



Second Unitarian Church of Omaha

Second Thoughts

September, 2014

Join Us This Sunday!

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

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

***Water Communion
& Ice Cream Social***
Sunday, September 7
(see page 4)

***Fall Religious
Education Begins***
Sunday, September 14
(see pages 6-7)

***Service Learning
Project***
Sunday, September 21
(see page 5)

***Fall Church
Cleanup***
Saturday, October 4
(see page 5)

September 7 **In Gathering and Water Communion**

On this Sunday we reconvene, young and old, to affirm our covenantal community and the gifts of being, insight and experience that you each bring. We symbolize these gifts in the form of water – from a meaningful place, whether a place visited or our home. Wherever you spent your summer, you are the gift that makes up this beloved community.

September 14 Rev. Frieda Gillespie **New Beginnings**

This is a season of new beginnings: back to school, back to church, back to a new minister at Second Unitarian for the interim. As we begin this new church year, let's reflect on what beginnings offer us spiritually.

September 21 Rev. Frieda Gillespie **In the Interim**

What do these two years offer you as you prepare to call a new settled minister? What is this interim period all about and how can we make the most of our time together?

September 28 Rev. Ron Knapp **Doubtless There Are Other Roads: The Little Poems of Stephen Crane**

Stephen Crane was an interesting man with an intriguing life story. He is best known for his novel, "The Red Badge Of Courage," But he also wrote some very interesting little poems. We will explore some of these little poems.



In the Interim

By Rev. Frieda Gillespie



Some of you have been through a year or two (or more) of interim ministry before and have some sense of what it's about. For others it is more of a mystery. You may view the interim time as a placeholder while keeping the fires burning and moving forward as before until the next settled minister is called. Actually the interim is an opportunity to transition through a major change and as such, it is a process quite unlike what happens during settled ministry. What's unique about transitions is that they start with an ending and end with a beginning.

Every change involves loss. As you know I have moved into an apartment in Omaha for the time that I am here each month. The new location and the contents of the apartment (with the exception of my clothes) are all new to me. It is a huge change to have a space that is just for me, to cook meals that are just for me and to decorate in my taste alone. It is disorienting to go through this change. A transition is needed in order for me to emotionally and mentally accept and embrace the new environment. All change starts with loss. In the example of the apartment, I've lost the presence of my wife, our children, the animals and the home and its contents I've had for years in Framingham. I've lost the routines that I have there, cooking dinner for the family, for example. All of these things had become part of my identity and my expectations about my life. Thankfully, I get to dip back into my home environment each month for a number of days. But most changes involve permanent losses.

So transition is the process by which we adjust to changes. If done intentionally and well, we end our transition with the energy and eagerness for whatever is next – a new beginning. The way we UUs go about searching for and finding a new minister allows us about two years in which to go through a transition in a thoughtful and deliberate way. As your Interim Minister, I am here to help you do that along with a Transition Team of members of the congregation.

There are many resources available to guide our transition work. William Bridges in his book *Managing Transitions*, offers a model for transition. The first part of the work is “ending, losing, letting go.” You’ve started that work in your goodbye celebrations with Rev. Scott and Rev. Sarah Gettie. You’ve acknowledged their leaving. However, there will be many ways you will notice their loss as you move ahead. There will be a transition in your sense of identity as this happens. The second phase Bridges calls “the neutral zone.” This is the time you’ll be in for most of the transition time, when “the old is gone but the new isn’t fully operational.” There may be more changes that need to happen in order to free up the energy toward a new beginning. Finally, the third phase is “the new beginning.” “This is when people develop the new identity, experience the new energy, and discover a new sense of purpose that make the change begin to work.” These phases all overlap during transitions.

I am grateful to have the chance to guide you and experience with you this time of transition. Let's see what we can create together!

In faith,
Frieda



Planks and Slivers from the Board

By Craig Piquette, Chair, Board of Trustees

Regardless of whose calendar you consult, whether it be the Greeks or Romans, the Old Farmer's Almanac or the Book of Common Prayer, we are in the midst of the Dog Days of summer as I write this. This expression came about because in ancient times the Dog Star, Sirius, rose with the Sun during the hottest, driest days of the summer. We often associate this time of year with vacation, or if at work, a wistfulness about having to be at work when you'd rather be lying in the shade with a cool drink. However, this year, at Second Unitarian, this definition does not fit. For us, the Dog Days represent the excitement and anticipation that presages the arrival of our new interim minister, Frieda Gillespie, who will preside over Water Communion on September 7. This service will also coincide with a new church year.

There are a number of changes planned for this year that add to our excitement. Religious Growth and Learning (RGL) has new curricular offerings and will expand class time to one hour from 9:30 to 10:30am for all age groups. Second service will have Children's RE for the elementary school age group only. There are also plans to initiate Adult Spiritual Education sessions so watch for those announcements. The RGL Council has other changes outlined in their newsletter item so look for that. Social Justice has invigorated their meetings with a Reimagining Social Justice format, incorporating readings from Paul Rasor's book calling us to action based on our strong religious foundation of social justice. The Library Committee will be holding a book sale at the end of September and is calling all books and volunteers to commune and make this a celebration of an exchange of ideas. There are many more exciting gatherings planned and we need YOU to participate to make them successful.

Second Unitarian is a vibrant place and we continue to grow and seek new connections. We all have gifts that we can contribute whether it be a welcoming smile or a heartfelt thank you. Join with us to find your ministry and we will leave the dog days behind and reach new heights. Ad Astra; to the stars!

Craig



Share the Plate for September: Partnership 4 Kids

One half of Second Unitarian's offering received in September will go to Partnership 4 Kids.

Partnership 4 Kids is a goal-setting and group-mentoring program that builds hope for under-served students and helps them create a foundation for success from kindergarten to careers. Their mission is to partner with our community to guide our youth toward academic success, from kindergarten to careers, through goal-setting, mentoring, and college-access programs. Currently there are more than 4,500 students in 22 Omaha Public Schools participating in Partnership programs. Visit www.p4k.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 Vicki Pratt, Treasurer

As your incoming Treasurer my first official act is to thank our past Treasurer, Pat Caffrey, for her many years of service to this position and to thank her and our Office Administrator, Gary Emenitove, for their help and patience as I stumble through figuring out what I'm supposed to be doing. It's also very nice to have the assistance of our bookkeeper, Vicki Allely.

July Income and Expenses

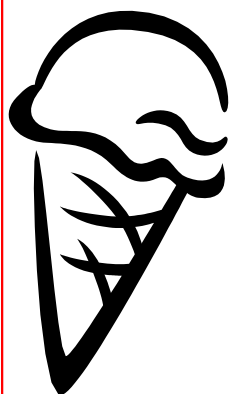
We got a good start on the 2014-15 fiscal year with a \$6,857.92 cushion of income over expenses. Some of the overage came from pledges paid in a lump sum.

	July 2014	Year To Date
Income	\$23,427.92	\$23,427.92 (10.39% of budget)
Expense	16,570.30	16,570.30 (7.33% of budget)
Net Over/Short	+ 6,857.62	+ 6,857.62

Income came from Stewardship Campaign Pledges \$21,867; New Pledges from Current Members, \$50; Last Year's Pledges Paid This Year, \$120; Gifts, \$100; Fundraising (\$56.60); Offering (\$799.32); and Transfer from Reserves (\$435). No money was received from New Pledges from New Members.

You may be wondering why the Treasurer's Report seems to be a month behind – for example you see July numbers in the September newsletter. This is because the deadline for the September newsletter was August 15, well before all the transactions for August were recorded and the month-end reports were created.

If you would like to see more detailed financial reports, you can join the Finance Committee, contact me at treasurer@2uomaha.org.



SPECIAL TREAT SUNDAY!

Join us **Sunday, September 7** as we celebrate our In Gathering and Water Communion with Rev. Frieda Gillespie.

The Fellowship Committee will be serving treats between services on the front steps including ice cream and non-dairy items!





Building & Grounds Fall Cleanup

By Clyde Anderson, Co-Chair

Our Fall Church Cleanup is scheduled for **Saturday, October 4 from 8:00 a.m. to noon.**

Our experienced volunteers will assist novices, so don't worry about lacking skills. However, please wear suitable shoes (no sandals or flip-flops, please) and bring work gloves. Wear work clothes appropriate for the weather (for working outdoors) and painting. Feel free to bring tools if you wish, but the B&G Committee members will arrange to have a supply of tools and materials available.

As always, we'll have refreshments available.

Children are welcome with adult supervision. They usually enjoy helping with some of the lighter garden chores.

Please note the event on your calendar, and we hope many of you can help, even for just a few hours. For more information, contact Clyde Anderson or Tom Rundquist.

September Service Learning Project

By Jaime Short and Molly Kliment-Jenkins



Help Second Unitarian feed the Heartland for our September Service Learning Project!

On **Sunday, September 21**, we will participate in the *largest spaghetti feed in the world!*

Join us as we try to break the world record while raising funds and awareness for the Heartland Food Bank. We have signed up our congregation to help **at South High School** where there was a high need for volunteers. We have twenty spots reserved for members age 10 and over (if your children are younger, they can assist but cannot be given an independent task).

Please join us on this important day! The shifts are 2.5 hours long between 9:30 a.m. and 1 p.m., and include cleaning, serving, taking tickets, etc. For more information, visit wearethepowerofone.org. Contact Jaime Short or Molly Kliment-Jenkins to volunteer. If you're after a specific job or a time outside of the 9:30-1 p.m. window, feel free to register yourself on the site.

Let's make this a success for Omaha and for 2U!

2014 Paint-a-Thon

By Clyde Anderson, Social Justice Committee

We have limited space in this newsletter but invite you to visit the church website at <http://www.2uomaha.org/?p=1980> for a full review of this year's Paint-a-Thon. Photos will be posted in the near future.

Thanks to the eight volunteers from Second Unitarian: David Johnson, Larry Kurtz, Sean McArdle, Roger Nicolaisen, Tom Peterson, Craig & Evan Piquette, and Clyde Anderson. Tom Rundquist brought lunch for the Team. We joined six volunteers from First Unitarian and five from the Bemis Park Neighborhood Association.

Patricia, the homeowner, was very pleased with big improvement to her home's appearance.



Religious Growth & Learning

By Molly Kliment-Jenkins, Interim Director of Religious Education



Welcome to the start of a new year for our congregation's Religious Education! Although we do offer classes year 'round, there's something about the fall that brings new energy and enthusiasm to the classes, as well as fresh curricula! We will be offering both child AND adult RE this year.

If you did not get a chance to attend the RE picnic and would like to volunteer and/or register your child(ren), please take a moment and contact me. I'd love to help you get that set up. **We are in need of additional guides for the children and youth on Sunday.**

We need your assistance at only one service a month. You can still attend the other worship service. I will provide all the project/craft materials, already set up, and will send you the lesson ahead of time so you can feel confident in the material you will cover. It's a great way to connect with your younger self and marvel at the wisdom these children have that extends well beyond their age!

As a reminder, the children will now be starting the worship service downstairs. You will notice the change in our Sunday worship and the Order of Service. Our goal is for the children to have a meaningful and comprehensive experience on Sundays, much like we do upstairs, complete with an opening, closing, and working on a message and project. Almost all the curriculum for UUs is geared to an hour, so now we will not have to cut out important aspects to the lesson. If you prefer your children to stay upstairs as they currently do, by escorting them down after the second song (before the readings), your older children will be joining the downstairs service at about the same point as the adults are upstairs (after nametags & settling into the space, a chalice lighting, introductions and sharing). We ask that they enter the classroom quietly, respectfully and wearing their nametags. Be aware that our younger children may miss the lesson in the Spirit Play classroom by staying upstairs.

The other side of the coin is that on those intergenerational services - we do ask that the children come and participate in the worship service upstairs. The service will have special components and activities for them. We want lifelong UUs, not just those that like to hang out with their friends.

Since the first Sunday of September is intergenerational, I look forward to seeing everyone on September 14th!

Adult Religious Education!

I didn't forget about us adults! We will definitely be offering "Build Your Own Theology" and a multi-part book discussion based on the book Overwhelmed, targeted to parents, but, honestly, applicable to all of us who wonder why we don't get to play as adults. If you are interested in leading something special, let me know and we will try to work it in this year or next.

The RGL Council

By Jaime Short, Chair

Have you heard? The RGL Committee is gone! Religious Growth & Learning is making a commitment to move away from the outdated committee meetings.

The Religious Growth and Learning Council will consist of:

- **Educational Planners** – Those who will meet monthly with the Director of Religious Education to ensure the adult and youth education

(RGL COUNCIL continued on next page)



Religious Education for Children 2014-15 Ages, Offerings, and Times

Parents are asked to have their children downstairs by the start of the service upstairs. If you wish for your children to participate in the beginning of worship with you, please escort them out of the sanctuary following the second song (prior to the readings).

Age Group	Curriculum	Description	Time(s) offered
Infant through 3 Years	Nursery	You can bet a good time will be had by all (or at least drooled on all)!	9:30 11:30
4 Years through 1st Grade	Spirit Play	Key elements of a Montessori classroom include the prepared classroom environment and teachers who encourage wondering. 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.	9:30
2nd Grade through 5th Grade	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.	9:30 11:30
Middle School & Older	Heeding the Call	Workshops on empathy, courage, abundance, joy, and other qualities ask participants to recognize how these standards can be tools for justice as well as how to be a good ally and tips on the language of conflict resolution.	9:30

(RGL COUNCIL continued from previous page)

- **A Little Less Talk, A Lot More Action** – Those who want to help with planning and carrying out the Service Learning Projects – Monthly mini social justice outings for all ages to grow our faith through action – this may consist of one planning meeting and then “email” meetings to ensure things are progressing as planned. You can help with as little or as much as you want!
- **Party People** – Help plan a learning event that YOU think would help our congregation learn and grow! Should we learn while observing Samhain, Winter Solstice, or Beltane? What about growing our faith with a Day of Silence or Standing on the Side of Love activity, mini workshops on Voluntary Simplicity or Demonstrating Our Values through Eating (DOVE) or even learning about current events at a documentary viewing party?! This would require a time to discuss your thoughts and plans, and then you would work with the council and make this plan into a party! You can plan one, you can plan ten, and it’s all up to you!



OTOC: Making Omaha a Better Place to Live

By Vicki Pratt, Social Justice Committee

Second Unitarian 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.

Last month I recapped recent work by these Action Teams: Housing and Revitalization; Immigration Reform; Mental Health; and Environmental Sustainability. This month is an update on the remaining teams.

- **Refugee Support** ensures that local institutions provide support to the 25,000, and growing, refugees who have come to Omaha from Africa, Asia, and other continents. This fall OTOC is working with Lutheran Family Services and UNO to organize a “Civic Academy” to explain how local, state, and federal government works and why participation is important. The Refugee Leadership Academy teaches how refugees and immigrants can work together to deal with common concerns around safe and well-maintained housing, living wages, accessing health care, getting children safely to school, avoiding gang membership, succeeding in school, and preserve their cultures.
- **Medicaid/Taxation** is creating educational materials focusing on the impacts to Nebraskans caught in the health insurance coverage gap created by the governor’s refusal to expand Medicaid.
- **Education** has met with the new superintendent of Omaha Public Schools and is involving parents in the new strategic vision emerging from OPS.
- **Workforce Development** is meeting with employers to define specific training that would fulfill requirements for open positions in the metro area.

In preparation for the November election of decision makers, OTOC is scheduling a series of events to find out how candidates stand on action team issues. First up: candidates for Omaha Public Power District, **Monday, September 8, 7:00 p.m.**, at St. Pius X Parish Center, 6905 Blondo. Find out how they plan to carry out the Board’s decision to move from coal to wind and solar and reduce dangerous emissions from the North Omaha plant. For more information contact Vicki Pratt.

Women’s Alliance

By Kathi Oliver

All women of First and Second Unitarian Churches are invited to attend Women’s Alliance on **Monday, September 8, at 6:30 p.m.** in the Common Room at First Unitarian Church, 3114 Harney St.

Socializing and beverages at 6:30, dinner at 7:00, and the program is at 7:30. The guest speaker is Mark Hoeger from OTOC (Omaha Together One Community). He will discuss Medicaid expansion and tax issues.

Cost is \$12 to go towards the new Merritt Educational Fund and the First Unitarian Partner Church Fund. If this is your first time attending, please be our guest.

RSVP to wa@firstuomaha.org or Janet West or Kathi Oliver. Please specify if you would like meat or vegetarian as your entrée.



Retirees' Group

By Carol Johnson

Field Trip! The Retirees Group will be taking a field trip to tour the Florence Water Treatment Plant (9100 North JJ Pershing Drive) at **1:30 p.m., Tuesday, September 9**. The Florence Water Treatment Plant is an historic building first opened in 1899. The tour will include time in the museum telling history of the building and plant. Meet in the church parking lot if you wish to carpool/caravan to the plant.

Blackstone Book Club

By Gwen Eurich

On **Tuesday, September 23, at 7:00 p.m.**, members of the Book Club will discuss *When the Killing's Done* by T. C. Boyle. Our discussions are always open to anyone interested and we encourage you to join us. We will also discuss starting our meetings at an earlier time, especially during the winter months. Hope to see you!

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 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, September 25 at 7:45 p.m.**

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!



Library Committee

By Pete Miller, Chair, and Vicki Pratt

As Second Unitarian welcomes Reverend Frieda Gillespie as our Interim Minister, the Macyl Boruff Memorial Library would like to draw attention to the title *Temporary Shepherds: A Congregational Handbook for Interim Ministry* edited by Roger S. Nicholson. This collection of essays was written by people with a lot of experience in this area: interim ministers themselves. Lots of important issues are addressed, including questions of leadership during the transition and how to deal with the changes on a systematic basis. The authors also address the basic human emotions that are bound to come up during a time of change. This book is an invaluable resource for this exciting time in the life of our church. Please check it out!

—Pete Miller

Books for a Cause

To raise money for our church operating budget, the Library Committee is organizing the annual used book sale! Shopping is outside before and after service on September 28 and October 5. If it rains on either Sunday, that day's sales are postponed to October 12.

Books up for sale come from your donations. All genres are greatly appreciated and sure to sell. You can start bringing small sacks to church for storage until sale day, or contact the Library Committee for pickup or to schedule a delivery time.

There's no set purchase price; whatever amount you want to donate to the church.

There are many other ways you can help with the sale – set up tables, move books from storage to tables, collect money, retrieve anything that blows away. Contact Pete Miller, Vicki Pratt, or any Library Committee member to volunteer for this fun and popular way to raise money for our church programming and services.

— Vicki Pratt

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!

Attendance				
Date	Adults in Worship	Adults in R.E.	Children in R.E.	Service Learning
7/27	99	Intergenerational		—
8/3		6	10	—
8/10	54	8	9	—
8/17	59	4	8	—
8/24	51			—



Membership Journeys

By Kathy Bell, Chair, Membership Committee

Get Connected

Fall is the time when church activities start shifting into high gear, after we have all hopefully had a chance to recharge our batteries over the summer. This is the perfect time to connect with others through the many activities Second Unitarian offers. To help you decide which activity might be the best way to offer your time and talents, check out our new “Get Connected” table in the library area during Coffee Hour. Whether you are interested in singing, greeting, teaching children, helping with the annual book sale, or participating in a Circle Supper, there are always plenty of opportunities to get involved. Each week a couple members from a committee or group will be there to answer questions and help you get connected.

Interested in Membership?

We will soon schedule our fall Pathways to Membership Class for those interested in becoming a member of Second Unitarian. If you are interested, please let Katie Tessin, our Connections Coordinator, know, at the Welcome Desk or membership@2uomaha.org. More information coming soon.

YRUU

By Ben Wallace

The annual Parent and Youth meeting for the YRUU (Young Religious Unitarian Universalists) Youth Group will be **Wednesday September 3, from 7-8:30 p.m.** in the downstairs common room at First Unitarian Church.

The group meets each Wednesday throughout the year from 7-8:30 and is focused on creating a community where youth can be themselves in a safe space while exploring topics related to their faith journey, social justice, our UU history, and having FUN!

All 7-12 Graders and their parents are welcome to come learn more about our wonderful youth group community and some of the great things that we will be doing this year! If you have questions, email Ben Wallace and Shawne Coonfare at omahayruu@gmail.com. See you there!

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Second Unitarian Church

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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