



# Second Unitarian Church of Omaha

## Second Thoughts

Join Us This Sunday!

Worship Services

10 a.m.

### Doris Wallace 1919 - 2016

Dear Friends,

It is with a sense of loss and sadness that I write to let you know that church member Doris Wallace died on August 21.

Doris began attending Second Unitarian in 1984. Among her many activities she was an office volunteer, helping with mailings and making phone calls to invite members to church functions. She had been granted "Member Emeritus" status with the congregation.

The Wallace family is having a private service for Doris in Des Moines. A memorial donation can be made in her name to any organization of your choice.

If you would like to send your condolences to the family, please contact the church office.

Peace and blessings,  
Reverend Cyndi

### UPCOMING SERVICES

September 4th *Flotsam: Stories and the Power of Intent*  
Chris Peters

Adapted from a sermon by Rev. Nancy McDonald Ladd, from River Road Unitarian Church in Bethesda, Maryland. It's a service Chris attended in person six months ago, and is repeating at 2U with Reverend Ladd's permission and encouragement.

September 11th *Water Communion*  
Rev. Cyndi Simpson

We will gather once again to begin our congregational year together! Please bring water to share from any place where you were this summer: home or away. As we mingle our waters, rather than sharing where the water is from, I will invite you to share its significance for you. Does it represent a beautiful experience, a lovely time of sharing with special people or something of spiritual power?

September 18th *Defying Hate*  
Rev. Cyndi Simpson

Unitarians Martha and Waitstill Sharp went from Massachusetts to eastern Europe in 1939 to support refugees fleeing the Nazi's advance and to get Jewish people out of Czechoslovakia. Their successes defied the Nazis repeatedly, and the Sharps narrowly escaped arrest and execution themselves. We will hear a bit of their story and reflect on its current parallels: how are we called as Unitarian Universalists to defy hate in our time?

September 25th *Cruel & Unusual*  
Reverend Cyndi Simpson

In many states in the U.S., the death penalty is still used for a variety of crimes. Until 2005, it was possible for juveniles under the age of 18 to be executed in some states. What does our Unitarian Universalist faith tell us about the morality, ethics and theology of the death penalty?

# LETTER FROM THE MINISTER

Dear Friends,

I hope the summer has been good to you! We are moving towards the fall and all its many transitions: the start of school years, the start of a new congregational year, the presence of a new ministry for you and for me and other transitions unique to this community and to each of us.

By the time you read this, I will have been with you for several weeks and just beginning our journey of knowing one another. And that is so much more than remembering one another's names and basic information! (And I struggle with that sometimes, for sure.) As the wonderful Quaker educator, activist and theologian Parker Palmer says, in his book *To Know As We Are Known*:

*The goal of a knowledge arising from love is the reunification and reconstruction of broken selves and worlds. A knowledge born of compassion aims not at exploiting and manipulating creation but at reconciling the world to itself. The mind motivated by compassion reaches out to know as the heart reaches out to love. Here, the act of knowing is an act of love, the act of entertaining and embracing the reality of the other, of allowing the other to enter and embrace our own. In such knowing we know and are known as members of one community, and our knowing becomes a way of reweaving that community's bonds.*

The origin of true knowledge of one another, our communities and the world is LOVE. We all yearn to be known as we **wish to be known**. Knowing one another as each of us desires to be known is one of the greatest gifts we give in religious community. **And it is the heart of the radical welcome and hospitality we offer to each other and to the strangers who come to visit us.** This type of knowing is a powerful spiritual practice.

Our most important task together over the next few months is to begin to know one another, with compassion, openness, risk, vulnerability, trust extended and the assumption of best intentions. Your beautiful congregational covenant speaks clearly of important paths to this kind of knowing: appreciative listening, healthy relationships, forgiveness, making amends, gratitude and generosity.

As poet William Stafford says in his poem "A Ritual to Read to Each Other":

*If you don't know the kind of person I am  
and I don't know the kind of person you are  
a pattern that others made may prevail in the world  
and following the wrong god home we may miss our star.*

In this season of many transitions, I am looking forward to beginning to know you – as you wish to be known – and so to be known by you!

Peace and many blessings,  
Cyndi

*Cyndi Simpson*

P.S. I want to let you know that you are welcome to reach out to me with pastoral concerns - or to meet for any reason - right now! Please do not feel that you need to "give me time to settle in." There is much I have to learn about the congregation AND I am your minister and I am here for you right now! Please call me at the office, extension 111, or email me at [revsimpson@2uomaha.org](mailto:revsimpson@2uomaha.org).

Do not hesitate to reach out to me with urgent pastoral needs at any time of the day or night. For the next few weeks, the way to do that if you cannot reach me promptly on my office phone, is through Office Administrator Jaime Short. If you need to reach me urgently in a time of crisis, at any time, please call Jaime's cell phone. (This is a temporary solution for the next few weeks until I get a second phone.)

# LETTER FROM THE DIRECTOR OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION



Welcome to the start of the school year... and the start of Sunday Religious Education for 3 year olds through high school students in the garden level! **We are actually starting classes on Sunday, September 11, not on September 4th, as was previously stated!** We are still having facilitator/leader training on Saturday morning, September 3rd. If you're ready to register before that day, please feel free to: it's now online! Go to our website, click on "Lifespan Learning" under the "learning" tab and scroll down to the bottom of the page.

## Here's what the classes will be doing:

- ⇒ The Spirit Play classroom will continue - I went to a regional conference in Topeka at the end of August and picked up a lot of wonderful tips and materials for us! This Montessori-based class allows children to explore freely while providing them a structure within which they explore. Questions are asked and encouraged!
- ⇒ The intermediate classroom (essentially 2nd through 6th grade) will be working on a multigen curriculum from the UUA called "Miracles" about the sources of wonder and awe that surround us every day: the miracle of making energy from the sun, the miracle of evolution, the miracle of who each of us is.
- ⇒ The youth will be learning about congregational life and contributing to it by planning and conducting a worship service in November. They are excited to connect more with everything going on upstairs.

YRUU is going to start on Wednesday, September 7th. Joe White will continue as a secondary Youth Advisor and Carolyn Miller will step into a primary Youth Advisor role. Please give them a big "Thank You!" The role of the Youth Advisor takes a weekly time commitment, and is an important ministry for our congregations. If your youth is interested in participating in YRUU, please register online using the link on the Facebook page for YRUU or e-mail me for the link.

-Molly Kliment-Jenkins

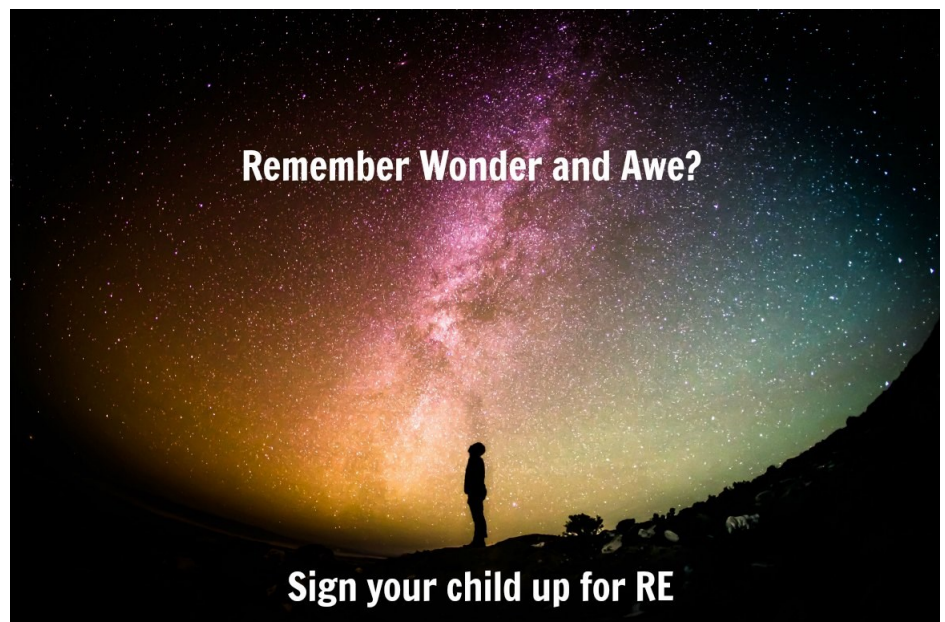
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A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Molly".

## Register for Sunday School

It's that time of year again: Sunday School is going to be starting in September (September 11th, to be exact). We have 3 levels of class available: youth, intermediate (2nd through 6th graders), and Spirit Play (PreK-Early Readers/First Grade).

Registration is available online. Please click on [this link](#) to go to the registration form. Visit the website to learn more about the curriculum for each level.



## The Date for Newsletter Submissions is Changing

In order to keep the congregation more informed, the date that newsletter submissions are due is changing. It is difficult for the committees to know what is going to happen in the next month, when the month you are in is only half over!

**Submissions will now be due on the 25th of each month.\* That means that this is the LAST day to get something in the Newsletter, not the day to START turning things in. You may turn in articles at any time up to and including the 25th. If you submit something after the 25th, then it will need to go in the e-news, the Order of Service, or the following month's newsletter.**

\*December and February's due dates will be earlier than the 25th. *Jaime*

***"Twenty-five shall be the number thou shalt count,  
and the number of the counting shall be twenty-five."***

**A bit of Monty Python Wisdom to help you remember the new date.**

[Holding the Holy Hand Grenade of Antioch]

King Arthur: How does it... um... how does it work?

Sir Lancelot: I know not, my liege.

King Arthur: Consult the Book of Armaments.

Brother Maynard: Armaments, chapter two, verses nine through twenty-one.

Cleric: [reading] And Saint Attila raised the hand grenade up on high, saying, "O Lord, bless this thy hand grenade, that with it thou may'st blow thine enemies to tiny bits, in thy mercy." And the Lord did grin. And the people did feast upon the lambs, and sloths, and carp, and anchovies, and orangutans, and breakfast cereals, and fruit bats, and large chu...

Brother Maynard: Skip a bit, Brother...

Cleric: And the Lord spake, saying, "First shalt thou take out the Holy Pin. Then shalt thou count to three, no more, no less. Three shall be the number thou shalt count, and the number of the counting shall be three. Four shalt thou not count, neither count thou two, excepting that thou then proceed to three. Five is right out. Once the number three, being the third number, be reached, then lobbest thou thy Holy Hand Grenade of Antioch towards thy foe, who, being naughty in My sight, shall snuff it.

Brother Maynard: Amen.

All: Amen.

King Arthur: Right. One... two... five!

Galahad: Three, sir.

King Arthur: Three!



## Please join me in welcoming Rev. Cyndi Simpson to Second Unitarian Church and to Omaha, NE!!!

By now, many of you have met Cyndi and recognized her vast energy and imagination! As we start this journey of developmental ministry together, perhaps it is a good idea to revisit our primary goals that all of us worked very intensely on just a few short months ago.

As you may recall, they included:

1. Be Welcoming and Engaging to Newcomers and Members
2. Worship is central to the Second Unitarian community and we enjoy services that inspire, challenge and educate us.
3. Change the culture of how we work together to accomplish the mission and vision of Second Unitarian church.
4. Build a clear sense of our identity which defines our purpose and how we can best live our mission.

**Read more about our developmental goals on our website.**

I received a letter from Sabrina Short who had the opportunity to attend Youth Midwest Leadership School in July. It is always exciting to hear about our youth's experiences. Here are a couple excerpts from her letter to the congregation:



*"First of all I want to thank all of the congregation for giving me the amazing opportunity to attend Youth Midwest Leadership School. The week of learning was very eye-opening. Because of the amazing bonds formed over such a short period of time I have come to understand the importance of building a strong community. Along with building connections, I learned quite a bit about my own self and our faith."*

*"From my experience I can see that our congregation has a lot of room for growth (which is a good thing!) especially when it comes to multigenerational activities. Although we have few youth in the congregation we have voices that should be heard."*

Sabrina ends the letter with *"Your fellow UU and dreamer"* and an offer to share her knowledge and experiences to the congregation and community as a whole - which we are looking forward to with great anticipation. Thank you, Sabrina, for investing your time and thank you to those in the congregation for their generosity in making this experience possible!

*Pat Caffrey*

# TREASURER'S REPORT

## Treasurer's Report

by Vicki Pratt, Treasurer

In July our income was higher than our expenses, thanks to everyone who prepaid their 2016-17 pledge.

	July 2016	Year to Date
Income	\$34,663.89	\$34,663.89 (16% of budget)
Expense	15,566.80	15,566.80 ( 7% of budget)
Net Over/Short	+\$19,097.09	+\$19,097.09

Income came from Stewardship Campaign Pledges (\$33,069.34); New Pledges from Current Members (\$30.00); New Pledges from New Members (\$200.00); Fundraising (\$43.00); Offering (\$957.76); Rent (50.00).

Expenses were from Salaries and Benefits (\$5,411.02); Minister's Compensation (\$6,709.31); Administrative Expenses (\$57.60); General Expenses (\$2,486.88); and Committee Expenses (\$60.97).

If you would like to see more detailed financial reports, you can join the Finance Committee, contact me at 402-334-0678, or e-mail: [treasurer@zuomaha.org](mailto:treasurer@zuomaha.org)



### PRIVACY POLICY FOR CHURCH PUBLICATIONS

Church policy states: *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!

## Fooling the Wasps!

Building & Grounds Committee

Paper wasps have been building their nests along the eaves of the church, especially on the east side. Despite the aggressive behavior of these insects, Rick Bell removed several of the nests in early August.

We purchased several Waspinator decoys that fool the wasps that there are already nests with hostile wasps present encouraging them to go elsewhere to build their nests. Two Waspinators were hung on the east side and one on the west side. Hopefully this will eliminate the risky job of removing active wasp nests and the use of toxic insecticides.



Unfortunately, the Waspinators don't work with yellow jacket wasps which are attracted to the wood benches at the front of the church and keep trying to build a nest in the compost bin on the west side of the church yard.



## Save the Date - Fall Church Cleanup, Saturday, October 8th

Our **Fall Church Cleanup** is scheduled for **Saturday, October 8th from 8:00 am to Noon**. There will be plenty of tasks for everyone! Keeping our church in tip top shape is a BIG job, and we need everyone's help!

**Please note the event on your calendar, and we hope many of you can help, even for just a few hours.**

### August Service Attendance

<i>Attendance</i>	
Date	Adults in Worship
8/07	56
8/14	52
8/21	66
8/28	89

## Circle Suppers

Have you heard about circle suppers? Are you interested in participating? Look for someone with a clipboard during coffee hour and sign up - or check at the Welcome Desk.

Circle suppers are potluck dinners held at a host's home for 8 to 12 people and are a great way to get to know members and friends of the church. These are free flowing adult-oriented events, with no set agenda, so participants can engage in interesting discussions on whatever interests them.

We will have a spreadsheet at church for the next few Sundays for returning participants to confirm information and for new participants to sign up.

We usually have three circle suppers during the year but we will need more hosts to continue with scheduling three (Fall, Winter, Spring). If you are able to accommodate 8 to 10 people at your home and you have not yet signed up as a host, please talk to Cheri Cody or Rick Bell.

### Retirees' Group Retain the Repeal

You are invited to Retirees Group for a presentation focused on Retaining the Repeal of the Death Penalty in Nebraska on **Tuesday, September 13th from 1:00-2:00** at Second Unitarian Church. Our guest will be Marylyn Felion, who shares her experience of accompanying Robert Williams to the electric chair, the last person executed in Nebraska.

Marylyn began writing to Robert Williams while he was on death row for 20 years. After two years of correspondence, she was allowed private visits as a Sister of Mercy chaplain. She listened as he came to grips with the horror and brutality of killing two women. Not long before he was executed, Robert asked Marylyn to accompany him to the death chamber. She agreed and walked behind him.

Retirees Group meets monthly for socialization and learning. You don't have to be retired to attend—all are welcome!

## Annual Book Sale

The annual book sale is coming up next month! Do you have any books you've read, and need a good reason to clear out? We are asking for donations! We have a little pile started at the church under the coat rack. **The book sale will be September 25th and October 2nd with a rain date scheduled for October 9th.** We always have a great selection of books, so come before or after the services to browse. The price of books is a free-will donation. This annual sale is a good fundraiser for the church, so it's a good excuse to indulge! If you have any questions, Pete Miller, Melissa Konecky, Vicki Pratt, Lorraine Duggin or Gwen Eurich will have the answers!



## Calling all 7th through 12th Graders Teen Movie Night September 18th!

On **September 18th at 4:30**, our 7 – 12 graders will view and discuss “Dear Zachary”. The film maker, Kurt Kuenne, decided to interview numerous relatives, friends, and associates of Andrew Bagby, his friend who was murdered. The film he made was intended to incorporate their loving remembrances that would serve as a cinematic scrapbook for the son who never knew Zachary. However, as events unfold, the film becomes a sort of true-crime documentary. Bob Fischbach will lead the discussion which will explore the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> UU principles: 1. The inherent worth and dignity of every person, and 2. Justice, equity and compassion in human relations. Please join us for snacks, drinks and pizza (free will donation taken for pizza) and to watch this award winning documentary.

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## Lunch and Learn: Death Penalty on November Ballot

by Vicki Pratt, Social Justice Committee

The 2015 Nebraska Legislature passed LB268 to eliminate the death penalty and change the maximum penalty for first degree murder to life in prison. But the question will be on Nebraska’s November 8 general election ballot.

Come to Lunch and Learn **after service on Sunday, September 25th** to find out why, facts about the death penalty, and understand the Retain Repeal ballot choices. This Lunch and Learn follows Rev Cyndi’s sermon about the death penalty.

**Lunch and childcare will be provided.**

**To sign up, email [rsvp@2uomaha](mailto:rsvp@2uomaha). Include: Your name, Vegan/vegetarian/don't care preference, Number and ages of children in childcare**

### Voter information:

**Deadline to register by mail: October 21**

**Deadline to register in person : October 28**

**Election Commission Office, 225 N. 115 (this is SOUTH of West Dodge Road)**

**Early voting October 9 – November 7 by mail or in person**

## Meditation Group

The Meditation Group meets on the third Wednesday of the month. We meet at 8:00 PM in the sanctuary following the choir rehearsal. At our meetings we have both a meditation-related discussion and an actual meditation. No previous meditation experience is necessary, and we love "drop-in" visitors or anyone curious about meditation. **Upcoming meetings will be on September 21 and October 19.**

## OWL - Our Whole Lives Life Span Sexuality Education

Through the efforts of both Omaha UU congregations, we have a great supply of facilitators at all levels to provide OWL to our members and friends! Since we offered elementary OWL at Second Unitarian last year, First is taking the lead this year to catch the rest of the children who were not able to attend. We are also offering middle school OWL and want to offer a young adult/adult OWL.

- **Kindergarten through 1st Grade:** Will be offered this fall at First Unitarian on Sundays. Requires parent permission and mandatory attendance to a parent meeting.
- **5th & 6th Grades:** Will be offered this fall at First Unitarian on Sundays. Requires parent permission and mandatory attendance to a parent meeting.
- **7th-9th Grades:** Will start this fall. We will have a mandatory parent meeting during YRUU on Wednesday, September 29 at 7PM at First Unitarian. At that time we will also be discussing when and where to hold the meetings.

### What age group would you be interested in taking?

**Young Adult or Adult OWL?** We would like to offer this class (probably in the spring) but we would like to know which one has more demand. Young adult OWL is for those who are primarily still single. Adult OWL is for those who are older or partnered. Please let Molly know your preference. Both are approximately 14 sessions.



### Make a Joyful Noise - Choir Practice Resumes September 7th

Choir practice resumes **Wednesday, September 7th at 7p.m.** in the sanctuary. All are welcome - No matter your ability or experience level!

## Coffee and Learning at Urban Abbey

By Vicki Pratt, Social Justice Coordinating Council



Each month Urban Abbey in the Old Market donates a percentage of counter sales and packaged coffee sales to a like-minded community partner. September it's OTOC (Omaha Together One Community)! Stop by 10<sup>th</sup> and Jackson for a treat, plan a get-together with friends, schedule a 2U Committee meeting, or attend an OTOC Issues Café.

### **Issues Café Sessions at Urban Abbey, 10<sup>th</sup> and Jackson (preliminary schedule)**

Wednesday, September 7, and Monday, September 19, 6:45pm "Call to Action to Retain the Repeal of the Death Penalty" by OTOC Retain LB268 Action Team and Retain a Just Nebraska.

## Women's Alliance

### At First Unitarian

Women, and those who identify as women, are invited to attend the Women's Alliance gathering on **Monday, September 12, 2016**. Socializing and beverages start at 6:30 with dinner following at 7pm. The speaker for September will be Allison from Youth Emergency Services.

We ask for \$15 which goes to the cost of dinner, the Merritt Education Fund, the Partner Church scholarship, and various activities at First Unitarian. If this will be your first time attending a WA get-together, please be our guest!

Our dinner selection will be from Mangia Italiana: meat lasagna, cheese ravioli with alfredo sauce, tossed green salad and parmesan rolls. Desserts will be provided by Nellie Chenoweth and Kathi Oliver.

You can RSVP via the Facebook event.

If you plan to attend, please RSVP with your preference of meat or veggie meal. Thank you!

## Defying the Nazis: The Sharps' War

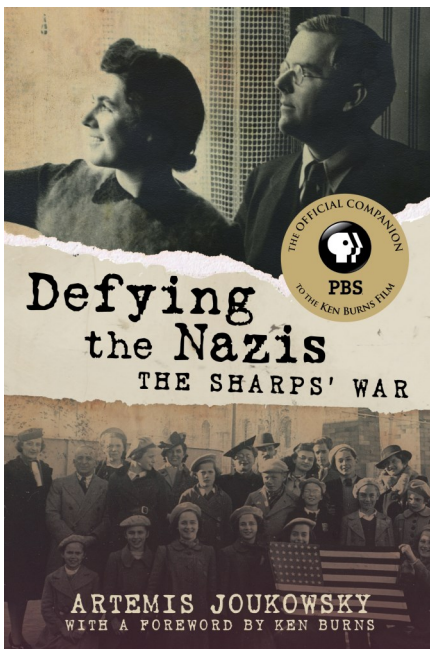
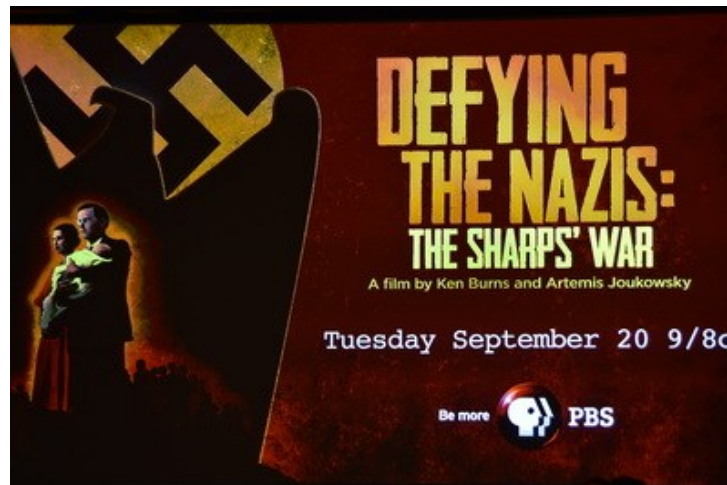
A new film directed by Ken Burns and Artemis Joukowsky

September 20th 8p.m. on PBS

*Defying the Nazis: The Sharps' War* is an account of a daring rescue mission that occurred on the precipice of World War II. It tells the story of Waitstill and Martha Sharp, a Unitarian minister and his wife from Wellesley, Massachusetts, who left their children behind in the care of their parish and boldly committed to multiple life-threatening missions in Europe. Over two dangerous years they helped to save hundreds of imperiled political dissidents and Jewish refugees fleeing the Nazi occupation across Europe.

*DEFYING THE NAZIS* is cinematically told through the letters and journals of the Sharps, with Tom Hanks as the voice of Waitstill and Marina Goldman as the voice of Martha. It features firsthand interviews with the now adult children whom the Sharps saved, as well as leading historians, authors and Holocaust scholars, including William Schulz, Deborah Dwork, Modecai Paldiel, Ghanda DiFiglia and Yehuda Bauer.

[Watch the trailer here.](#)



## Defying the Nazis: The Sharps' War

A companion book by Artemis Joukowsky

Available from Beacon Press on September 6th

The Story of an American Couple Who Saved Hundreds from Nazi Persecution. *Defying the Nazis* is a story of simple people finding strength they had no idea they possessed. It is the story of individuals standing up to unthinkable evil. It is a story that contains both the twists and turns of a classic spy thriller, as well as the heartbreaks and triumphs of the most compelling drama. And, above all, *Defying the Nazis* is a tragic love story---a story of what one man and woman could accomplish together, and how those very accomplishments pulled them apart.