



# Second Unitarian Church of Omaha

## *Second Thoughts*

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### **Try Something New in the New Year!**

**Jan 4th** - Sing along with the 2U Choir. Practice resumes January 4th and is every Wednesday.

**Jan 10th** - Discover along with the Retirees' Group as they present "Unitarian History in Transylvania". See page 9.

**Jan 11th** - Join Religious Growth Learning for Coffee at Delice Bakery (3201 Farnam St). We will discuss Religious Ed for programs for youth and adults. More info on page 5.

**Jan 14th** - Explore your spiritual side with Writing for Spiritual Growth.

**Jan 15th** - Teens - Grab a friend for Teen Movie Night. We will be watching Big Fish. Page 10.

**Jan 16th** - Join Social Justice Members at the Martin Luther King Luncheon. See page 8.

**Jan 18th** - Clear your mind with the Meditation Group!

**Jan 24th** - Be a better Bystander by attending Rev. Cyndi's "Safety Pin Training"

**Jan 28th** - Make merry at the fun 2U tradition of Sing for Your Supper! More info page 9.

**Feb 4th** - Be inspired at the Social Justice Retreat. See page 11.

### *UPCOMING SERVICES*

#### BEGINNINGS

**January 1: *Resolute***

**January 8: *Book Communion***

**January 15: *Black Lives Matter***

**January 22: *Youth Led Service***

**January 29: *Chinese New Year***

See page 11 for more details.

***Join Us This Sunday!***

**Worship Services**

**10 a.m.**

## *Beginnings*

Dear Friends,

I hope you are all doing well.

Winter is indeed here, with its cold and snow and ice! We have passed the Winter Solstice and the days are growing longer. Though we might not notice it yet, by the end of January, we will!

Our monthly worship theme is BEGINNINGS. A new year is a time for new beginnings of many types. We might make some resolutions – or not! – about behaviors and habits in our lives. As the Board and I work to refine the goals for our shared Developmental ministry, we are anticipating new beginnings for this congregation. It is our shared hope that moving forward with Developmental ministry will bring about a culture change for this congregation that will move it to being ‘unstuck’ and to becoming vital, meaningful and powerful in the lives of our members and in the wider community.

This month will also mark the beginning of a new presidential administration for this country. As I and my colleagues have said since the election – there is much about which to be concerned. Activities and events since the election have only underscored those concerns, not reduced them. We are truly entering a time, as our UUA President the Reverend Peter Morales has said, of **sanctuary** and **resistance**. We must continue and become even more a sanctuary of hope, compassion and action for our members. We might also consider if we can become an **actual physical sanctuary** for those who may be in danger in the coming year – and who certainly are being threatened. To become an actual sanctuary is not a light or easy decision to make.

We must also stay active in **resistance**, being prepared to step forward into the public square in ways that we have not in the past. The worst thing we can do is assume that everything is going to be okay, when it definitely is NOT, or to normalize the behavior we are seeing from the president-elect.

Our services this month will address this theme of Beginnings in several ways. On January 1, we will hear about New Year’s resolutions – are they what we need? Or is it more about being ‘resolute,’ a different thing altogether?



## FROM THE MINISTER

There will be a Lay led service on January 8. On January 15, in observance of Martin Luther King Day, I will speak to the Black Lives Matter Movement – a movement still in the beginning of its time and one that we as Unitarian Universalists are just beginning to join. It is critical that we understand what BLM is about, as there are many misunderstandings out there. On January 22, the YRUU Program will hold their service. Please come to this service to support our Youth in what they have to say to us! On January 29th, we will observe the Chinese New Year – which is all about prosperity, good fortune and MONSTERS. Oh, yes! Come prepared to make some holy noise!

I will be on leave from Sunday afternoon, January 1, through Sunday, January 8. I look forward to returning to co-create a variety of BEGINNINGS with you in the new year!

Love and blessings,

*Cyndi*

### Whale Coast Alaska 2017

**WOW! Four Unitarian Universalist Fellowships in Alaska invite you to our awe-inspiring, 24<sup>th</sup> annual Alaska tour program.**

**TOUR #1: National Park Tour, June 10 to 20 -- \$3,156**

**TOUR #2: All-Alaska Tour, July 7 to 19 -- \$3,758**

**WHERE: From the coastal waters to the sunny Interior, from wilderness to modern cities. We experience the best of Alaska: Fairbanks, Denali Park, Anchorage, Juneau, Sitka, Seward**

**SEE:**

- **Wildlife: whales, seals, bears, moose, caribou, & more.**
- **Glaciers, islands, fjords, and mountain ranges.**
- **Native American artists and dancers.**
- **Alaska's finest museums.**
- **Spectacular travel by train, plane, and boat.**

**STAY: Real Alaska! UU homestays, meals, & dinner parties with Alaska UUs who treat you like friends.**



**Director: Dave Frey, longtime Fairbanks UU**  
**More information: [www.WhaleCoastAK.org](http://www.WhaleCoastAK.org)**

**Email: [dfrey@WhaleCoastAK.org](mailto:dfrey@WhaleCoastAK.org)**

**Address: 675 Gold Vein Road, Fairbanks, AK 99712**

**Telephone: 907-322-4966**



**\*\*\* Hurry! Each tour sells out when 40 guests register \*\*\***

For all of us, a “Prayer for the Holiday Season” as written by Aaron Payson.

Oh Beloved,

Can it be that another year has passed? Wasn't it just yesterday when we heard such familiar music, when these well-worn stories awakened us from our post-harvest slumber? Wasn't it only weeks ago when we last reminisced about seasons past, when life seemed easier, when this season was so full of snowy wonder and glorious wants? Didn't we converse then about how much there was still to do and how short the daylight hours had become? Wasn't it we who sat together then and sipped warm cider, or was it hot chocolate, and laughed as we shared again the memories of youth that gleam once again from our eyes? Or was it coffee and ruminations about a world gone mad? And hadn't we just made the promise that a year hence we'd be farther along than we were and far more accomplished in the doing; those perpetually illusive resolutions that prove us kin in effort and siblings in spirit?

Oh Beloved, can it be that we are here again?

How incredible! How miraculous! How excellent! So let us then give thanks for this heart-felt return! You who have been so much a part of each other's lives, whose presence means fullness of joy and love, you who are such a gift! Hazzah! Let old stories be shared again with new insight and new adventures add spice to the routines of our existence. Let life's milestones mark for us the forward path to possibilities yet imagined and our trials and tribulations give us deeper appreciation for blessings bestowed.

The world with its deep challenges is needful of this, of communities of memory and hope, of a people of courage, with love deep enough to speak truth to power, with humility rich enough to make us mindful of the privileges we have not earned, and with a conscience broad enough to demand those rights that ought to be accorded all people. Let the light we kindle spark the awakening that is ours to embody. For the truth we seek is the life we lead, and the love we share is essence of that peace for which we yearn.

Amen and Blessed Be

*We look forward to continuing our journey together in 2017! Thank you!*

# FROM THE DIRECTOR OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Ah, the month of new beginnings and fresh starts.

Earlier last month, I participated in a conference call with other DREs. We commiserated about the challenges our congregations have been facing lately. Many of us have seen an influx of visitors who are seeking a place that lifts them up and supports their many diverse identities. We talked about creating multigenerational classrooms, finding ways to have interesting classes for adults and children.

As a UU, we know that learning never stops. That's why for the next few weeks we are trying a different way to RE: the multigenerational Miracles Curriculum. This curriculum is for EVERYONE, not just our younger members. With hands-on activities and stories from our UU sources, you will discover your own agency for miracle-making. **Join us on Sundays at 10 a.m. in the garden level meeting space to discover, experience and express awe and wonder!** Led by me with another facilitator (youth or adult). This truly is a class for ALL AGES! The eight sessions will be: February 5, 12, 19, March 5, 12, 19, 26 and April 2.



Participants make a uniquely UU inquiry—a religious search which simultaneously embraces the awesome truth of a miracle's mystery and the “how and why” of rational explanation. Participants explore different kinds of miracles, from the awesome, ordered beauty of Earth and all life on it, to their own capacity to transform themselves and others to bring forth love and justice.

**We are also looking for one youth or adult each Sunday to assist with the lesson.** If you're interested, there is a paper sign up available on the Miracles bulletin board in the Meeting Space. Or check out the latest RE e-news for the online version. I will be managing the session, but I will need an extra set of hands.

**The Religious Growth and Learning Council will be meeting on January 11th at 6:30 p.m. at Delice on Farnam.** If you are interested in helping us craft upcoming classes for all ages, please feel free to join us! We would love anyone passionate about helping anyone, regardless of age, feel free about questioning, learning and exploring!

Many blessings to you in the new year!

Molly Kliment-Jenkins

DRE

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

## Treasurer's Report

by Vicki Pratt, Treasurer

In November we spent more than new income. But we have a year-to-date surplus to dip into.

	November 2016	Year to Date
Income	\$16,197.66	\$96,872.73 (45% of budget)
Expense	16,648.02	79,916.97 (37% of budget)
Net Over/Short	-\$450.36	+\$16,955.76

Income came from Stewardship Campaign Pledges (\$13,798.01); New Pledges from Current Members (\$35.00); New Pledges from New Members (\$200.00); Fair Trade Fundraising (\$95.00); Offering (\$1,146.34).

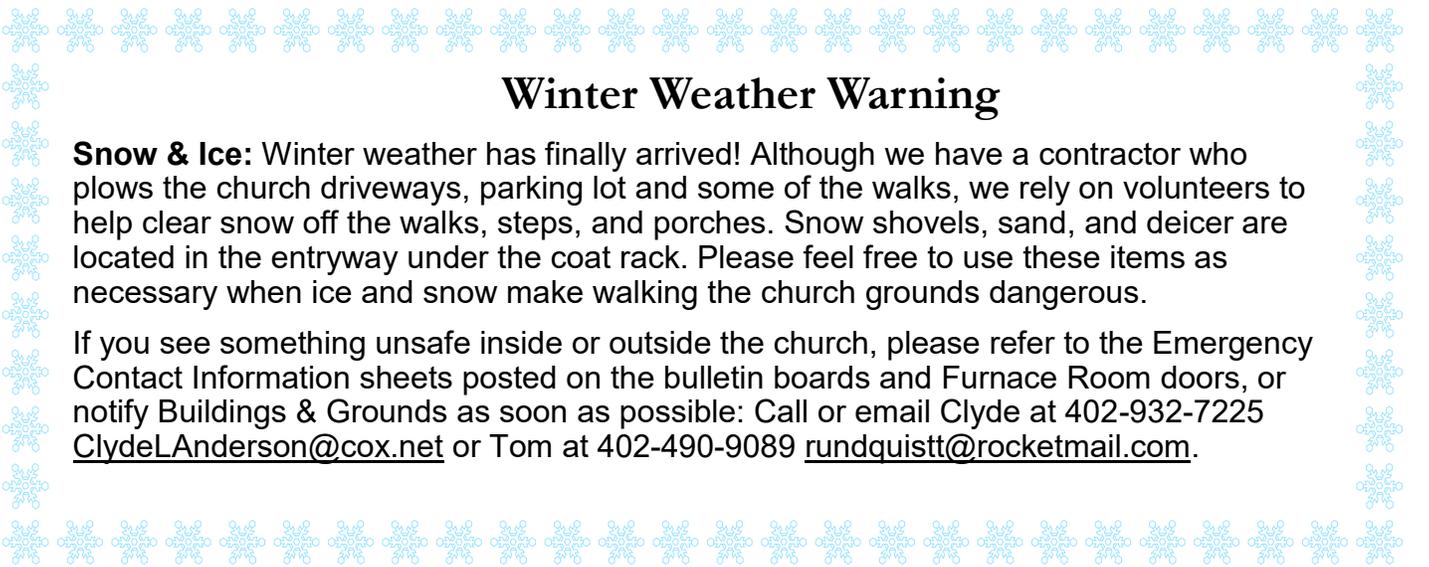
Expenses were from Salaries and Benefits (\$5,478.79); Minister's Compensation (\$6,280.83); Administrative Expenses (\$208.15); General Expenses (\$4,229.55); and Committee Expenses (\$450.70).

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](mailto:treasurer@2uomaha.org)

### It's Budget Time Again!

It's almost time to start developing our 2017-2018 budget. Committee Chairs and other budget line owners, please turn in your 2017-2018 Budget Request Forms by Monday, January 9th. Place the forms in the Finance folder in the Church Office or email to Joel Haskins [j.haskins@cox.net](mailto:j.haskins@cox.net). Lost your form? Go to **our website** and look for the link under Financial. Questions? Please contact Vicki Pratt, Treasurer. 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.





## Winter Weather Warning

**Snow & Ice:** Winter weather has finally arrived! Although we have a contractor who plows the church driveways, parking lot and some of the walks, we rely on volunteers to help clear snow off the walks, steps, and porches. Snow shovels, sand, and deicer are located in the entryway under the coat rack. Please feel free to use these items as necessary when ice and snow make walking the church grounds dangerous.

If you see something unsafe inside or outside the church, please refer to the Emergency Contact Information sheets posted on the bulletin boards and Furnace Room doors, or notify Buildings & Grounds as soon as possible: Call or email Clyde at 402-932-7225 [ClydeLAnderson@cox.net](mailto:ClydeLAnderson@cox.net) or Tom at 402-490-9089 [rundquistt@rocketmail.com](mailto:rundquistt@rocketmail.com).

## DECEMBER SERVICE ATTENDANCE

<i>Attendance</i>	
Date	Number in Worship
12/04	76
12/11	51
12/18	71
12/24	74
12/25	15



## Retirees' Group January 9th

Please join us Tuesday, January 9th from 1:00 p.m. - 2:00 p.m. for Retirees Group. Our presenter will be Janet West, a member of First Unitarian Church on "Unitarian History in Transylvania". Do you know that Eastern Europe Unitarianism started in Transylvania in 1568? Transylvania, which is now a region of Romania, is steeped in Unitarian history. Janet West's presentation will include an early history of Transylvania Unitarianism, showing pictures of historical sites, which still exist today, and of villages and cities which are home to 21st-century Unitarians. You are not required to be retired to attend! Join us on the second Tuesday of each month for fun, socialization and learning.

## Sing for Your Supper! Saturday, January 28, 6 p.m.



**Polish your musical talents (singing, dancing, etc.), poetry writing, recitation, and dramatic or humorous readings, or whatever you do.**

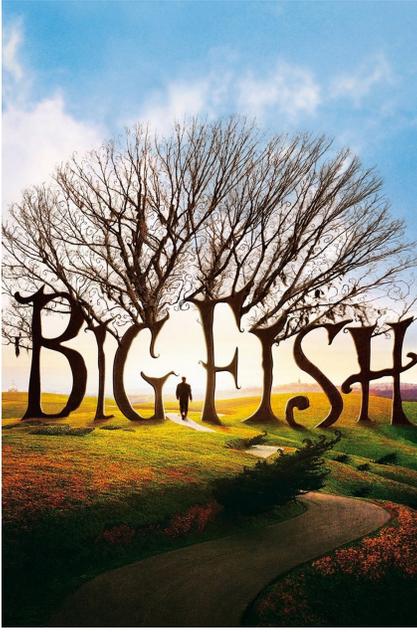


This is your opportunity to perform at Second Unitarian's annual SING FOR YOUR SUPPER, this year on **Saturday, January 28.**

An audience is a must, so please come even if you are not performing - we need everyone! Fellowship will furnish bread and beverages - please bring soup or dessert to share. The meal will start at 6:00 p.m. with entertainment to follow. Childcare will be available from 7 to 9 p.m. This is an event you don't want to miss.



## GET INVOLVED



### Calling all 7th through 12th Graders Teen Movie Night for January *Big Fish*

The Second Unitarian teens (7-12 graders) will be viewing *Big Fish* **January 15th at 4:30.**

Synopsis: After a lifetime of being told exaggerated stories by his father, a frustrated son tries to determine the fact from fiction in his dying father's life. Through his investigations into the stories he begins to understand the man and his penchant for storytelling.

A discussion of the film and how it relates to UU values will follow the movie. Snacks and drinks will be available and a freewill donation taken for pizza. Join us!

## Miracles

As a UU, we know that learning never stops. That's why for the next few weeks we are trying a different way to RE: the multigenerational Miracles Curriculum. This curriculum is for EVERYONE, not just our younger members. With hands-on activities and stories from our UU sources, you will discover your own agency for miracle-making! Join us on Sundays at 10AM in the garden level meeting space to discover, experience and express awe and wonder! Led by Molly Kliment-Jenkins.

We are looking for one youth or adult each Sunday to assist with the lesson. If you're interested, there is a paper sign up available on the Miracles bulletin board in the Meeting Space. [Or sign up online.](#)

<b><u>Miracles Dates</u></b>
February 5
February 12
February 19
February 28
March 5
March 12
March 19
March 26
April 2



## Save the Date for Social Justice

Mark your calendar! Social Justice Committee is holding a planning/strategy retreat with Rev. Cyndi on February 4th from 9 a.m. - noon. All members and friends are invited and a reservation link will be available soon.



### **BEGINNINGS**

#### **January 1: *Resolute***

On this New Year's Day, we will consider the usefulness – or not – of making resolutions for the New Year. Perhaps it's not about making resolutions, but about being **resolute**. What does that mean and how can we do it?

#### **January 8 – *Book Communion***

#### **January 15: *Black Lives Matter***

The best way to celebrate Martin Luther King Sunday is to prepare to continue his work of liberation. Our Unitarian Universalist faith has committed to the Black Lives Matter (BLM) movement. In our dedication to a world of racial justice, we cannot afford to misunderstand BLM. In these perilous times, we cannot afford to have doubts about any movement with which we must be solidly allied.

#### **January 22 – *Youth Led Service***

#### **January 29: *Chinese New Year***

The New Year Spring Festival (Chinese New Year) is the most important national festival in China. Perhaps you are familiar with the fireworks, food, good fortune and/or prosperity aspect of the celebration. But there is a much older story behind this holiday, a story of MONSTERS! And noise! Together we will learn what the Chinese New Year Story has to teach us about community.