



Second Unitarian Church of Omaha

Second Thoughts

August, 2015

Join Us This Sunday!

Worship Services

10 a.m.

**Help Us Reorganize
the Lower Level
Wednesday,
August 5**
(see page 7)

**Sundae Sunday
R.E. Registration
Sunday, August 9**
11 a.m.
(see page 7)

**2U Identity
Workshop
Saturday, August 22**
9 a.m. to noon
(see pages 2-3)

August 2
10:00

Rev. Ronald Knapp, Minister Emeritus, First Unitarian
The New Genesis: Out of the Stars

As the result of advancements in human understanding of the nature of the universe and of the human place in it, a new Genesis is emerging. That new Genesis ought to be the foundation narrative of religion in the twenty-first century.

August 9
10:00

Julie Kirn
**An Old-Fashioned Hymn Sing:
Raising our Voices in Song!**

Got a favorite hymn from way back or a new favorite that Music and Worship NEVER seems to select? Now is your chance! Send your requests in advance to Julie Kirn. Please limit selections to our two hymnals, thanks!

August 16
10:00

Tom Peterson
Being In All

An invitation to think beyond traditional definitions of God, drawn from Process Theology and a sermon by Rev. Douglas Taylor.

August 23
10:00

Frances Cantrell and Reggie Pifer
Collaborating in Faith

"Collaborating in Faith" is an exploration of resolving conflict as a community of faith with no winners and no losers.

August 30
10:00

Ferial Pearson
Secret Kindness Agents

In the aftermath of the Sandy Hook Elementary shooting, Ferial Pearson's students created a way to spread kindness in place of hurt. Come hear their inspiring story.

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



You are invited to a **CHURCH IDENTITY CHALLENGE!** It's **Saturday, August 22, 9 a.m. to noon, at Project Harmony, 11949 Q St. (120th & Q).**

The purposes are

- to grow Second Unitarian
- to find a great minister
- to partner with others, and
- to be energized and inspired!

We would appreciate your RSVP to RSVP@2uomaha.org or 402-334-0537, ext. 114.

The Transition Team and I will be leading the Church Identity Workshop using processes which could be called, "Not your usual flip charts." We'd like to engage your right brain as well as your left in looking at what "**IDENTITY**" might mean relative to the church.

We all have multiple identities in our lives: mother/father, wife/husband, daughter/son, scuba diver, doctor, lawyer, farmer, dreamer, caregiver, artist, activist, Unitarian Universalist, cancer survivor/patient, etc., etc. Some are more important to us than others and some are more relevant to our lives at any point in time than others. All of them are useful and important.

The same is true of the **church's** identity. There is no one thing that makes Second Unitarian, Second Unitarian. No one quality, activity, historical event, person (living or dead). The church is made up of its members at any given time and their interests, AND it is imbued with the history of our faith and the church itself. It is also influenced and somewhat directed by the culture we live in, the city it is located in, and the ways we understand our role in the various communities we are part of. And so it can be quite daunting to describe the church's identity in any succinct sort of way.

So why try? Why should you come up with a clear, concise description of Second Unitarian? There are several reasons:

1. You want to reach people who may be seeking what you are offering.
2. You want prospective ministers to really 'get' who you are and thereby get the minister you want and need.
3. You want to invite potential partners in the Omaha community to engage with you.
4. You want to express your aspirations and inspire yourself and others to reach for more.

Three hours may not seem like enough time, but if you put your minds to it, you can create a clear, concise, real, and meaningful description of the church's identity — one that is your own, that you can be proud of. The Transition Team and I will lead you through some exercises to help in this effort.

What you do in the Church Identity Workshop will greatly enhance your experience. In order for this to be effective, we need you to come and participate. Bring your creativity, your perceptions, your experiences, and most of all your aspirations.

Please let us know you are coming to the August 22 Church Identity Workshop by sending your RSVP to RSVP@2uomaha.org or by leaving a message on the church office phone at 402-334-0537, ext. 114.

In faith,
Rev. Frieda



Planks and Slivers from the Board

By Craig Piquette, Chair, Board of Trustees



It has been a busy summer and I wonder: What happened to those days when church took a vacation and we all met up again at Water Communion?

The Board reelected me as chair, and Pat Caffrey was elected vice-chair to assume the chair position in 2016-17. Carol Johnson will serve as Secretary.

The fall shapes up to be a busy time as we will have a Church Identity Workshop on Saturday, August 22 at Project Harmony, as outlined by Rev. Frieda on the previous page in this newsletter. We want as much participation as possible, and when we discuss “Whose are we?” we want you to add your block to the construct.

In September, we will begin work on shaping our congregational goals as we build our application for Developmental Ministry. A group is being organized to examine the need and resources for two services, but we anticipate staying with one service at least through September and until the group can make its recommendation to the Board.

See you in church and remember to save some water for Water Communion on Sunday, September 13!

Craig

CHURCH IDENTITY WORKSHOP

Saturday, August 22, 9 a.m. to noon

Project Harmony, 11949 Q St. (120th & Q)

YOU are invited! Please join us.

RSVP to RSVP@2uomaha.org or leave a message on the church office phone at 402-334-0537, ext. 114



Share the Plate for August Partnership 4 Kids

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

Partnership 4 Kids is a goal-setting and group-mentoring program that builds hope for underserved 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 Committee.



Treasurer's Report

By Vicki Pratt, Treasurer

June Income and Expenses

June expenses were higher than income but we finished fiscal year 2014-15 with an overage of \$6,789.22. This overage is due to unused Connections Coordinator Salary and staff Professional Expenses.

Careful stewardship from our committees and volunteers also contributed to the surplus. Committees only spent 57% of their budget. And despite several unforeseen and unbudgeted increases, General Expense, such as utilities and lawn care/snow removal, were kept to only 94% of budget. Some of these savings came from absorbing fundraising expenses into the Finance Committee, and kudos to the volunteers who stepped in to provide cleaning and childcare!

Since we had an overage for the end of the fiscal year, the Board decided to transfer money back into Reserves before closing in June. The following chart is before the transfer.

	June, 2015	Year To Date
Income	\$9,830.65	\$218,779.27 (93% of budget)
Expense	13,228.01	211,990.15 (90% of budget)
Net Over/Short	-\$3,397.36	+\$ 6,789.22

Income came from Stewardship Campaign Pledges (\$8,797.00); New Pledges from New Members (\$70.00); Gifts (\$100); and Offering (\$741.00). 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.

Stewardship Update

By Cheri Cody, Chair



Our fiscal year ended June 30, and thanks to some belt-tightening, the year-end financials look good! Pledge income for 2014-15 was \$177,826, 96% of the \$184,544 budgeted. **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 approximately \$6,800 as surplus but this gain was offset by funds that had been transferred from the Reserve Fund during the fiscal year

We go into the new fiscal year with pledges of \$183,174 from 80 households; this amount is 98% of our pledge goal of \$187,200. If you have not yet made your pledge for 2015-16, it's *not too late*. Email stewardship@2uomaha.org for a pledge form.

Letters were mailed to all households pledging for 2015-2016 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 our treasurer, Vicki Pratt, at treasurer@2uomaha.org.



Building and Grounds

By Clyde Anderson and Tom Rundquist, Co-Chairs

New Access Codes

Church leaders will be issued new building access codes on **Sundays, August 9 and 16, before and after Worship Service**. Board members, committee chairs, and others needing building access will be issued codes. Weather permitting, a member of the Building & Grounds Committee will be seated on the bench by the front door issuing the codes.

These codes allow access to the front and lower level doors. If you require an access code and are unable to get your code on these two Sundays, please contact the [Office Administrator](#).

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

The Basement Floods....Again!

When Kathy Bell arrived at church on the morning of Monday, June 15, she found water on much of the basement floor. Apparently rain from a storm overnight caused a substantial amount of water to leak in from the southwest corner of the basement. The carpets in the classrooms were saturated with water, and water even made it down the hall to the restrooms.

Thanks to all the volunteers who helped clean up the mess: Kathy & Rick Bell, Carla Kuhn, Jaime & Kalen Short, Roger Nicholaisen, as well as Gary Emenitove and Molly Kliment-Jenkins. (Where were the Building & Grounds Co-Chairs? Out of town!)

Custodial Volunteers

Last winter church expense was outpacing income, and the Finance Committee urged the board, staff, and committees to take action to cut expenses. Gary suggested that trash pickup and contract janitorial service be scheduled for every other week instead of weekly. These changes were made with an estimated annual savings of \$3,500. Building & Grounds volunteers are cleaning the church on those weekends the contractor doesn't clean. The church website calendar lists which weeks the contract cleaning service is scheduled to clean. If you would like to help B&G volunteers clean the church, please contact Clyde Anderson.

Meditation Group

By Kevin Dunlop

The Meditation Group meets **on the third Thursday of each month at 7:45 p.m. downstairs at church. The next meetings are Thursday, August 20, and Thursday, September 17.**

At our meetings we have both a meditation-related discussion and an actual meditation. No previous meditation experience is necessary, and we love visitors or anyone curious about meditation.

Retirees' Group

By Carol Johnson

Why was the repeal of the death penalty a good decision for Nebraska? Come to Retirees' Group **Tuesday, August 11, at 1:00 p.m.** to learn reasons for abolishing the death penalty and about smart alternatives that better protect public safety.

The forum will be presented by a representative of Nebraskans for Public Safety, a statewide coalition of individuals and groups with diverse backgrounds and interests that has been formed to oppose the effort to reinstate Nebraska's death penalty.

All are invited to attend—regardless of retirement status. Retirees' Group is not just for persons officially retired—it's for anyone looking for socializing, fun, personal growth and learning.



YRUU Rummage and Book Sale

By Ben Wallace and Shawne Coonfare, Youth Advisors, YRUU

The YRUU (Young Religious Unitarian Universalists) Rummage and Book Sale is **Saturday, September 26, 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. at First Unitarian Church, 3114 Harney St.**, in the Common Room.

Help the youth group fundraise for its new program, IncluCity (*see article below*).

Please drop off donated items at First Unitarian Monday, September 21, through Thursday, September 24, 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. or Friday, September 25, 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. (*Friday is preferred as that is the date the youth will be setting up the sale.*) Please do not leave donated items at Second Unitarian.

Questions? Contact Ben and Shawne at omahayruu@gmail.com.

YRUU to Participate in 2015-16 IncluCity Program

By Ben Wallace, Youth Advisor, YRUU

The YRUU (Young Religious Unitarian Universalists) Youth Group is excited to announce its participation in the 2015-16 **IncluCity Program** through Inclusive Communities Omaha.

The IncluCity program works to reduce acts of school violence and bullying by challenging the assumptions, attitudes and beliefs around issues of difference (appearance, gender, race, faith, sexual orientation, ability, etc.). The program includes a full day workshop for youth and adults, a year-long internship program for two youth that will focus on putting the tenets of the Inclusive Communities program into action, and a 4-day Intensive Residential Program that will be held in Ashland in January.

This is a wonderful opportunity for our youth to learn skills to confront and challenge prejudice, bias and stereotypes and discover new ways to become allies for one another. The program has a significant cost and will require fundraising efforts by our group over the next 6 months. We will be publishing opportunities to support those fundraising efforts. If community members have questions about the program or are interested in donating towards defraying the program costs, they can contact Ben Wallace or Shawne Coonfare at omahayruu@gmail.com.

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



Welcome to August and (gasp!) the start of the school year. That was a FAST summer, wasn't it?!

As the month begins, our OWL Facilitator Training is upon us. This is a huge deal for our congregation to pull off. **Thanks** to all those who are completing OWL training — folks not only from our congregation, but also from the Lawrence, KS, UU Church, the Lincoln UU church, and affiliated agencies. Your dedication to the children in our community is commendable!

As part of preparing for the new 2U church school year, we will be reorganizing the lower level. I'm hoping that this will provide a better use of space, less class interruption, safer routes for Fellowship, etc., and a bigger social space during Fellowship events. Thanks for bearing with us as we tweak things here and there.

Come to our **Sundae Sunday on Sunday, August 9, following our Worship Service**. Check out our upcoming curriculum! It's going to be an exciting time to be a UU kid at Second! It's also a great time to register your child(ren) for RE and to volunteer to teach a class or two! We are in need of adult as well as child classroom facilitators!

Finally, if you are of the woodworking bent, we are considering building a "Little Free Library" as a Service Learning Project. What is a "Little Free Library?" It's a way to help build community while sharing the joy of books! You erect a little cabinet near a sidewalk and folks can leave books and take books. We thought it would be a great project for an upcoming SLP. Learn more at littlefreelibrary.org. Please contact me if you're interested in helping: we do have some simple plans to work from.

In Hope and Joy,

Molly

Religious Growth and Learning Presents

On the lower level, Sunday, August 9, following Worship

We will have a **Sundae Bar** set up!
All are welcome to join in the delicious frostiness!

- ◇ Check out our upcoming R.E. curriculum!
- ◇ Register your child(ren) for R.E.!
- ◇ Volunteer to teach a class or two!

Trading Spaces. The 2U Version!

We will be reorganizing the lower level on **Wednesday, August 5, starting at 9 a.m.** Please come and help us move our things from room to room as we create a new environment for the entire church to enjoy as we head into 2015-16!

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.



Join our own Garden Guru Marco as he becomes Chef Marco for six Italian Bachelor Cooking Sessions!

First Unitarian is offering sessions on Italian and Mediterranean cooking and eating from 2U member Marco Ballarin, a 65-year-old Italian bachelor who learned to cook watching his mother in the kitchen.

In these six sessions, you will create antipasti, pasta, soups, skillet meals, and delicious fruit sides! Space is limited and it's first come, first served. **We will meet in the Common Room and kitchen at First Unitarian, 3114 Harney St., from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. on Thursdays, September 10 through October 1; on Tuesday, October 6 (*please note the change of day*): and on Thursday, October 15.**

Contact admin@firstuomaha.org to reserve your spot today!



Social Justice Committee

By Cheri Cody, Convener

As part of the *Reimagining Social Justice* work we've been doing at Second Unitarian, the committee wanted to articulate an identity for social justice. This month the committee approved the following statement of identity:

Our social justice identity is grounded in Unitarian Universalism which asks us to value all people, be ethical, work for equality, and respect the earth. We are optimistic, engaged, and willing to take risks. We are willing to be public, to stand with those who are discriminated against, and engage with others as we build a community that works for all. We seek relationships, speak and gather with others, are aware of our community, and have a conscience that compels us to act to make a difference in our world.

As a way of following through on "seeking relationships" six people from Second Unitarian attended the Inclusive Communities Table Talk on North Omaha which was held July 14 at Big Mama's restaurant. Bob Fischbach, Betty Segell, Mary Anne Chisholm, Shari Baumer, Dan Pearson, and Cheri Cody discussed issues of North Omaha with a diverse group. Plans were made for future conversations with people we met that may lead to Share the Plate relationships or speakers in the pulpit and/or forums.

Stay tuned for the date and time of the hanging of a banner on the front of the church which states "**Black Lives Matter.**"

QUICK NOTES:

- **Circle Supper** signups start again in August during fellowship after the service.
- Thank you to all who donated **cards to the Caring Table**. We now have over 100 cards, so please do NOT donate any more! The Caring Committee appreciates your support!
- The **annual book sale** is in September! Do you want to get rid of books to make room for some new (to you) books? Leave donated books on the bottom left library shelf or under the coat rack. Thanks!

<i>Attendance</i>	
Date	Adults in Worship
5/31	45
6/7	67
6/14	60
6/21	84
6/28	35
7/5	40
7/12	55
7/19	58

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 Nancy Amsler, Richard Koelling, Betty Segell,
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Second Unitarian Church

3012 S. 119th Street

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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