



Second Unitarian Church of Omaha

Second Thoughts

August, 2014

Join Us This Sunday!

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

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

**Welcome
Rev. Frieda
Saturday, August 16
6—8:30 p.m.**
(see page 7)

**Paint-a-Thon
Saturday, August 16**
(see page 5)

**Retirees' Group
Tuesday, August 12
Darrel Draper as
"Jean Baptiste
Charbonneau"**
(see page 9)

August 3

Rev. Nancy Gillett
Entering the Fear

Nancy Gillett will be sharing her reflections gleaned from her recent meditations and art work on confronting fear. Through stories and the wisdom of other people of faith hopefully we will be empowered to face the fears that we are confronting.

August 10

Vicki Dudley
Deciding Points

Real social justice happens when thinking persons take action to support the values they hold dear even when doing so may threaten the comfort of their own lives.

August 17

Lorraine Duggin
Jan Hus, The Chalice, and UU Roots

An exploration of how the story of the great Christian Martyr John Huss (or Jan Hus) connects to some of the symbols and rituals of our faith.

August 24

Social Justice
We Are Called: Social Justice at Church and Beyond

Members share their experiences working toward making a more just world, on local, regional, and national levels including experiences from the MidAmerica Region UUA Assembly, Hunger for Justice, and General Assembly.

August 31

Music & Worship
The Education of God

Ever wonder why things happen a certain way? So did God! Members of the Music and Worship team present another chapter in the "Education of God" series, by The Rev. David Bumbaugh. These stories look back on certain events and explain them as lessons learned.

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



*Meister Eckhart wrote,
"If the only prayer you said in your whole life was,
'Thank you,' that would suffice."*

In a few weeks, you'll welcome Rev. Frieda Gillespie with wide open arms and eager minds and hearts, as you take the next step of your ministry. The next couple of years will be a reminder of the strength and generosity of the members and friends of Second Unitarian Church of Omaha, the people who make this place a community.

It's important to stop and speak of your gratitude before meals, which is why many people and families say grace together before they eat. Whatever words they choose, the intention is the same – it's a recognition that we benefit from our own hard work, and the hard work of many others. Imagine what it would be like if everything we did – every meeting, every worship, everything – started and ended with the simple prayer that Meister Eckhart suggested.

If you look back on some of my old newsletter columns, you'll see different times that I used this space to share of my gratitude – thanking individuals and groups for their commitment to our congregation. Trying to include everyone would leave someone out; so, in this final space, let my note of thanks reach each of you. Those of you who arrive early enough to turn the lights on and leave late enough to turn the lights off, thank you. Those who give and do and share – thank you. Those who show up when you'd rather not, sing the hymns you don't particularly like, and willingly (if not grudgingly) allowed me to experiment with worship styles – thank you. I've said it over and over and here it is one last time – print it out, cut it out, put it on your fridge:

**Each and every one of us has gifts to bring to the world, unique perspectives and insights and talents.
By working together as a community, we grow as individuals and we grow the church.
We are more than the sum of our individual parts. So, thank you!**

Sarah Gettie and I will really miss you. When we chose to come to Omaha in 2010, we did so because we knew that the ministry at Second Unitarian (and the community of Omaha) offered great history and tremendous possibility. And now, Rev. Frieda will lead you along the journey; and then, it'll be someone else.

Some of you may have noticed in my worship services that I'd often use musicals for illustrations, even having one service each year that was based on a different show. In the musical, "Wicked," there is this song entitled, "For Good." While there are different arguments to be made about the quality of the music or the lyrics, this one particular image speaks to me – it's when the two friends (for the two characters become good friends) need to separate. Elphaba stops and realizes that she is, indeed, limited – and that Glinda must forge on and do the work Elphaba cannot do. She charges her friend and says that "now it's up to you for both of us, now it's up to you."

Thank you for the chance to work with you; and now, it's up to you.

In faith,
Rev. Scott



Planks and Slivers from the Board

By Craig Piquette, Chair, Board of Trustees

Second Unitarian enters fiscal year 2014-15 in excellent financial shape, leadership is excited about its vision for the future, and a new minister will be here this month. The Finance Coordinating Council is reporting that a number of new pledges have come in and the transition to our new treasurer, Vicki Pratt, has gone smoothly. There will be a congregational social gathering on August 16 to welcome Rev. Frieda Gillespie, our interim minister and her partner, Jennifer Long. Looking ahead, Rev. Gillespie will be in the pulpit for Water Communion on September 7 (so remember to collect a vial of water over the summer to contribute). The excitement is building to the start of a new church school year (and for the kids to go back to school). Church committees will name new chairs and define their goals early in the church year and by September their ministry will begin in earnest. These are exciting times for Second Unitarian but we have a problem.

A number of committees have chairs who are term-limited and must step down from the role they have ably served for two years. One might ask, why wouldn't the Board extend their chairpersonship and allow them to continue to fulfill their role? Ideas are the lifeblood of an organization and diversity is its strength. Leadership in ours or any other organization must turn over from time to time to allow those new ideas and energy to percolate to the surface. There has been much talk, especially since the release of the new strategic plan, about the concept of shared ministry. The church can't run without the many volunteers who contribute their time and talent to committees that help run the church. For many this is their ministry, but Second Unitarian needs more people to join those committees to discover their ministry.

As we head into the new year, think about your gifts and talents. Are you a connector, someone who brings people together? The Caring, Fellowship or Membership Committee may be for you. Are you thoughtful or analytical, maybe Library Committee or the Financial Coordinating Council is your 'thing'. Are you handy around the house or do you like gardening? Maybe Building and Grounds is your ministry. Or do you burn with a passion to make the world a better place? You need to join your kindred spirits in Social Justice!

Make a leap of faith and join a committee of your choosing. You will develop stronger relationships with members and friends you may know only casually and you may find your ministry. A list of committees is available under the connecting tab on the church website or contact me at Board@2uomaha.org.



Share the Plate for August: No More Empty Pots

One half of Second Unitarian's offering received in August will go to No More Empty Pots.

No More Empty Pots is a grassroots nonprofit corporation connecting individuals and groups to improve self-sufficiency of local urban and rural communities. Their vision is to support communities in becoming self-sufficient and food secure through collaboration, education, stewardship, and sustainability.

Visit www.nomoreemptypots.org.

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



Treasurer's Report

By Pat Caffrey, Treasurer

Second Unitarian Church

Treasurer's Report

Month End for June 30, 2014

A very special thank you to you for your ongoing generosity and stewardship of Second Unitarian Church! We have come to the end of the 2013-2014 church year and we are looking forward to awesome happenings in 2014-2015!

It has been my honor to serve as your Treasurer for the last few years. Vicki Pratt is your new Treasurer and I am grateful to her for her willingness to serve in this capacity. Gary Emenitove continues to serve as Assistant Treasurer and I am grateful for his excellent skills and talents. In addition, we have contracted with Vicki Allely, of Bookkeeping Services, LLC, to assist Vicki and Gary in some Treasurer responsibilities.

FINANCIAL SUMMARY

	<u>June</u>	<u>Year-To-Date</u>
Income	\$15,306.53	\$208,464.57
Expenses	<u>-\$28,164.84</u>	<u>-\$208,364.57</u>
Net Over/Short	<u>-\$12,858.31</u>	<u>\$ 100.00*</u>

*An end of year transfer of \$5,335.00 was made from Fund 01 Operating to Fund 21 Reserve Fund as approved by the Board.

YTD Pledge Income/Current Year: \$180,036.36 reflects 99.01% of \$181,841.00 Total Pledged for 2013-14.

YTD New Pledge Income/Current Year: \$8,528.00 reflects 86.46% of \$9,464.00 (8) New Pledges for 2013-14.

Contribution Statements for 07/01/13 through 06/30/14 will be emailed or mailed if email is not available or preferred. If you do not receive it or if you need an updated one, please let Gary Emenitove or Vicki Pratt know.

To Committee Chairs: Please let Vicki Pratt and Gary Emenitove know of any changes in Committee Chairs. If you are interested in a quick orientation regarding committee financial responsibilities and processes, please let us know and we will be glad to help you.

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

Thank you!

Treasurer

Pat Caffrey, Vicki Pratt

Email: treasurer@2uomaha.org

Generosity Prevails at Second Unitarian

By Clyde Anderson, Finance Coordinating Council

Our fiscal year ended June 30, and the year-end financials look very good! Pledge income was 99% of \$181,841.00, the pledged amount for 2013-2014 and 87% of \$9,464.00, the new member pledges. **Thank you** to all of you who paid your pledges, and special thanks to those members who exceeded their pledges! That helped compensate for members who couldn't fulfill their pledges because they moved away or suffered financial hardship. We ended the year with a \$5,335 surplus that will be deposited in the Reserve Fund to help pay expenses in future years.

Letters were mailed to all households pledging for 2014-2015 thanking you for your pledges and stating the pledge amounts and schedules of payment. Please keep this letter with your financial records. If any information is in error, please notify Gary Emenitove, Office Administrator, or Vicki Pratt, Treasurer.



The Paint-A-Thon Is Back!

By Clyde Anderson, Social Justice Committee

After a two-year break, First and Second Unitarian Churches of Omaha are again teaming up to participate in Brush-Up Nebraska's Paint-A-Thon! The two churches will partner with the Bemis Park Neighborhood Association under the leadership of Rob Warner.

Paint-A-Thon is a community partnership that recruits volunteers to paint the exteriors of homes for low income elderly and disabled homeowners. Paint-A-Thon organizes teams for the painting of the homes and provides the teams with a qualified homeowner.



Our assigned house is on North 41st Street just north of Pinkney St. We'll be there **Saturday, August 16**. We try to beat the heat by starting early. On Saturday we primarily paint, reattach the fixtures, and clean up.

Brush Up Nebraska furnishes the paint, and we provide the rest of the supplies. Volunteers are welcome to bring their favorite brushes, scrapers, etc. Although we have a few ladders, we always need more, especially long extension ladders. Bring work gloves and wear appropriate footwear -- no sandals or flip-flops! This project is an excellent opportunity

for students to get service-learning hours.

If you would like to help, contact Clyde Anderson. We also need volunteers to bring snacks, beverages, and lunch. Because this is a work site with hazardous tools and equipment, children must be 12 or older with a parent present to participate.

OTOC, Making Omaha a Better Place to Live

By Vicki Pratt, Social Justice Committee

Second Unitarian Church is a founding member of OTOC (Omaha Together One Community). The congregations in this broad based community organization work together to improve the quality of life in Omaha.

Here's a recap of recent work by a few of the Action Teams.

- **Housing and Revitalization** convinced our City Council to allocate \$1 million to demolish dangerous and vacant structures in neighborhoods. The team is now working to help set up an Omaha Land Bank to revitalize deteriorating areas of Omaha.
- **Immigration Reform** educates the public and our Congressional representatives about impacts to families caused by current policies.
- The emerging **Mental Health** team is researching ways to improve funding for mental health programs and services.
- The **Environmental Sustainability** team is working with OPPD to ensure follow through on their commitment to move to wind and solar energy generation and to stop burning coal at their North Omaha plant.

Action teams form in response to issues raised in relational meetings. This process of meeting, researching, defining solutions, and speaking with decision makers works in personal, congregational, and business life as well as community organizing.

To find out details, attend "The Cycle of Organizing and How to Take Effective Action" training on **Monday, August 18, 7:00 p.m.** at Augustana Lutheran Church at 38th and Lafayette Streets. Presenter is Paul Turner, Lead Organizer for AMOS (A Mid Iowa Organizing Strategy) in Des Moines. Contact Vicki Pratt for more information.



New Church Entry Codes in August

By Clyde Anderson and Tom Rundquist, Building & Grounds

Church leaders and staff will be issued new building access codes **beginning Sunday, August 3**, before both services. Weather permitting, a member of the Building & Grounds Committee will be seated on the bench by the front door issuing the codes the first two Sundays of August.

These codes allow access to the front and lower level doors. If you are unable to get your code on these two Sundays, please contact the Office Administrator at info@2uomaha.org or 402-334-0537 ext. 114.

The old codes will be deactivated at the end of August.

In order to receive a code to the church, persons should belong to one of these categories: church staff, current board members, treasurer, chairs of church committees, youth program leaders, and janitorial service. If you don't qualify under one of those classifications but feel you need access to the church, please contact the Office Administrator.

If you have any questions about operation of the access panels, contact any member of the Building and Grounds Committee or the Office Administrator.



The YRUU had an amazing trip to Colorado in June helping with Habitat for Humanity in Loveland, CO, and doing some wonderful community-building in Estes Park, CO. The group would like to send out a very heartfelt thank you to everyone in the Second Unitarian church community who helped to support this trip. It was an amazing experience for the youth and adults involved and we are grateful for the overwhelming support we received in fundraising and organizing the trip.

Photo courtesy First Unitarian Church



On July 13, the congregation had a service about Grace from Tom Peterson. The children expanded this lesson downstairs in their "Grace is for the Birds" project: making birdseed chalices and cheerio constructions for our feathered friends. As you walk in the front entrance, you may see some of these: thank our kids for showing grace to our neighborhood birds.

Photos by Molly Kliment-Jenkins





Greetings from Rev. Frieda Gillespie

Greetings to Second Omaha members and friends!

My wife and I had a great but short trip to Omaha last week and we fell in love with Nebraska. We managed to pack a lot into three days. I found an apartment near the church. We had some delicious food, saw a lot of Omaha, and scoped out the stores, and drove out into the countryside. We met some of the Board, staff, and other church leaders, and saw the church for the first time. It is certainly a strange process choosing and being chosen through the internet and by phone.



I was so pleased to find a charming and lovely church and really wonderful people to work with. I look forward to being there on the 16th when we'll have a chance to meet many more of you. I'll be starting my ministry with you in earnest on the 18th. I hope to meet with some of the committees and plan our first service on September 7. I will also be accessible to any of you that wish to talk starting then. My plan is to try and meet all of the members in the first few months and I will be calling folks to do just that. Meanwhile, I know it's hot - I hope you are staying cool and having a wonderful summer!

Blessings,
Frieda

email - RevFrieda@2Uomaha.org

A SUMMER MEET AND GREET FAMILY EVENT!

The Fellowship Committee invites you to a **Summer Potluck** to meet our **Interim Minister Rev. Frieda Gillespie** and her partner **Jennifer Long**.

Join us **Saturday, August 16, from 6 to 8:30 p.m.**

Please bring food to share with 12 people.

Questions? Contact any member of the Fellowship Committee.



Lifespan Religious Growth & Learning

By Molly Kliment-Jenkins, Interim Director of Religious Education

In August, we in religious education are preparing for the launch of our fall curriculum. It's an exciting time, full of hope and enthusiasm for our children, youth, and adults. This year we hope that you find it a time filled with spiritual growth and engagement.

Here are some dates to be aware of:

- Saturday, August 23: Religious Education kickoff picnic (see below for further details)
- First week of September: Teacher trainings (subdivided by curriculum)
- Sunday, September 14: First Sunday of the new curriculums

Child Curriculum & Scheduling

Spirit Play Montessori - Through a Montessori-based UU curriculum, Spirit Play, that honors the age-old vehicle of religious socialization, the key elements are the prepared classroom environment and the teachers. These elements free the children to work at their own pace on their own issues, after an initial lesson or story, within a safe and sacred structure shepherded by two adults.

Signs of Our Faith - Our selected elementary curriculum engages children to explore ritual practices of our faith that remind us of our traits and values. Some of the rituals are enacted in the congregation. Some we conduct alone, or in our interactions with family, friends, and peers; others are offered to the wider world. This program helps children understand the abstract concept of a ritual by naming rituals as signs of our faith.

Heeding the Call - As a social justice curriculum, "Heeding the Call" explores linked oppressions in our society and encourages participants towards personal growth in values that counteract the marginalization of others. Workshops on empathy, courage, abundance, joy, and other qualities ask participants to recognize how these standards can be tools for justice. Additionally, the program includes more concrete tools, such as suggestions on being a good ally, and tips on the language of conflict resolution. This curriculum is offered to our middle as well as high schoolers.

Sunday Scheduling - All three levels will be provided at the 9:30 a.m. service. Spirit Play will be in the "rainbow" room, middle schoolers will be in the new "lounge" at the bottom of the stairs (by the built-in shelving unit), elementary will continue to be in the downstairs worship area. The green room will be flex for spirit play and middle school. Second service will likely just offer the elementary class.

Adult Education Programs

We have developed a five-year plan for our adult religious studies. If you are interested in leading or attending one of the programs listed below, please contact me or one of the RGL members. The programs we run will be dependent on interest and finding a leader. I will provide all the materials in advance to the leader as well as teaching support.

Build Your Own Theology - A 10-session class based on Richard Gilbert's book

Sources of our Faith: Humanism - Explore various humanist sources for a greater understanding of humanism.

Feminist History

Holland Lecture Circle Discussion - looking for a moderator

RE Picnic

Join us for our RE Picnic/Kickoff on Saturday, August 23, from 6 p.m. to 9 p.m. on the east side of the building. It will be a potluck with RGL providing BBQ sandwiches, hot dogs, and drinks. Members & guests are invited to bring side dishes and desserts! For amusement, we'll have an ever popular BOUNCE HOUSE! And maybe some face painting.



Retirees' Group

By Carol Johnson

All are invited to the Retirees' Group **Tuesday, August 12 at 1:00 p.m.** Darrel Draper, in costume and in character, will dramatically portray "Jean Baptiste' Charbonneau --Son of Sacagawea" in a fascinating first-person history of the later life of the infant who accompanied Lewis and Clark on their journey to the Pacific Ocean and back.

Also, join us **Monday, August 4, 4 to 5:30 p.m.** for a Lifesaver Party (rescheduled due to weather) 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! Register by calling 800-253-4368 or visiting the [AlegentCreighton website](#). Everyone is welcome, but please register!

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 20 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 downstairs in the church 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.

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!



Special Gift to Boruff Library

By Lorraine Duggin, Library Committee

On June 30, 2014, members of the Macyl Boruff Memorial Library Committee were honored and touched by a visit from Macyl Boruff's family: her husband Duane, two of their three daughters Debbie and Lennea, and grandson Jake, to present a copy of a cookbook in Macyl's honor compiled by her family. The cookbook titled The Boruff Family Cookbook will be placed on display in the Second Unitarian Library but will not be available for checkout.

Macyl Fitcher Boruff, a longtime member of 2U, lost her battle with cancer at the age of 52 on September 9, 1990. The library was dedicated on October 29, 1995, with funds for its establishment and maintenance donated by her family. The Library now holds over 1,000 books arranged under categories selected especially to further our members' knowledge of the faith, support the work of our committees, and promote spiritual growth in our congregation.

Macyl's family was very pleased to see how much the library has grown and developed since its earliest days when a small number of books were housed in the church office. An inscription in the cookbook reads, "In honor and memory of our mother we want to give the Boruff Cookbook to the Macyl Boruff Memorial Library at the Second Unitarian Church. May you enjoy making memories as special as ours while you entertain family and friends." The cookbook is signed by Desiree Buckley, Lennea Lacey, and Debbie Johnson.

Stop by soon to the Library to see the cookbook on display, copy down a few of its simple but elegant recipes, and check out a book or two that capture your interest while you're browsing.



Library Committee Member Gwen Eurich receiving cookbook from the Boruff family.

Photo by Lorraine Duggin

Circle Suppers
RETURNING SOON
SIGN UP NOW!

Circle Suppers are returning in the fall.

Circle Suppers are a great way to get to know people in the congregation during a fun and casual potluck at someone's home. There are usually 8 to 12 people at each potluck which allows for great conversations.

The plan is for 3 potlucks during the year starting in October and then January and April. The **Circle Supper** planning committee will have signup sheets during coffee hour in August and September.

When you see Steve Abraham, Joan Benziger, Rick Bell, or Cheri Cody, just say
"I'd love to attend a Circle Supper" and sign the form!

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.

<i>Attendance</i>				
Date	Adults in Worship	Adults in R.E.	Children in R.E.	Service Learning
6/1	56	7	14	—
6/8	67	<i>Intergenerational</i>		—
6/15	47	2	9	—
6/22	66	3	6	—
6/29	78	8	3	—
7/6	53	5	7	—
7/13	57	8	12	—
7/20	77	9	18	—

Staff

Rev. Scott McNeill, *Minister (to August 17)*

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

Rev. Frieda Gillespie, *Interim Minister (starting August 18)*

402-334-0537 ext. 111
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Molly Kliment-Jenkins, *Interim Director of Religious Education*

402-334-0537 ext. 112
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Gary Emenitove, *Office Administrator*

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

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Second Thoughts Staff: Rev. Scott McNeill,

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

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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