley, Phil Dudley, Bill Hay
Kaitlyn Hayes, Anita Jeck, Dave Jenkins
Janice Kliment, Pierre Lavedan, Sarah Gettie McNeill
Scott McNeill, Anita Meyer, Pete Miller
Pam Miller-Jenkins, Janet Nichols, Chris Peters
Craig Piquette, Meg Quintana, Dodie Robison
Dan Roth, Jaime Short, Justin Short
Jodi Straub, Katie Tessin, Nancy VanderSluis
Joe White, Rachel Yamamoto**

If you were not able to be present on Sunday, June 1, please see me - we have a special gift for you!

I would also like to remind you that in the coming summer session, we will be having fun on Sundays in the RE going on downstairs or (hopefully) outside. Please be aware of this when you are helping your children dress themselves in the morning and consider the conditions that exist outside... and the washability of their clothing!

Let's hit the summer full of energy and fun!

Needs List

As we look towards the upcoming year, RE is looking for some items that you may be ready to part with.

- Square/rectangular baskets, all sizes, wicker/wood/metal/fabric
- 2 side table lamps (no need to match)
- 2 reading lamps (no need to match)
- Ceiling tiles - not warped, musky or smelly, please! Any size will do.
- Jute/burlap material
- Small CD Player
- Small figures & their stuff (animals, figurines, action figures, small dolls, dollhouse furniture and Barbie, etc. accessories... but Barbies and similarly-sized dolls are too large.). I'll be re-styling into UU heroes/props for stories.
- Wooden blocks
- Dropper bottles
- Kid-sized aprons
- Small pitchers and bowls (glass)
- Small wooden boxes - like cigar, jewelry, etc.

If you have any items that you'd like to part with, drop them off in the DRE office. We get stuff we need. You get to get rid of stuff you don't. It's a win-win for everyone!



Retirees' Group

By Carol Johnson

Join us **Tuesday, June 3, 4 to 5 p.m.** for a Lifesaver Party presented by AlegentCreighton Health. Learn life-saving cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) and automated external defibrillators (AED) for children and adults, win door prizes, have fun, and learn to save a life! Certification is available for \$5.00 per individual; there is no cost if you are not getting certification. Register by calling 800-253-4368 or visiting [the AlegentCreighton website](#). Everyone is welcome, but please register!

Blackstone Book Club

By Gwen Eurich

Members and Affiliates are invited as always to our June book discussion. We will be talking about [Anthill](#) by E. O. Wilson on **Tuesday, June 24, 7:00 p.m.** (Please note that we have had a recent time change.)

The Blackstone Book Club meets on the fourth Tuesday of the month at the church. Our members periodically choose a variety of books to discuss -- both fiction and nonfiction.

Meditation Reincarnated

By Kevin Dunlop

Our meetings are composed of two parts. First, we read and 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.

We have begun reading the book [10% Happier: How I Tamed the Voice in My Head, Reduced Stress Without Losing My Edge, and Found Self-Help That Actually Works--A True Story](#) by Dan Harris. You can read the book ahead of time if you like, but it's not necessary. We'll read and discuss the book at our monthly meetings.

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. Our next meeting is Thursday, June 26.



Evidential Inspiration and Realistic Hope

By Molly Kliment-Jenkins, Interim Director of Religious Education

"Evidential Inspiration and Realistic Hope" with Rev. Michael Dowd

This free program, geared for adults and teens, will be presented in the Second Unitarian Sanctuary on **Wednesday, July 23, at 7 p.m.** Childcare will be provided.

The program expands on material in Dowd's bestselling, bridge-building book, *Thank God for Evolution: How the Marriage of Science and Religion Will Transform Your Life and Our World* and his July 20 Sunday morning service at Second Unitarian.

Science and religion are not enemies; indeed, they must work together if we are to survive the 21st century. Given our impact on Earth's climate, the seas, and other species, humanity is about to experience what could be called *The Great Reckoning*. The good news is that this also marks *The Great Homecoming* of the prodigal species. A worldwide movement has been emerging for decades, largely unnoticed, at the nexus of science, inspiration, and sustainability. Beliefs are secondary. What unites us is a pool of common values, priorities, and commitments regarding the importance of ensuring a just and thriving future for humanity and the larger body of life. This evening's program will focus on six main points of agreement held in common by tens of millions of religious and non-religious people around the world.

Michael Dowd is a bestselling evolutionary theologian and one of the most inspiring science-based speakers in America today. His book, *Thank God for Evolution*, was endorsed by 6 Nobel Prize-winning scientists and by religious leaders across the spectrum. Rev. Dowd and his science writer wife Connie Barlow (both climate hawks), have spoken to nearly two thousand groups across North America since 2002. Their work has been featured in *The New York Times*, *LA Times*, *The Wall Street Journal*, *Washington Post*, *Newsweek*, *Discover*, and on CNN, ABC News, and Fox News.



Heartland Pride Parade and Festival

By Tammy Hunter, LGBTQ Welcoming Congregation Committee

Please join us for the annual Heartland Gay Pride Parade and Festival, taking place **Thursday, June 26, through Saturday, June 28.**

The theme this year is "Free to Be ME!" Through our involvement, we affirm our support for LGBTQ individuals to be fully themselves, as well as our commitment to work for equal rights for all. We'll be joined by First Unitarian Church in both the parade and the festival. The following events will take place during the weekend:

Thursday, June 26 -

Candlelight vigil and screening of the movie "Milk" at Hanafan Park in Council Bluffs

Friday, June 27 -

Youth Pride festival and evening dance at Hanafan Park in Council Bluffs

Saturday, June 28 -

10 a.m. – Pride Parade in Council Bluffs, beginning at the intersection of 9th Avenue and South Main Street

11 a.m. – Pride Festival and Entertainment begins at Stinson Park in Omaha's Aksarben Village

Please watch the Weekly eNews and Sunday Orders of Service for details about marching in the parade and staffing our booth in the festival.

For more information, contact Tammy Hunter.

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.

Staff

<i>Attendance</i>				
Date	Adults in Worship	Adults in R.E.	Children in R.E.	Service Learning
4/27	73	<i>Intergenerational</i>		—
5/4	66	10	16	—
5/11	56	9	13	—
5/18	58	7	7	—
5/25	67	10	7	—

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Nancy Amsler, Richard Koelling, Betty Segell,
Tom Peterson, Gary Emenitove

This newsletter is for June & July. The next newsletter will be August.

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