



Second Unitarian Church of Omaha

Second Thoughts

March, 2015

Join Us This Sunday!

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

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



**Stewardship
Kickoff Party**
Saturday, March 7
(see page 5)

**Social Justice
Movie & Potluck**
"Inequality for All"
Sunday, March 1
(see page 7)

March 1

Michael Lynne
Poetry and Spirit

Poetry reaches beyond and beneath our rational minds and material world into a realm of intuition and insight, of something higher and deeper than the superficial world of everyday reality. It pierces through stale and tired appearances, conventional thinking and perception, and gives us flashes of the untarnished beauty, tragedy, challenge, and boundless energy at the heart of things.

March 8

Rev. Frieda Gillespie
The Money of Our Soul

We think of money as a commodity -- a means of acquiring goods and services. However, it is much more than that. What we each do to earn our money has a direct connection with our being. What we do with our money has an effect on our soul for good or ill. Being good stewards of our money is to honor our work in the world, and when we give from our soul, we build a deeper connection with ourselves and others.

March 15

Rev. Frieda Gillespie
Developing Compassion

Theologian Karen Armstrong says that we can consciously develop our ability to be compassionate. It isn't always easy to see the worth and dignity of others or even ourselves. How do we deepen this possibility?

March 22

Rev. Frieda Gillespie
Question Box Service

What are your burning questions that you are hopeful, perhaps, that I can answer? Here's your chance! We will collect questions on the 15th and share them on this Sunday.

March 29

Service to be announced

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.



In the Interim

By Rev. Frieda Gillespie



The Stewardship Campaign this year has the theme, “**United in Purpose—Connected in Love.**” There were certainly some wonderful experiences of this in January and February. First of all, 10 of us purchased a table at the annual Martin Luther King Day luncheon. The program was excellent, calling for a recognition of work to be done to combat racism. I was unexpectedly invited to stand with the other clergy present to support a press conference calling for the resignation of a member of the Nebraska State Board of Education who allowed racist comments on his blog site.

Then in February we held a Pathways to Membership class sponsored by the Membership Team. It was a wonderful opportunity to hear the journeys that brought people to Second Unitarian Church. We made good connections and shared deeply our appreciation for what we’ve found here. We really do offer a place to thrive for those who are looking for acceptance and a place to explore freely their questions and beliefs.

This is exactly what the **Build Your Own Theology** classes, which started in February, are doing together. We have 19 people in the two classes combined. It is such a privilege to share this kind of exploration together. There is much more going on and I hope that everyone involved will take the time to share what they are doing.

I want to lift up the work of the Finance Coordinating Council and the Budget Team who are making the hard decisions to come up with a sustainable budget for the next church year. It is not easy work but it is work done in love for this community and high hopes for its future.

There is much to love and much to look forward to here. While it is still freezing outside, inside this community warmth, energy, and generosity abound. Let’s set our prayers toward spring and new growth!

In faith,
Frieda



Share the Plate for March: Nebraska Humane Society *continues*

One half of Second Unitarian's offering received in February will continue to go to the Nebraska Humane Society (NHS).

Due to weather cancelations in February, we are continuing our Share the Plate for the NHS this month. Their mission is to *protect, save, and enrich the lives of animals in the communities they serve.* The organization was originally established for the protection of both animals and children. In the mid-1940s, state agencies began to embrace child welfare issues, leaving NHS as the sole organization within the Omaha area designated for the protection of animals. They provide education, give sanctuary to animals, encourage adoptions and promote responsible pet ownership. By providing animal control services to much of the metro area, they also serve the citizens of our community. Visit www.nehumanesociety.org.

To nominate an organization for our Share the Plate program, [visit the church website](#) or contact the Social Justice Committee.



Planks and Slivers from the Board

By Craig Piquette, Chair, Board of Trustees



You are the lifeblood of this church! You and everyone else who values what the church represents, what it brings to our lives and how it touches each and every one of us are what make the church what it is. Without you, this work, this ministry, could not be done. This month the annual pledge drive will take place, and each of you will be asked to contribute something to support our ministry. You will do it, not for yourself but for what your contribution does for others. We are indeed connected in love.

Our church is strong because we have all made some connection to it and we know that the more connections there are, the stronger the church will be. It is those connections that build commitment to the church and make one want to give up a Saturday morning to help clean up around the church or spend an hour or so contributing to children's religious education or to keep an eye on our infants and toddlers in the nursery on Sunday morning. That commitment leads to financial support and just like your local public radio station, the church needs you to pledge your financial support to provide for programs, professional ministry, music and administration as well as the heat and light for Sunday services or weekday meetings. Just like your radio station, when you pledge your support, you become a member. As a member of Second Unitarian, the bylaws now require a pledge of financial support. This allows us to plan a budget and maintain the ministry of the church. Without your pledge, there might not be a church.

The Finance Coordinating Council, including the Stewardship Committee, has crafted a proposed budget for the upcoming fiscal year and has assumed that the members want to maintain the current level of programs and expand the ministry of the church. In order to do that the budget must grow to meet the cost of services we obtain from others such as snow removal, lawn mowing and insurance premiums as well as the costs of ministry. The Council has proposed a stretch goal for income derived from pledges and that means we all must dig a little deeper to cover these additional costs.

As we head into our pledge drive this month, “**United in Purpose—Connected in Love,**” I want you to think of the value Second Unitarian brings to your life and the connections you have made within the church. I also want you to consider your charitable giving as we lead up to tax-filing day and ask that you consider making Second Unitarian the largest recipient of your giving. If every member contributed 5% of their income to the church, we could do great things indeed. Please join us at our Stewardship Kickoff on March 7 and make a difference in West Omaha. After all, you are the lifeblood of our church!

Craig

Mark your calendar for Saturday evening, April 11, for the Second Unitarian Silent/Live Auction with entertainment! Complete details will be announced soon.

Please consider donating to the Silent/Live Auction. Do you have a skill, talent, event idea, or new or like-new item for the Auction? We welcome services, lessons, special events, unique items, or gift certificates that will potentially sell for \$25 or more. Please, no used clothing. Download a donation form under QUICK LINKS at 2uomaha.org, or pick up a form at church. All proceeds fund church projects and programs. If you have questions, please contact Pat Caffrey at auktion@2uomaha.org for more information.

We are pleased to announce that **Jim Coppoc**, an award-winning poet and teacher, will join us on April 11. Jim is a UU from Ames, IA, and the winner of the 2014 MidAmerica UUA Regional Conference sermon contest. In addition to his creative and scholarly efforts, Jim has been a musician, actor, stand-up comic, network radio DJ, and performance poet. Jim will also be in the pulpit on Sunday, April 12, to present his award winning sermon, which encourages all of us to “Sit at the Justice Table” through wonderful messages, stories, and music.



Treasurer's Report

By Vicki Pratt, Treasurer

January Income and Expenses

Income dropped considerably for January while our expenses continued at their normal amount.

	January, 2015	Year To Date
Income	\$12,449.04	\$139,389.53 (60% of budget)
Expense	19,677.33	132,655.51 (57% of budget)
Net Over/Short	-\$7,228.29	+ \$6,734.02

Income came from Stewardship Campaign Pledges (\$10,957.00); Fundraising (\$451.57 – purchases from Amazon.com through church website and payment from last year's auction plus \$10.40 forwarded to UUSC for Guest At Your Table donations and \$370.00 forwarded to Martin Luther King Day luncheon as pass through for ticket sales); Offering (\$990.47); and Rent (\$50.00). No income or pledges have been received toward the \$8,000 budgeted for New Pledges from New Members this year; no income or new pledges were received toward the \$2,000 budgeted for New Pledges from Current Members this month.

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

Blackstone Book Club

By Gwen Eurich

We welcome anyone interested in our book discussions. All discussions are held on the fourth Tuesday of the month — Tuesday, March 24, from 1:30 until 3:00 p.m., at the church. Our book discussion in March is about *The Baker's Daughter* by Sarah McCoy. This novel moves back and forth between two vastly different settings: present day America on the Tex-Mex border and Nazi Germany at the end of World War II, and reverberates between the stories of a mother and daughter.

Women's Alliance

By Kathi Oliver

Women, and those who identify as women, are invited to attend the Women's Alliance gathering on **Monday, March 9, at First Unitarian Church. Socializing and beverages at 6:30 p.m., dinner at 7.**

The March program features Ali from Big Muddy Urban Farm. She will be presenting on the trials and tribulations of turning empty neighborhood lots into small working farms. Big Muddy Urban Farm is a collectively run urban farm providing local and diverse fruits, vegetables, and herbs as well as sharing skills and resources within the community.

We ask for \$12 which goes to the cost of dinner, the Merritt Education Fund, and the Partner Church scholarship. If this will be your first time attending a WA get-together, please be our guest.

Dinner includes corned beef and cabbage (m) and vegetable strudel (v). When you RSVP, please include which entrée you prefer. RSVP by: emailing wa@firstuomaha.org.



Stewardship Campaign Kickoff Party

By Cheri Cody, Chair, Stewardship Committee

United in Purpose - Connected in Love
Saturday, March 7, 7:00 p.m.
Miracle Hill Golf Club
1401 N 120 St.



Childcare (10 and under) at Second Unitarian

RSVP today at info@2uomaha.org or 402-334-0537 ext. 114

Please let us know if you need childcare, if you need a ride, or if you are vegan.

Our theme for this year's stewardship campaign is **United in Purpose - Connected in Love**. After many conversations with members and friends, we learned that the feeling of community and mission that you have within the church is what you most appreciate. We recognize that with this theme so we can continue to support these important priorities.

This will be a fun evening filled with door prizes, drawings, music, poetry, and YOU. We're all here because we love this church and want to see it thrive, and in the end, it takes financial support as well as your talents to keep us moving ahead. Get better acquainted with your fellow congregants and top it all off with tasty desserts!



Do you play an instrument or sing?

Would you enjoy performing a selection during church services?

We are looking for musicians from the congregation to participate in the music of our services. You don't have to be a professional.

If you're interested, please contact Donna Zebolsky at music@2uomaha.org or on Sunday to discuss your music and arrange a date for you to play.

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!



Religious Growth & Learning

By Molly Kliment-Jenkins, Director of Religious Education



A Mother's Pride... and Joy

A spring thaw is coming soon. Curriculum is starting to wrap up, and the kids are tying together their early lessons to later ones.

Our Adult RE class, Build Your Own Theology, has 19 participants! Despite a delayed start, early feedback is positive. We have added two additional Mondays — May 4 and 11 — just in case! Thus far, this has been a year of cancelations and, hopefully, we're past the worst of it!

Last month, we had a terrific multigenerational service on February 15. Our youth performed a play about Standing on the Side of Love. We have several new youth in our middle school Sunday school program. It's a real joy to see that group taking off with discussions and debates.

Our elementary kids have worked though some lessons lately on stewardship (yes, they even talked about time, talent and treasure) and had their hand at balancing income with the needs of the congregation. They have added a couple patches to their stoles.

Our Spirit Play children have been hearing tales from various faiths around the world lately. Then they work on an art response to the story or explore beyond what they learned. I have had many 4-6 year olds ask to come back the following week after visiting. If you are ever interested in observing this Montessori-style class (or any of the others), please let me know!

Yes, these children are passionate and strong, like a group of lions. And this pride of lions is close.* They invite each other to gatherings. They share things about themselves. They are a community. And that is the real joy I get out of being downstairs.

I truly hope each of you has that feeling of joy when you walk in the doors to our "pride" at 2U.

In hope and joy for our shared journey,

Molly

* Perhaps a little too close physically at times: the preschoolers complain about the middle schoolers being too loud! What can I say... they're UUs and there's nothing predictable about any of us!



Our middle school class practicing for the intergenerational service on February 15.



The elementary kids learning about Time, Talent and Treasure.



Second Circle Teen Movie Nights

By Anita Meyer

Selections for the first half of the calendar year for Second Circle Movie Night were announced at our January meeting. Titles were nominated by the teens and those chosen reflect or raise issues related to our UU principles and present good themes for discussion.

The Second Circle Movie Night is generally the **third Sunday of each month at 4:30 p.m.** Come and enjoy snacks and pizza along with the movie. Our discussion is led by our own Bob Fischbach, movie reviewer for the Omaha World-Herald.

Movies for the months ahead include:

March: *Kidnapped for Christ*

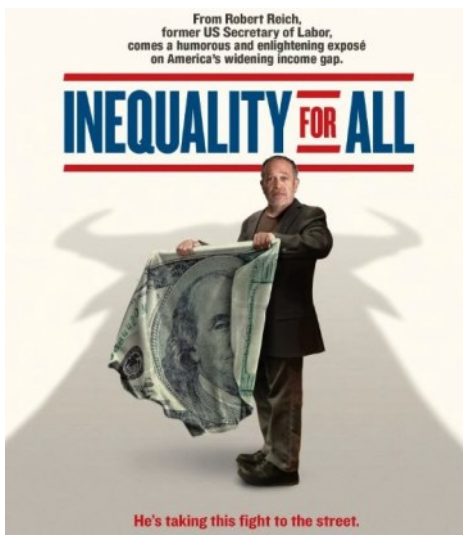
April: *Remember the Titans*

May: *Kundun*

June: *Gandhi*

Social Justice Movie & Potluck: *Inequality for All*

By Stu Burns



Join us **Sunday, March 1**, to watch leading economist and former Secretary of Labor Robert Reich in the documentary *Inequality for All*.

The movie starts at 5 p.m., with pizza during intermission.

Please bring a side dish, salad, or dessert to share. Discussion follows this 90-minute documentary.

The film covers several relevant topics, including the sharp decline in most people's real wages over the past decades, the growing numbers of the mega-rich, why this is happening, how it puts us all at serious risk, and what solutions we can work towards. For more information, visit inequalityforall.com.

The presentation is part of the Unitarian Universalist Association's Congregational Study/Action Issue on Economic Inequality.

This event is free and open to the public, so please invite anyone and everyone.



Mark your calendar for Saturday evening, April 11, for the Second Unitarian Silent/Live Auction with entertainment!

Complete details will be announced soon.

See page 3 for more information!



Building & Grounds

By Clyde Anderson & Tom Rundquist, Co-Chairs

Join the Building & Grounds Committee!

If you like hands-on activities and minimal meetings, Building & Grounds is the committee for you! Our mission: ***We work to ensure the facilities of the church are safe and meet the needs of its members.***

Our first Building & Grounds Committee meeting for 2015 will be at 10:00 a.m., Saturday, March 28. As is our custom, our meeting will begin with a physical inspection of our church property – both the building and the yard. We will be working on plans for our Spring Cleanup coming on Saturday, April 25.

New members and visitors are always welcome at our meetings. We also welcome your comments and suggestions about our church facilities.

Please contact the B&G Co-Chairs, Clyde Anderson or Tom Rundquist for more information or to report problems with the church building and grounds.

Church Spring Cleanup – Saturday, April 25

Our Spring Church Cleanup is for Saturday, April 25, from 8:00 a.m. to noon. There will be plenty of tasks for everyone! For example, painting exterior areas of the building (weather permitting), fertilizing the lawn, raking leaves, setting up and repairing the irrigation system, cleaning up flower gardens and planting annuals, and cleaning windows.

Please note the event on your calendar, and we hope many of you can help, even for just a few hours. Refreshments will be provided. There will be no childcare, but children with adult supervision are welcome!

For more information, contact Clyde or Tom.

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.



Omaha Together One Community Update

By Vicki Pratt, Social Justice Committee

Omaha Together One Community (OTOC) is a coalition of congregations that share a commitment to making Omaha a better place to live. Second Unitarian has been an active member for many years. OTOC's vision is carried out by action teams of individuals from congregations throughout Omaha.

This brief overview summarizes action on current issues. If any interest you, contact Vicki Pratt.

- **Immigration Reform** is building support for LB 623 to allow application for driver's licenses for those who qualify for Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) status. Nebraska is the only state that does not allow these drivers licenses.
- **Medicaid Reform** is researching LB 472, the Medicaid Redesign Act, to provide health care coverage for the 70,000 Nebraskans caught in the coverage gap because Nebraska has not accepted money in the Affordable Care Act.
- **Environmental Sustainability** team testified at the Natural Resources Committee hearing to support LB 337, Low-Income Home Energy Conservation Act. The team is developing a presentation around Climate Change.
- **Mental Health** team is reviewing the Tri West report on the state of mental health care in the region to identify gaps in coverage. Team members testified in support of LB 12, to suspend rather than terminate Medicaid coverage if a recipient becomes an inmate of a public institution. The coverage would resume upon release.
- **Housing and Neighborhood Revitalization** is researching how the City will implement changes from Omaha's new Housing Code Ordinance. They will meet with the newly created Housing Board.

OTOC Fundraiser: Food, Art, and Music

By Vicki Pratt

Everyone is invited to Omaha Together One Community's (OTOC) annual Spring Fundraiser at Hot Shops Art Center. It's Saturday, April 22, 6 to 9:30 p.m., at Hot Shops Art Center, 1301 Nicholas Street, Omaha.

The fun evening features tasty appetizers, soft drinks (cash bar for wine and beer), live music and entertainment, a wide variety of silent auction items, and the opportunity to get to know members of congregations throughout Omaha. As a bonus, many of the artists will have their shops open for browsing.

OTOC works to improve living and working conditions for residents in the Omaha metro area. Second Unitarian is a founding member of OTOC.

Tickets on sale during coffee hour between services: \$20.

More info about Hot Shops: www.hotshopsartcenter.com



Meditation Group

By Kevin Dunlop

The Meditation Group has a new name and a new meeting time.

We now meet on the third Thursday of each month at 7:45 p.m. downstairs at church. Our next meetings are Thursday, March 19, and Thursday, April 16.

At our meetings we have both a meditation-related discussion and an actual meditation. No previous meditation experience is necessary, so please come and check us out.

Regional Assembly to Explore New Era of UUism

From the MidAmerica Region

Join UUs from across the Region in Naperville, IL, **April 17 to 19** for exciting programming and networking with fellow UUs. Two outstanding keynote speakers will present Friday night and Saturday morning:

- ♦ **Rev. Rosemary Bray McNatt** is the new president of Starr King School for the Ministry and a contributing editor for the UU World.
- ♦ **Rev. Dr. Marlin Lavanhar** is senior minister of the largest UU congregation in the US with over 1800 adult members -All Souls in Tulsa Oklahoma.

24 different workshops will be presented in two sessions on Saturday afternoon. Descriptions of all workshops are on the web site. Workshop tracks will include: Stewardship, Multicultural/Inclusion, Social Justice, Deepening UU, Worship, and New Era.

Worship services will be led by ministers from the three UU Ministers Association Chapters.

All programming will take place at the Marriott Hotel in Naperville (just west of Chicago). Guest rooms are available at a special group rate. Early bird registration fee for adults is \$175. Discounted rates are available for young adults, youth, and children. A limited number of partial scholarships are available - apply online. Registration includes all programming plus four meals. Childcare will be provided for registered children over the age of three.

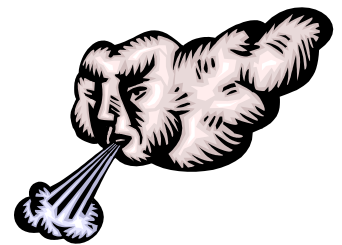
Visit <http://www.midamericauua.org/events/RA>. **Early registration discount ends March 16.**

MidAmerica Region is building a new era in Unitarian Universalism, where UUs visibly live our faith, create connections, grow our membership, and welcome all persons who share our UU values.

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 in the foyer. 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, with more shovels and brooms in the furnace room.



Membership Journeys

By Kathy Bell, Chair, Membership Committee

I recently enjoyed yet another Pathways to Membership Class, during which we each related the stories of our individual spiritual journeys. Although our paths were varied and in some cases took numerous twists and turns, they all led to the front door of Second Unitarian Church, where at least for a while we will walk alongside each other. I love this about the Pathways Class, sharing our stories with each other. For it reminds me of how I walked through that door 20 years ago, wondering if this might be the spiritual home that would nourish my family and me, that would allow us to take root here and grow. Today, I can answer that question with a resounding yes! My hope is that the people who walk through that door today continue to find Second Unitarian to be such a place.

Because we are greeting so many newcomers lately, we plan to offer another Pathways Class soon (date to be announced). Whether you are a long-time member or a newcomer, we hope you will join us. I always leave energized, recommitted to helping others find us and grow roots in this beloved community.

Join Us for Newcomers Lunch Bunch

We invite newcomers to join us for lunch at a local restaurant on the second Sunday of each month at 12:45 p.m. Newcomers can find a Lunch Bunch coupon in their guest packet for one free lunch for their entire family. Lunch Bunch is a great way to get to know some of our members and to ask questions about Unitarian Universalism and this church. Please check with the Welcome Desk staff for details.

Attendance

Date	Adults in Worship	Adults in R.E.	Children in R.E.	Service Learning
1/25	81	6	18	—
2/1	<i>Weather Cancellation</i>			
2/8	63	6	13	—
2/15	106	<i>Intergenerational</i>		—

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

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