



Second Unitarian Church of Omaha

Second Thoughts

UPCOMING SERVICES

- December 4th ***Affirmation Sunday - Rev. Cyndi Simpson***
 On this Sunday, we will celebrate our new members as well as those who have dedicated themselves to service and leadership for our congregation. Please join us in affirming all of these wonderful people who have committed to our faith and brought their light to shine in so many ways!
- December 11th ***Living In Light - Barbara May***
- December 18th ***Yule – The Winter Solstice - Rev. Cyndi Simpson***
 Today we celebrate Yule – the Winter Solstice. We will affirm the fruitful power of the darkest time of year and cast into the fire that which no longer serves us well. We will seek the Sun and celebrate the return of the Light into our lives.
- December 24th ***Candlelight Christmas Eve - Rev. Cyndi Simpson***
 On Christmas Eve we gather to celebrate the birth and life of Jesus of Nazareth in a traditional (yet also thoroughly Unitarian Universalist) service of Lessons and Carols. The offering will be taken to support the Minister's Discretionary Fund.
- December 25th ***Enlightenment - Reverend Cyndi Simpson***
 On Christmas Day, our doors will be open to all who are seeking community and solace on this holy day. We will hear the traditional Italian story of La Befana and consider how it is that we may come to enlightenment in our lives and in this religious community.

Join Us This Sunday!

Worship Services

10 a.m.

Holiday Services

***Winter Solstice 12/18 - 10 a.m.
 Christmas Eve 12/24 - 6:30 p.m.
 Christmas Day 12/25 - 10 a.m.***

A Season of Light

Dear Friends,

I hope you are all doing well as the days grow colder and we are having some much-needed rain. I even saw a few snowflakes the other day!

Our monthly worship theme is LIGHT. I chose this theme several months ago and am now seeing it in a bit of a new way. Certainly, there are many sacred festivals of light around the world this month – Hanukkah, Kwanzaa, Yule (the Winter Solstice), Diwali, the Loi Krathong (Floating Lotus Candle) Festival in Thailand, and many others. These festivals and ceremonies and holy days all originated in the northern hemisphere and many of them certainly connect to the winter solstice and the return of the light, as well as gratitude and blessing. Most of these holy times are also imbued with joy.

However, after the election, I now see our theme of Light in a different way, as we approach what will be a dark time in the history of our nation. Yes, we will have light and celebration and joy, because those are necessary for our lives. Yet other questions also come forward now. How will we be a light for ourselves and others who need our compassion and our solidarity? How will we share our light of Unitarian Universalism with the world? How will we keep ourselves energized when we will need to dig deep for ongoing resilience and resistance?



Our services this month address these questions in several ways.

On December 4th, we will celebrate an Affirmation Sunday. We will welcome new members to this congregation – yay! We will also recognize important accomplishments and milestones for several groups of volunteers in our church. All of these dear people are bringing their light to all of us and our UU faith by coming here!

On December 11th, there will be a lay-led service with Barbara May as Worship Leader. She will be focusing on how we can Live in Light.

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On December 18th, we will celebrate Yule – the Winter Solstice – in the Pagan tradition. We will give gratitude to the Dark and all its fruitful being. And we will celebrate the Return of the Light by casting into the fire those habits, beliefs and ways of behaving that no longer serve us well. And – the Sun King will be with us – if we can find him and bring him back to light the world! Thus we will prepare ourselves for what is coming.

We will have one service for **Christmas Eve, December 24th at 6:30 p.m.** This will be a service of lessons and carols on the birth of Jesus of Nazareth, presented in ways both traditional and completely Unitarian Universalist. We will end with candle lighting and Silent Night. This is a perfect time to remember Jesus the revolutionary, who stood against an Empire until his last breath.

On Sunday, December 25th, Christmas Day, our doors will be open for all those who may seek fellowship, religious community and connection. The service is about Enlightenment – how is it that we can prepare ourselves spiritually for growth, creativity and change? Can we bring enlightenment to ourselves by force of will? What kind of enlightenment might we hope for in these times?

I hope that all of these services support you in hope, resilience, resistance and love, so that we may face the unknown future together with determination, commitment and compassion!

Love and blessings,

Cyndi

Cyndi



Much has happened in one short month...

- Rev. Cyndi's sermon on November 13th was inspiring and a call to live out our UU faith.
- At our Board meeting on November 21st, the Board members affirmed **"the need for an ongoing response to the election and its aftermath and consequences and will build on the strengths and alliances that we already have as well as identify new alliances to seek out"**. In essence, to create and act in focused ways to proactively put our mission and seven principles into action, more so now than ever.

What will that look like?

This is where all of you come in. In community, we need to be aware and determine what action we will take.

- Social Justice has begun conversations as have other groups in the church.
- Could Second Unitarian Church be a Sanctuary church?
- Rev. Cyndi is in continuous contact with UU congregations and congregations of other denominations. She will lead a "Safety Pin" or De-escalation / Bystander Intervention Training on January 24th at 6:30 p.m.
- We will begin adding contact information for resources in our weekly e-news.

What can we do now?

- Join us at Sunday Service to strengthen our community;
- Send suggestions, concerns to Board@2uomaha.org;
- Watch for upcoming information in our weekly e-news, the Order of Service, newsletters and Facebook posts;
- Be kind to ourselves and stay connected!
- Take a moment to read the UUA President's Election Reflection – go to www.uua.org/pressroom/press-releases/uua-president-offers-pastoral-message-election-season.

Remember, as Martin Luther King, Jr. said,
"Faith is taking the first step even when you don't see the whole staircase."

And in other news....

- Please join me in congratulating Cheri C., the new Chair of the Open UUA Committee, which is a national UUA Committee and oversees the implementation of democratic processes in the UUA. We are grateful for Cheri's service and contributions to Second Unitarian and to the UUA on the national level!
- The Board members are participating in four sessions to clarify our Developmental Ministry goals in order to gain a common understanding and ownership of them. We are looking forward to ongoing conversations with all of you! We will also be together with Nominations / Leadership Development Committee members to watch the webinar, "Cracking the Leadership Crisis".

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FROM THE BOARD

Notes of appreciation and did you know?

- Every month Richard K. and Nancy A. proof read our monthly newsletters.
- The Fellowship Committee, led by Lynn A. and Judy E., sponsored our Thanksgiving Dinner. The Bagel Bin Boys took care of set up and tear down.
- Every week, our money counters, Kathie H. & Clyde A. or Kathy B. & Anita J., with substitutes, David J. & Melissa K., are here to help with the counting of your generosity from the previous Sunday and special events.
- Correction from last month regarding the Book Sale – The Book Sale, organized by Pete M. and the Library Committee, generated income of \$854.14!

Holiday wishes! On behalf of your Board of Trustees - Anita, Carol, Don, Greg, Joe and myself - we wish you all the best during this holiday season! May the holidays be filled with warmth and joy and shared with family, friends and community! May your life in the New Year be filled with possibilities and courage!

Thank you!

Pat



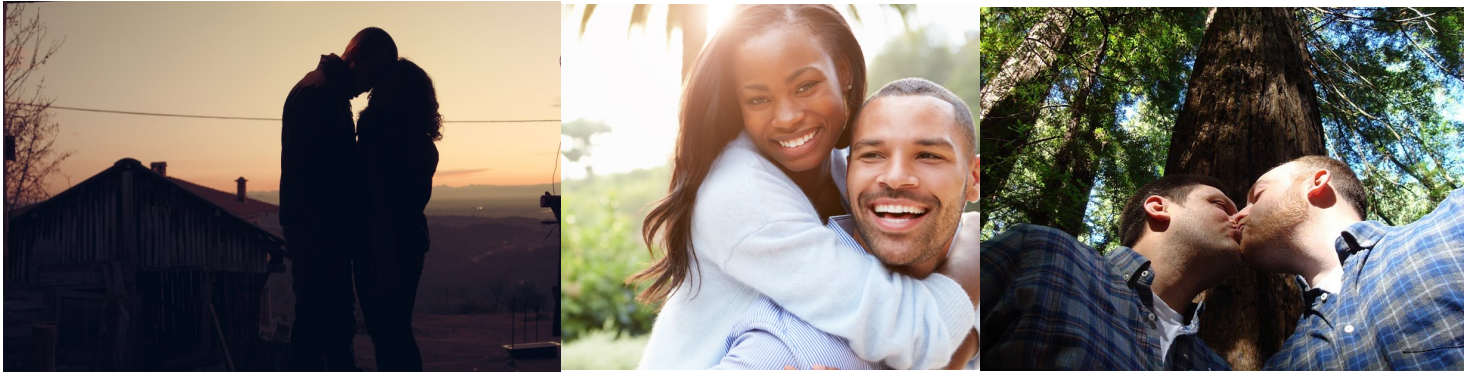
Have comments, suggestions, or ideas, please feel free to send them to Board@2uomaha.org.



**Faith is taking the first step even when
you don't see the whole staircase.**

Martin Luther King, Jr.

November had its ups and downs for everyone... a veritable emotional rollercoaster. Find your happy place at least for a day this month and share that joy with those you meet. Spread happiness and may it multiply for you in return!



Attention Adults:

We are trying to plan an ADULT OWL class but need your input! Help the facilitators and DREs determine what Adult OWL to offer, how to structure it, and which topics to present. If you are interested in taking this class, please take a moment to fill out the survey to help us appropriately plan for this! Type in this link to your browser to go to the survey: <https://goo.gl/forms/oTi1Xy2fDk5srOca2> The link can also be found in the weekly whole church religious education email I send out for the entire month of December.

The 2016-2017 season of YRUU is off to a strong start. They have watched *Defying the Nazis*, enjoyed a bonfire, found ways to lift spirits after the election, collected donations for refugees in Omaha, learned about Indonesia firsthand from one of their own, and two of the youth have taken "J Ball" to a whole new level.

Finally, congratulations to Gabe, who won the drawing for tickets to the Rose Theater performance of *Prancer*. He and his family will receive three tickets to see *Prancer*. We will have another set of drawings for those facilitating the classes as well as for attendance this spring! Sign up to help out and bring your children on Sundays for a chance to win.

Many blessings to you in this time of giving.

Molly Kliment-Jenkins

DRE

Handwritten signature of Molly Kliment-Jenkins.

End of Year Giving Reminders

Please remember: Your 2016 donations to the Church must be received by **3 PM Tuesday, December 27th** to be recorded for the 2016 Tax Year. By the end of January the Treasurer will send you a summary of your 2016 recorded financial contributions. Please save this statement for your tax records. If you have any questions, please contact Vicki P., Treasurer.



We can also accept most credit cards for pledge and offering payments, other donations, and purchases such as fair trade products. To make a credit card payment before or after church service, see Clyde A. or Vicki P. During weekday office hours, contact Jaime Short, Church Administrator. Thank you!

It's Budget Time Again!

It's almost time to start developing our 2017-2018 budget. Committee Chairs and other budget line owners will be receiving Budget Request Forms. After itemizing your spending needs for the next fiscal year, the forms need to be submitted to Joel H., Finance Chair, by **Monday, January 9th**. The budget team will use the information to prepare a proposed 2017-2018 budget which will help set the income goal for our 2017 pledge campaign in March.

November Service Attendance

<i>Attendance</i>	
Date	Number in Worship
11/06	76
11/13	97
11/20	82
11/27	70

TREASURER'S REPORT

Treasurer's Report

In October we brought in more than we spent.

	October 2016	Year to Date
Income	\$15,222.55	\$80,675.07 (37% of budget)
Expense	14,666.57	64,027.47 (30% of budget)
Net Over/Short	+\$555.98	+\$16,647.60

Income came from Stewardship Campaign Pledges (\$12,261.01); New Pledges from Current Members (\$50.00); New Pledges from New Members (\$200.00); Second Week of Book Sale and Fair Trade Fundraising (\$636.14); Insurance Premium Refund and Other Income (\$428.40); Offering (\$1,297.00).

We also transferred \$350.00 from Reserves as directed by the Board and increased the Operating budget by the same amount. This money is to cover repairs to the parking lot. The transfer and associated expense increases the 2016-17 Operating Budget to \$215,603.

Expenses were from Salaries and Benefits (\$4,943.00); Minister's Compensation (\$6,379.31); Administrative Expenses (\$126.66); General Expenses (\$3,144.95); and Committee Expenses (\$72.65).

If you would like to see more detailed financial reports, you can join the Finance Committee, contact me at 402-334-0678, or email: treasurer@2uomaha.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!



- ⇒ Social Justice Committee is holding a planning/strategy retreat with Rev. Cyndi on February 4, 9 am - noon. All members and friends are invited. Look for more details soon.
- ⇒ Safety Pin Training - Reverend Cyndi will hold "Safety Pin" or De-escalation / Bystander Intervention Training on January 24th at 6:30 p.m. Mark your calendar now!

KIOS FUNDRAISER UPDATE

A big thanks to those that donated for their generous contributions to our KIOS advertising fund! We raised **\$1915**, which will enable us to have 52 spots on *All Things Considered* (our spots have been on Friday afternoons at around 5 pm) and 14 spots on *Morning Edition* between 7 and 9 am. These will start at the beginning of January. This is a great way to spread the word about our church!



B&G is Thankful for all our volunteers!

Despite a low of 26 degrees Saturday morning, November 19th, many of the mums in front of the Church still looked beautiful! Like the mums, our Building & Grounds volunteers braved the cold to clean up the Church Yard to make it beautiful for the Thanksgiving Potluck. Inside they set up the tables and chairs for the event. We also tackled most of the other tasks on our “to do” list like unclogging the kitchen sink drain, winterizing the windows in the minister’s office, repairing a shelf in the library, removed cobwebs, and much more. Thanks to Rick B., David J., Roger N., Tom P., Jim P., Tom R., and Clyde A. And thanks to Pam C., who tended to aesthetics inside, like putting up the beautiful Thanksgiving banner.

We went from this...



To this!



One of our big B&G projects this Fall was the “temporary” repairs to the North Driveway. Rick, Roger & Clyde used a new product called Aquaphalt to patch the large pothole. This material uses water as a catalyst and was highly rated by Consumer Reports. We hope the patch will last through the winter and maybe much longer. Bids received to replace the driveway with new concrete ranged from \$5,000 to over \$8,000! The Aquaphalt patch cost less than \$700.

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Another B&G project for late fall is installation of a gutter on the east side of the roof to deflect water away from the walk leading to the Basement double door entrance. In the winter water dripping from the roof freezes on the walk below. This is a serious safety hazard, and at least two people slipped and fell on the ice last winter.

REMINDER: If you are at church and smell gas, please call 911 and immediately evacuate the building. The Fire Department has the equipment to locate the source of the gas and ventilate the building. They will also report the problem to M.U.D.

Retirees' Holiday Lunch

For the past several years, Retirees Group has celebrated the Holiday Season by lunching at a locally owned restaurant. This year, Retirees Group will meet at Omaha Rockets Kanteen, **Tuesday, December 13th at 12:30**. Omaha Rockets Kanteen is located in the Lake Point Center at 24th and Lake and is described as a "healthy soul food eatery with a Negro Leagues Baseball theme and a community empowerment thrust." The restaurant, whose tagline is "Enjoy the food, digest the history", is named after a barnstorming semipro, independent all-black town team, the Omaha Rockets. Parking is available in a lot at 25th and Lake or on the street.

The owners have asked that we make our menu selections prior to our lunch; please view their menu omaharocketskanteen.com. **To reserve your place at the luncheon, rsvp with your name(s) and menu selection(s) to retirees@2Uomaha.org on or before Friday, December 11th.** Please also let us know if you would like to carpool from the church that morning.



You are not required to be retired to attend! Join us on the second Tuesday of each month for fun, socialization and learning.

Calling all 7th through 12th Graders Teen Movie Night for December *Juno*



The Second Unitarian teens (7-12 graders) will be viewing *Juno* this month, **December 18th at 4:30.**

Synopsis: Faced with an unplanned pregnancy, an offbeat young woman makes an unusual decision regarding her unborn child. Starring Ellen Page, Michael Cera, and Jennifer Garner.

A discussion of the film will be led by Bob Fischbach. Snacks and drinks will be available and a freewill donation taken for pizza. Join us!

Got Leaves?

If you still have leaves (or your neighbors do), please bring and leave bags in one of the three adjoining cedar compost bins. We badly need compost for our 2UU community garden, but the most affordable source (Oma-gro) is going away (as this is the second year that yard waste compost inputs have been diverted to the landfill). For those that are interested, I'll be glad to provide instruction next summer on how to hot compost your yard waste (leaves and grass clippings), and kill weed seed in the process.

Larry K. - Community Garden Coordinator

Women's Alliance

Monday, December 12th at 6:30 at First Unitarian. Those who identify as women are invited to attend the Woman's Alliance Holiday Get-Together. Socializing at 6:30 p.m. Heavy appetizers and desserts at 7 p.m. Our "white elephant" gift exchange at 8pm. Please bring an appetizer or dessert and a wrapped gift. Re-gifting is strongly encouraged. Alliance asks for a \$15 donation which goes to the Merritt Education Fund. (First time attendees will be guests of the Alliance.)

This year we will collect towels and washcloths for the Refugee Empowerment Center. Please bring an unwrapped towel to help this organization. The mission of the REC is to resettle and empower refugees to become more self-sufficient through direct services and educational programs. RSVP by Dec. 9 to 1st Unitarian 402-345-3039, indicate whether you're bringing an appetizer or a dessert.

Would You Like To Be A Holiday Angel?

Very soon you will be seeing the Adopt-a-Family tree up in the entry at church. As you know, it would not be the Holiday Season at 2U if we did not adopt a local family in financial need. Please consider donating a gift or money for a food gift card. Information about our adopted family will be arriving by sleigh soon.



Wrapper's Paradise

Need help wrapping those gifts? Want to help us wrap our gifts for our Adopt-a-Family? Have some old gift wrap, ribbons, and bags you are just DONE with? Are you done wrapping gifts but feel the need to share you skill with others? Then this event is for you!

After church on **Sunday, December 18th, at 11:30**, we will set up some tables in the sanctuary. Bring in your gifts (both those that need to be wrapped and your gift of mad wrapping skills) and our community will pitch in to help you with the holidays. There will be a holiday cookie exchange, too, so bake a batch and trade up. It will be a great community time. See you there!



Loss at the Holidays

On **Thursday, December 8th**, Rev. Cyndi will be leading the Pastoral Care Program, "Loss at the Holidays" from **7pm to 8:30pm** at Second Unitarian Church. This program covers all types of losses, including death of a family member or friend, loss of job, loss of pet, relocation, and general "holiday blues." Please join us in this time of meaningful reflection.



If you want to reserve childcare, please notify Pam C. at childcare@2Uomaha.org no later than Sunday, December 4, 2016.

Minister's Discretionary Fund

If you are having a financial crisis and need short-term financial support, please do not hesitate to be in touch with me. I have a Minister's Discretionary Fund that is available for me to help congregational members with financial emergencies. This is a confidential process, so your privacy will be respected. It is very important in our beloved religious community that we support each other in all the ways that we can. Our Christmas Eve collection will be for this Fund; you can also donate to it at any time. Thank you all for your support of one another through this Fund!

- Rev. Cyndi

Share the Plate December 2016 Stephen Center

One half of Second Unitarian's offering received in December will go to **the Stephen Center**. The Stephen Center partners with the community, families and individuals to overcome homelessness, addiction and poverty. Find out more at: stephencenter.org

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

Second Unitarian Church

3012 S. 119th Street

Omaha, NE 68144

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