



January, 2011

Second Thoughts

Second Unitarian Church of Omaha

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Join Us This Sunday!

First Hour Discussion 9:00 a.m.

Worship Service 10:30 a.m.

Fellowship and Refreshments 11:30 a.m.

January 2

Decide, Act, & Persevere

Darrel Draper

Darrel Draper portrays Theodore Roosevelt delivering a message of: "Decide, Act, & Persevere."

First Hour

Writing for Spiritual Growth

David Martin

January 9

Our Focus on the Family

Rev. Scott McNeill

In a culture inundated with references to family and political discussions about "family values," where do we stand? How have we redefined family - and is there a problem? Bring some family with you - biological or chosen!

First Hour TBA (look for updates in weekly email and Order of Service)

January 16

One Perfect World?

Rev. Scott McNeill

Join us in worship with great music by our choirs and a sermon dedicated to the sacrifices made to make this world what it is - and to discuss what work is left.

First Hour

From Age-ing to Sage-ing - A Discussion

Anita Jeck

January 23

The Education of God: Job

Rev. Scott McNeill

This Sunday, join Rev. Scott as he presents another chapter detailing the growing and learning of God. This chapter deals with Job - and is sure to entertain and illuminate. Our 1st-6th grade RE program will also be studying Job this Sunday!

First Hour TBA

January 31

This I Believe as a Unitarian Universalist

Participants to be announced

This continuing series focuses on individual perspectives on UU values and beliefs from members, with an invitation to connect with others through reflection and appreciation of differences.

First Hour TBA



SING FOR YOUR SUPPER
Saturday, January 15
(see page 5)

BUILDING THE BEACON
Monday, January 17
(see page 8)



CIRCLE SUPPER
Saturday, January 22
(see page 9)



Second Thoughts is a monthly publication of Second Unitarian Church of Omaha. Please send your articles and submissions to: info@secondunitarianomaha.org. Deadline is the fifteenth of each month.



Minister's Musings

By Reverend Scott McNeill



By now, the winter chill has settled in, there may be a light snow on the ground, and the calendar and clocks are inching ever so close to 2011. If you're like me, 2011 does not sound particularly "cool." There's no major election, no World Cup, no Olympics, no end of the world prophecies (I've got my eye on you, Mayans), etc., etc. Just a plain ol' year.

Except, of course, around here. As we begin the new year, the church is growing and moving and sharing its good news with people all over Omaha. The fall brought us an increase in gifts to the KIOS drive – followed up by an incredible sharing of gifts with our adopted family for the holidays.

Now, we are headed into the winter months where things pick up even stronger around here (no hibernation for us!) and then we'll breeze into the spring and summer with new members to celebrate, a pledge drive celebration, and in May, an installation of me as your settled minister.

People around here recall the phrase, "No rest for the weary," and scoff! It's probably good that we're busy – keeps the blood flowing. But it's ever so important that we stop for a bit and remind ourselves of just why we're doing this work and coming together as a community committed to pursuing truth and meaning, diversity and justice.

To that end, we'll be working over the next several months to elicit thoughts and ideas and visions about who we are and who we, as a congregation, want to be. Where do we want to be in three, five, ten years? How do we want the Prairie Lane neighborhood and the Omaha community to know us? Why do we choose to be together? There is something more to us than a group of people who enjoy one another's company, though surely that's true, too. We teach our children and share with our neighbors not out of a sense of obligation, but I believe, out of hope. Hope and commitment to making this world the place it ought to be.

As we start talking about what it means to be a Unitarian Universalist and a member of Second Unitarian Church of Omaha, I hope you'll wrestle with the deep questions about what all of this means. It can be unsettling, confusing, and complex. And yet, we grow by asking; we grow by working together to find common ground. 2011 is a big year for us, for Second Unitarian Church of Omaha. We can make a lot happen and with all of us pulling together, we can see magnificent growth. Thank you for allowing me to be a part of that and for all that you do to make each and every year special.

In faith,

Rev. Scott

At our Worship Retreat in the fall, there was some discussion about how I would do worship differently and for people to experience that some Sunday. So, on January 23, the Order of Service will be slightly different as a way of showing new or different aspects of worship. This is not a permanent change to worship, but a showing of difference in liturgical elements. January 30 will be back to normal, with a great worship led by fellow members of Second Unitarian. There may be changes here and there – but as always the Music and Worship Committee and I will try to tell people – and we definitely want your feedback (it can be positive or negative).

In faith,

Rev. Scott



Planks and Slivers

By Tom Peterson, Chair, Board of Trustees



As this month's column is written, we are poised on the cusp of change, waiting expectantly. The longest night of the year is past, and daylight will gradually return to our morning and evening commutes. The holiday seasons of Hanukkah, Christmas, and Kwanzaa are upon us, with all of their hope and promise, full of travel, of family, of mysteriously shaped presents, of delicious scents and joyous sounds. Soon a new year will be here, and with it promises of new beginnings, resolutions, and plans.

This is the time in our church year that we begin translating our vision and mission into tangible goals, expressed in our budget for the coming year. Thinking of our budget as an expression of who we are can be eye-opening, for it forces us to come to terms with what our priorities are.

Some budget items are practical: expenses for gas and electricity to heat and cool and light our building, water and sewer fees, lawn care and snow removal, copier and postage expenses. Some are a reflection of our commitment to contributing our Fair Share pledge of per-member denominational dues to the UUA and Prairie Star District, and are tied to our growth. The largest portion of the budget, for salaries and benefits, reflects our commitment to providing fair compensation to our professional staff. The smallest portion is for our programs, just 6.5% of last year's budget.

What does our budget say about us? It says that first and foremost, we value professional leadership in our ministry, religious education, church administration, and music program. Looking closer, we express our care for the environment by taking steps to hold the line or reduce our maintenance expenses: switching to energy-saving lighting and using programmable thermostats; installing rain barrels to offset our water bill; relying on volunteers for lawn care and snow removal; and reducing print volumes and moving to electronic distribution. We value our connection to the religious community of which we are a part.

Our greatest, unrealized potential is in our program funding. A growing, vibrant church community thrives on growing, vibrant programming, sustained by committed members and friends. And in turn, vibrant programming sustains us, enriches our lives, and strengthens our commitment to one another. Think about the reasons you keep coming to Second Unitarian, and especially think about those events and opportunities that bring you in addition to Sunday morning. These are where we manifest our vision - to become a beacon of hope. This where we plan for our future.

Special thanks to Committees!

Each and every day, people are working tirelessly to make Second Unitarian Church of Omaha one of the greatest congregations in the city. We have tremendous volunteerism for our church and out in the larger world and the staff and other members of the church are so very thankful. From the people who make coffee regularly, to the greeters, the office volunteers, and Religious Growth and Learning teachers – we are so very blessed. Thanks to everyone who contributes and works to make this place great. If you want to get involved, please let Rev. Scott know!

First Hour, Writing for Spiritual Growth

During First Hour at 9 a.m. on the first Sunday of each month, we will celebrate this time by placing our understanding of spirituality into poetry and prose, which adds clarity and passion to our lives. Join us in creating the world we desire through the written word.

All members and friends of the Second Unitarian Church of Omaha are welcome to participate. We welcome all sojourners who wish to share the paths on which they walk in search of enlightenment.

We have no creeds, no goals, no competitive members, and no grades. Our group's motto is "Just Write."

Our belief is the truth for each person will appear, when we write enough.

- David Martin



Treasurer's Report

By Pat Caffrey, Treasurer

Second Unitarian Church
Treasurer's Report
Month End for November 30, 2010

Wishing everyone a joyous New Year and a heartfelt thank you for your generosity in 2010!

FINANCIAL SUMMARY

	<u>November</u>	<u>Year-To-Date</u>
Income	\$14,288.02	\$93,538.53
Expenses	-\$11,496.19	-\$65,334.37
Net Over/Short	\$ 2,791.83	\$28,204.16

November Income: \$14,288.02 which included Pledge Income of \$10,056.99 (Current Year Pledge Income); Offerings of \$428.00; Anonymous Gift of \$3,500.00; Rent of \$250.00; Refund Income of \$13.03 and Transfer of \$40.00 in Registration Fees from Fund 09 RGL Children to RE Registration-Children.

YTD Pledge Income/Current Year: \$73,841.95 reflects 49.83% of \$148,196.00 Total Pledged for 2010-11.

Offerings year to date: \$2,139.12

Contribution Statements for the 2010 Tax Year will be mailed in January 2011.

If you would like more detailed financial statements, please feel free to call or contact me.

Thank you!
Treasurer
Pat Caffrey



Stewardship

By Sue Aschinger and Clyde Anderson, Stewardship Co-Chairs

We Are Family

As this article is written, it's December. What is it about this time of year that gets us in such a mood for giving? Is it because it's in front of us wherever we go? Is it because of the message of love for the season? The reminders of all that we have and all that others need?

We believe its about **connections**. We have a need to connect. Taking liberties with a famous quote, we can say, "No one is full until everyone is full."

We are family. With that as our theme for our upcoming Stewardship campaign, we need to remember all the places we can give, and how that giving supports our church family; to support our mission of programs, our staff, our facilities, or for our outreach, spreading our own message of love, growing as a "beacon of hope."

We hope as the coming Stewardship campaign unfolds, you will also feel that same need to support those connections and our church mission. To help us feel the message and to connect as a family, we have a fun evening planned for all of you, so please save the evening of **Saturday, February 26**. It's a family event with a catered buffet dinner, fun group dancing, and of course some messages about how we can all support our mission.



Come one! Come all!

SING FOR YOUR SUPPER
FREE FUN FOR EVERYONE!

Saturday, January 15, 2011
Supper at 6:00 p.m.
Program at 7:00 p.m.

What could be better than warm soup and hearty laughter with friends?

Please bring a soup or a dessert to share. Fellowship Committee will provide bread and non-alcoholic beverages. Adults are welcome to bring wine to drink and to share with other adults. All those who are 7th grade through nonagenarian are invited to share a talent by signing up for a 5-minute time slot. (Maximum: 2 slots/person.)

PERFORMERS NEEDED: Think creatively – what can you share with your Second Unitarian friends? (Performing is optional, audience members are essential as well.)

CHILDCARE: There will be a sign-up sheet in the back of the Sanctuary for those who need childcare (through 6th grade). Deadline to signup for childcare is January 9. Childcare will be available from 7-9 p.m.

Speaking of Singing -- Are You Interested in singing in our choir?

Music Director **David Plank** holds weekly choir rehearsal on Wednesday nights. The choir sings a few times (6-9) throughout the year in Sunday morning worship. If you're interested, please contact David at music@secondunitarianomaha.org with your name, what part you sing (if you know), and what experience you may have. We're looking to make the choir inclusive and as large as possible, so please consider joining the choir!

Spirituality...In Its Right Mind

By Louisa Foster

As Unitarian Universalists, we often hear the feedback that we're "too cerebral," "too intellectual," or those who felt experience, emotional connection, or ritual can be absent from our experience of the sacred.

If you would like to explore what lies beyond ideas, debate, and discussion, you are invited to deepen your spiritual experience in a unique group that will meet weekly beginning in January.

This experiential group will give your right hemisphere a chance to participate in exploring and defining your understanding of what is sacred and divine. Together, we will discover ourselves, each other, and our community using art, movement, and improvisational exercises designed to help you reconnect you with your nonlinear, non-language-based wisdom.

We will work together to understand our own personal metaphors and symbolism as well as the archetypal elements of our collective spiritual journeys. We will ask questions of ourselves and of each other and learn new ways to watch and listen for the answers.

This group is open to both older teens and adults and will meet on **Sunday afternoons from 2 to 4 p.m. in the Sanctuary, beginning on January 16**, meeting for eight sessions over nine weeks (no meeting on February 20).

If you have any questions, or if you'd like to register, please contact Louisa Foster. This group has a maximum of eighteen participants.



Religious Education

By Portia Love, Director of Religious Education



The holidays are officially upon us. I love the holidays, especially Christmas. Beyond the gift-giving (OK, I love that too. If anyone wants to see my list, be sure to see me) these are times of love, family and goodwill towards men (others).

But, I have always wondered. Why don't we extend the goodwill year-round? During the Christmas season in particular, churches will adopt families, give money, give gifts, give of themselves, give, give, give. Then when Christmas is over, we disappear. Don't the poor or struggling folks that need help during Christmas, also need help in February or May or October? Should not churches and church folk be around to assist and fellowship with people less fortunate throughout the year?

The only other time I know of, where we are so motivated to help others, is during times of disaster. For example, the earthquake in Haiti. Everyone wanted to help. The thought that continuously ran through my mind was that the people in Haiti were suffering and living in deplorable conditions long before the onset of their terrible earthquake.

We are always there for other countries. The United States is one of the richest countries in the world—for some. But there are children and families in crisis right here. In Omaha, there are children who go to bed many nights cold and hungry, or who are waiting for someone to provide them with a family and love, by adopting them. Does it matter to us that some children may be in that position not because of a parent who is unemployed, but because of a parent with a drug or alcohol habit? Or maybe a mental disability? I hope not. Children in crisis--horrendous regardless of the reasons.

Our children are educated about the religions of the world. Did you know that all religions have either "The Golden Rule" or some form of it?

I believe one of the most important parts of our children's education is to teach them about how to treat others who are less fortunate than they are; that an important part of life is to care, to give and to help others in need. By the way, I have heard that the best way to teach children anything is by example.

Love. Happiness. Blessings. Safety.

To you and yours, from me and mine, during the holiday season. And, throughout the year!

Portia's Picks for Books of the Month:

- *The Star of Melvin* (My favorite. I bought a copy for my personal children's books collection.)
- *Imani's Gift at Kwanzaa*
- *Rooftop Christmas*
- *The Mitten Tree*

portiaV. (The "V" is for Vivienne, my middle name. My mother named me after two of my aunts, but loved the different spelling of one of them and used it. I was 15 before I could spell it correctly!)



Ministry at Second Unitarian

By Reverend Scott McNeill

Here is some information on ministry and about how Second Unitarian Church of Omaha is fulfilling its mission to be a beacon of hope.

Over the past couple of months, the Board of Trustees and the Settled Minister have shared good conversations about the nature of ministry both inside the church walls and in the community.



Laura Shennum

One of our members at Second Unitarian, **Laura Shennum**, is a student at Meadville Lombard Theological School. Currently she is working at the UU congregation in Lincoln, NE, as their student minister as she fulfills her requirements for fellowship as a Unitarian Universalist minister and for her Master's of Divinity degree.

This fall, Laura met with the Unitarian Universalist Association's Regional Sub-Committee on Candidacy. This committee reads information about a student's performance and theology, their evaluations from programs like Hospital Chaplaincy, and letters of recommendation. After reading this information, they meet with potential ministers for about an hour to discuss the student's calling to ministry. In order to be a "fellowshipped" UU minister (that is, in relationship to the UUA and other UU ministers), one must meet with this committee, be approved, and then do more work and meet with the Ministerial Fellowship Committee.

We are delighted to hear that Laura received a go-ahead to proceed in ministry from the Mid-West Regional Sub-Committee on Candidacy. As part of the process, all ministers must be sponsored by a congregation that can vouch for their presence in a community setting. The Second Unitarian Church of Omaha is delighted to be able to sponsor Laura on her path to ministry and to encourage her in all of her gifts! As of November, Laura is a candidate for the Unitarian Universalist ministry and we wish her and her family well on that process.



Rev. Sarah Gettie Burks

In another bit of news, albeit similar, we are delighted to announce that the **Reverend Sarah Gettie Burks** (Meadville Lombard, M.Div. '10) has been approved by the Board of Trustees as an Affiliated Community Minister. Ministers in fellowship with the UUA need to be affiliated with a congregation for the first part of their ministries and are encouraged to do so throughout their ministry. Parish ministers, like Rev. Scott, have the privilege of easily going through this process as the nature of their work. Other ministers who pursue ministry through Chaplaincy (hospital, prison, military, hospice) or Campus Ministry or Social Justice ministry have to coordinate with a local congregation and its minister.

Affiliation means that Reverend Burks will have a specific role at the Second Unitarian Church of Omaha that covenants with the minister and the board how and when she will perform ministerial tasks (such as preaching, teaching, etc). Further, Second Unitarian will be seen in the community more broadly as her work will be an example of our commitment to be a beacon of hope.

For more information about Rev. Sarah Gettie Burks or Laura Shennum, please talk to either of them, Rev. Scott, or a member of the Board of Trustees. More information about affiliation, sponsorship, and the process of becoming a minister can also be found on the UUA's website.

In faith,

Rev. Scott



Building the Beacon

By Reverend Scott McNeill



Join us for a whole community event on **Monday, January 17, 2011** -- Martin Luther King, Jr. day!

Rev. Scott, DRE Portia Love, and the LGBTQ Welcoming Group are sponsoring "Building the Beacon" -- a night of sharing and learning about the intersections of racism, sexuality, and culture in America.

Join us at 6 p.m. for a dinner of Soul Food similar to what was shared in the Civil Rights Movement of the 50s and 60s in the South. Then, Rev. Scott will lead a brief worship followed by a program for adults, as Portia and our young Unitarian Universalists will have their own program.

This will be a great night of sharing our history, common stories, and hopes of where we want to see the world grow! This is the first "Building the Beacon" program of three that will help us work on our designation of being a Welcoming Congregation on our path to completing the new program, "Living the Welcoming Congregation!"

For questions, please contact Rev. Scott or Tammy Hunter. Please sign up for childcare by Sunday, January 9.



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.

Legal Planning for GBLT Couples and Families:
What You Should Think About If You Live in Nebraska

Tuesday, January 25, 2011

at 7:00 p.m.

First Unitarian Church Sanctuary

3114 Harney St.

Speaker: Robert Dorton

Robert Dorton, an attorney who specializes in legal issues relevant to Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, and Transgender people and their families, will give a short talk on some of the important issues and answer some general questions. Until there is equal protection under law, there are many legal issues to be negotiated for all those whose families are left out by our system.

This event is co-sponsored by Metropolitan Community Church, First Central Congregational Church, First Unitarian Church, and Second Unitarian Church.

The Art of Spirituality
January 3: Poetry



On Monday, January 3, I will be presenting the second in our series of The Art of Spirituality. Join me in a workshop writing poetry on the topic of spirituality. We will come up with possible topics together.

The workshop will be held from 6:30 to 8:00 p.m. Let us know if you will need childcare.

Please don't be concerned about your writing skills. It will be fun and I promise, you will leave the class with a poem you can be proud of!

-- Portia Love, DRE



Circle Suppers

**NEXT CIRCLE SUPPER
IS SATURDAY, JANUARY 22
SIGN UP NOW!**

The Fellowship Committee is coordinating three Circle Suppers this church year. The next is Saturday, January 22.

Attending a circle supper is a great way to get to know people from the church with whom you may not have visited much during coffee hour. These dinners are hosted by members who open their homes, provide the main dish and drinks, and host a group of 6 to 8 guests who each bring a dish to share.

Please sign up at the back of the Sanctuary and indicate if you are able to host a supper. You will be contacted to verify whether you'll be a host or guest. You may also register by contacting Judy Eller.



Mirrors of Privilege: Making Whiteness Visible Workshop

By Vicki Pratt



This year's Prairie Star District Annual Conference is in Des Moines, Iowa (also see article on next page). While making your travel arrangements consider getting to Des Moines in time to participate in Friday's Mirrors of Privilege workshop.

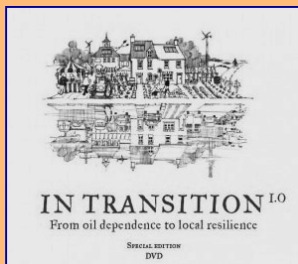
The PSD Social Justice Network and GRACE (Growing Racial And Cultural Equity) Team are sponsoring this workshop that catalyzes dialogue to undo race-based oppressions. The workshop combines video presentations, personal reflection, and small group conversations. Participants in the film talk about learned and internalized sense of privilege. Their stories reveal what is required to move through denial, defensiveness, guilt, fear, and shame into making a commitment to ending racial injustice.

This workshop is Friday, April 8, at the First Unitarian Church of Des Moines. Registration fee of \$15 includes lunch.

Join us to learn pathways to build bridges between white people and people of color, who can then have authentic relationships across a racial divide.

Details and registration are at www.psdoua.org/drupal/events/AnnualConference2011.

SOCIAL JUSTICE MOVIE JANUARY 9: "IN TRANSITION 1.0"



Join us **Sunday, January 9**, for the Social Justice Movie Event, "In Transition 1.0: From Oil Dependence to Local Resilience"

Potluck at 6 p.m., movie at 6:30, followed by a discussion led by Transition Omaha, part of a movement addressing climate change, economic instability, and Peak Oil.

About the movie: "In Transition' From oil dependence to local resilience is the first detailed film about the Transition movement filmed by those that know it best, those who are making it happen on the ground. The Transition movement is about communities around the world responding to peak oil and climate change with creativity, imagination and humor, and setting about rebuilding their local economies and communities. It is positive, solutions focused, viral and fun."

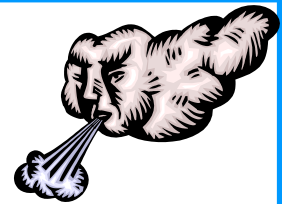
-- Julie Carda, *Care for the Environment*

PRIVACY POLICY FOR WEEKLY E-NEWS AND MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

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 both the church newsletter and weekly e-news 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.

Weather-Related Cancellations



If weather or road conditions cause services or a church event to be cancelled, we will make every attempt to notify you by:

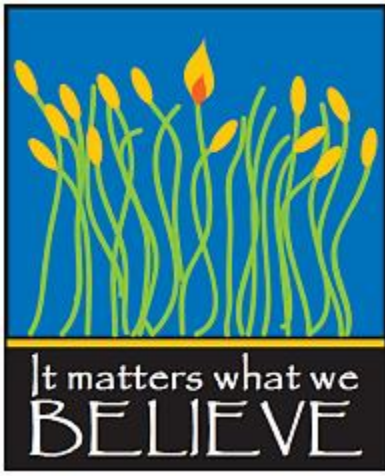
1. Sending a message to the weekly email list,
2. Placing a message on the church phone (334-0537),
3. Placing a message on the church web site, and
4. Placing a notification on Facebook.

In case of a Service cancellation, we will also contact local media with our information.



Prairie Star District Annual Conference

Des Moines, April 8-10, 2011



Our 2011 Conference theme comes from a favorite reading in our hymnal, "*It Matters What We Believe*" (#657) by a beloved UU religious educator, Sophia Lyon Fahs. It begins, "Some beliefs are like walled gardens. They encourage exclusiveness and the feeling of being especially privileged. Other beliefs are expansive and lead the way into wider and deeper sympathies." What kind of believers are we? We are our best selves when we achieve understanding and empathy. We are at our worst when we can only proclaim what we are against. How do we challenge ourselves to be our best, while avoiding the trap of being exclusive ourselves? Come and explore this theme with us. How do we articulate our individual beliefs? How do we help our children form their own moral compass? And how do we, as a church, take a public stand on ethical issues?

Keynote Speaker: Brian Eslinger, former minister of the UU Fellowship of Ames, Iowa, served there for thirteen years. He is a graduate of United Theological Seminary in the Twin Cities and a former president of Prairie Star District.

Judy Lecturer: Rev. Dr. Kendyl Gibbons is a life-long Unitarian Universalist, who currently serves as senior minister of the First Unitarian Society of Minneapolis. She graduated from the College of William and Mary and Meadville Lombard Theological School, and now teaches at United Theological Seminary of the Twin Cities and the Humanist Institute. She has served as President of the UU Ministers Association, and is a published author in *Parenting Beyond Belief* and the hymnbook *Singing the Living Tradition*.



Prairie Star District Awards Due January 31

By Karen Hirsch, Chair, PSD Awards Committee

Every spring, at the district conference, the Prairie Star District acknowledges those hard-working UUers who bring life and vitality to our congregations. Maybe this year somebody from YOUR congregation will be honored with an award. If you believe that someone from your group qualifies for one of these awards, why not nominate him/her? You can find the nomination forms at <http://www.psduua.org/Awards/Awards>.

1. **PSD Social Justice Award:** For one who witnesses to the ideals of social justice and responsibility. (youth or adult)
2. **Unsung UU Award:** For a UU whose lifetime actions inspire, support, and express Unitarian Universalism.
3. **O. Eugene Pickett Award:** For a congregation which has made an outstanding contribution to the growth of UU.
4. **Keeping the Faith Awards:** For someone who has worked to keep UU alive in his/her community and who touches the lives of congregation and community members in a positive way.
5. **Ellie Morton Award:** For a person who has made a significant contribution to UU religious education.
6. **Betty Gorshe Heritage Award:** For someone who has made a significant contribution to preserving, understanding, and celebrating our UU history.

Completed nomination forms may be sent to:
Sarah Greene, District Administrator
122 W. Franklin Ave. Suite #303
Minneapolis, MN 55404

Completed forms may also be sent to her electronically at: sgreene@psduua.org **Due date: January 31**

KIOS DRIVE IS GREAT SUCCESS!

Thanks to your generosity, we raised \$3,000 to purchase ad spots on KIOS-FM public radio. During 2011, we will have spots on All Things Considered (late afternoon weekdays) and spots on Weekend Edition on Saturday mornings.

We look forward to another great year of promoting Second Unitarian on KIOS!
-- Cheri Cody



**July 31-
August 5, 2011**

**Five Days of Fun, Learning, Fellowship,
Spirituality, PLUS Rev. Scott and Air
Conditioned Luxury**

Come to **Camp StarTrail** (between Omaha and Lincoln) for another grand adventure/retreat for UUs of all ages. Past activities have included bead-making; dream analysis; painting; quilting; survival skills; Amazing Race; sock hop; talent show; barn dance, camp fire (with s'mores); challenge courses; OWL for adults; swimming, nature hikes; ad hoc writers' group, bridge games and lots more.

Camp StarTrail pampers the camper with four housing options—meals included: (a) hotel-style luxury with private baths; (b) college dorm-style rooms with bath down the hall; (c) rustic cabins with a shower house; and, for the purist, (d) actual honest-to-goodness camp-style camping with a short walk to the rest rooms.

Plus, Rev. Scott McNeill will be the chaplain/worship leader that week!

Camp StarTrail is July 31 to August 5, 2011. Camping that fits your budget and your soul. Find out how we "pamper the camper" at www.psdoua.org/campstartrail.

Camp StarTrail is sponsored by the Prairie Star District.

Attendance

Date	Adults in Worship	Adults in R.E.	Children in R.E.	Youth in Second Circle
11/28	60	8	11	--
12/5	60	6	15	4
12/12	64	6	14	--
12/19	90	Intergenerational Service		

Women's Alliance

By Nadine Keith

The Women's Alliance will meet on Monday, January 10, in the First Unitarian Church Common Room. The social hour is at 6:30 p.m., followed by a hearty appetizer and dessert buffet. Barb Ross will present a program about the Omaha Theatre Community and what they are doing.

Reservations for the meeting should be made with Janet West by Sunday, January 9.

Meditation Reincarnated

By Kevin Dunlop

Each month, a group of church members and friends of the church meet to learn and practice the art of meditation. We study the writings of accomplished meditators and discuss how to apply these teachings in our own lives. We are now studying the book *Taking The Leap* by Pema Chodron.

Meditation Reincarnated meets on the fourth Thursday of each month at 7:30 p.m. in the Sanctuary. Our next meeting will be Thursday, January 27 (not January 20 as erroneously reported in last month's newsletter). Please join us in learning what can become a very fulfilling practice in your life. It's a wonderful way to learn relaxation skills and to grow spiritually. No previous meditative experience is required.



OTOC Update

By Vicki Pratt

Second Unitarian is a member of the local Congregation-Based Community Organizing (CBCO) group Omaha Together One Community (OTOC). OTOC Action Teams are moving ahead on issues that surfaced during recent house meetings:

- Immigration Reform is meeting with state senators to discuss strategies for stopping Arizona-type anti-immigration in Nebraska.
- Job Training and Workforce met with the head of the Midlands Workforce Development program to discuss job training programs.
- Housing and Community Revitalization met with the head of City inspections to advocate for action on sub standard buildings.
- Education will meet with leaders of Communities and Schools and the African American Achievement Council.
- Refugee Support is working on improvements to housing conditions for refugee and immigrant families.
- Community Safety is continuing contact with area police captains.

As a member of OTOC, Second Unitarian reflects the national trend. Unitarian Universalist Association President Peter Morales says that one out of every eight UU congregations is involved in community organizing. UUA Congregational Advocacy & Witness Director Susan Leslie adds, "Denomination leaders and local clergy all find that CBCO not only transforms our cities and neighborhoods, it also transforms our congregations. The sense of community that comes through working together for justice revitalizes congregations by giving congregants a shared purpose. And when we revitalize our congregations, we have the power to change the world."

Many members of our congregation have integral roles on these teams for justice in Omaha. To join us in this transformative work, contact Vicki Pratt.



Second Circle

All teens are invited to join **Second Circle**, meeting the **first and third Sundays of the month, September through May**. We meet across the street from the church, walking over together after the first portion of the worship service.

Our time is spent focused on connection: to each other, to the outer community, to the world, and to our religious and spiritual selves. We explore through discussion, ritual, and a variety of activities. All meetings are facilitated by two adult volunteers from our church community.

Please refer questions to Gay Abraham or Anita Jeck.



YRUU & Parents of Teens

The YRUU (Young Religious Unitarian Universalists) is a youth group for 7th - 12th grade youth from First and Second Unitarian Churches of Omaha. The group meets every Wednesday during the school year, September through May, from 7 - 8:30 p.m. at First Unitarian Church, 3114 Harney Street.

For more information, contact Ben Wallace or Shawne Coonfare, YRUU Leaders, or Cheryl Wallace, Youth Director, at OmahaYRUU@gmail.com or 402-345-3039

A group for parents of youth in grades 7-12 meets monthly on the **first Wednesday from 7 to 8:30 p.m.** at First Unitarian Church.

The group, for parents from both Omaha UU churches, will be facilitated by Joel Haskins from Second Unitarian. The group meets during the YRUU time but your teen does not have to attend YRUU for you to attend the parents' group.

Contact Cheryl Wallace at 402-345-3039 or dre@firstuuomaha.org if you have questions.



Second Unitarian Church Calendar

January, 2011

Sat., Jan. 1 New Year's Day

Mon., Jan. 3, 6:30 p.m. The Art of Spirituality (DNW)

Tue., Jan. 4, 7 p.m., Lifespan Religious Growth & Learning (DN)

Wed., Jan. 5, 7 p.m., Social Justice Coordinating Council (DNW)

Thu., Jan 6., 6:30 p.m. Fellowship (offsite)
6:30 p.m., Stewardship (DNW)
7 p.m., Executive Committee (MO)
7 p.m. Men's Council (offsite)

Fri., Jan. 7, 7 p.m., LGBTQ Welcoming Group (offsite)

Sun., Jan. 9, 9 a.m., Caring Committee (DNW)
12 noon, Getting to Know UU for Newcomers (MO)
6 p.m., Social Justice Movie & Potluck (WH)

Mon., Jan. 10, 6:30 p.m., Women's Alliance (offsite)
7 p.m. OTOC Steering Committee (offsite)

Tue., Jan. 11, 7 p.m., Membership Committee (FH)

Wed., Jan. 12, 10 a.m. Communications Committee (DNW)
6:30 p.m. Finance Coordinating Council (DNW)

Thu., Jan. 13, 7 p.m., Board of Trustees (DNW)

Sat., Jan. 15, 6 p.m. Sing for Your Supper (WH)

Sun., Jan. 16, 2 p.m., Spirituality in its Right Mind (SA)

Mon., Jan. 17 Martin Luther King, Jr. Day
Church Office Closed
6 p.m. Building the Beacon (DNW)
6:30 p.m. Library Committee (FH)

Thu., Jan. 20., 7 p.m., Music & Worship (offsite - Abraham offices)

Sat., Jan. 22, 6 p.m. Circle Supper

Sun., Jan. 23, 2 p.m., Spirituality in its Right Mind (SA)

Mon., Jan. 24, 6:30 p.m. Stewardship (DNW)

Tue., Jan. 25, 7 p.m., Program Council (DNW)
7 p.m., GBLT Legal Planning (offsite)
7:30 p.m., Blackstone Book Club (FH)

Thu., Jan. 27, 7:30 p.m., Meditation Reincarnated (SA)

Sun., Jan. 30, 12 noon Visiting Steward Training (SA)
2 p.m., Spirituality in its Right Mind (SA)

Regular Events:

Sundays, 9 a.m., First Hour
Sundays, 10:30 a.m., Worship Service
Sundays, 11:30 a.m., Fellowship & Refreshments
First and Third Sundays*, Second Circle (offsite)
(*JANUARY ONLY: January 9 & 23)
Second and Third Sundays, 9:30 a.m., Children's Choir
Second Sunday, Noon, Getting to Know UU (MO)
Tuesdays, 12 noon, Lunch with the Church Staff
Wednesdays, 7 p.m., Choir Rehearsal (SA)
Wednesdays, 7 p.m., YRUU @ First Unitarian
First Wednesday, 7 p.m., Parent Support @ First U
15th of Every Month: Second Thoughts deadline

Calendar Codes:

RE=Religious Education, (FH)=First Hour Area, (SA)=Sanctuary, (DN)=Downstairs, (DNW) = Downstairs Worship Area (OS)=Offsite, (WH)=Whole Church, (PR)=Private Rental, (KI)=Küchen, (MO)=Minister's office: scheduled by Minister only.

Save These Dates Next Month:

February 7, The Art of Spirituality
February 12, Visionary Donor Event
February 13, Social Justice Movie Night & Potluck
February 20, Building the Beacon
February 26, Fellowship Pledge Kickoff Dinner

Let us know how you use this calendar. Do you post it on your refrigerator? Do you use it to remind you of a meeting you need to attend? Or perhaps do you prefer to check the online calendar which is updated regularly, not just once a month like this calendar in the newsletter? Please let us know how important this calendar is to you, and if you have suggestions for improvements. **Thank you!**

All events are subject to change.

To check the latest church calendar updates anytime, visit www.SecondUnitarianOmaha.org and click on CALENDAR OF EVENTS in the left-hand column, or call the church if there is a question.

Contact Us

Staff

Church Phone (402) 334-0537

Rev. Scott McNeill, Minister

Office Hours: Tue. through Thu. 10 a.m. - 2 p.m.

Other hours by appointment

minister@secondunitarianomaha.org

Portia Love, Director of Religious Education

Office hours to be announced

dre@secondunitarianomaha.org

Gary Emenitove, Office Administrator,

Office Hours: Mon. through Thu. 9:30 a.m. - 3 p.m.

Fri. 9:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.

info@secondunitarianomaha.org

David Plank, Director of Music

music@secondunitarianomaha.org

Leslie Harvey, Childcare Coordinator

childcare@secondunitarianomaha.org

Second Thoughts

Staff: Rev. Scott McNeill, Nancy Amsler, Richard Koelling, Betty Segell, Gary Emenitove

Board of Trustees

E mail: board@secondunitarianomaha.org

Trustees with terms expiring June 30, 2011

Carol Johnson

Tom Peterson, Chair

Trustees with terms expiring June 30, 2012

Kathy Bell

Lorraine Duggin, Secretary

Don Shennum

Trustees with terms expiring June 30, 2013

Cheri Cody, Vice-Chair

Laura Neece-Baltaro

Nancy VanderSluis

Appointed by the Board of Trustees

Pat Caffrey, Treasurer

Second Unitarian Church Of Omaha

3012 South 119th Street

Omaha, Nebraska 68144

(402) 334-0537

www.secondunitarianomaha.org

Committees

Building and Grounds

Rick Bell, Chair

Caring

Jill Archer, Chair

Committee on Ministry

Richard Koelling, Contact

Communications

Nancy Amsler, Chair

Denominational Connections

Cheri Cody and Tom Peterson, Contacts

Fellowship

Janet Nichols and Betty Segell, Co-Chairs

Finance Coordinating Council

Vicki Pratt, Chair

Endowment Fund

Stu Burns, Chair

Fundraising

Darrel Draper, Contact

Stewardship

Clyde Anderson and Sue Aschinger, Co-Chairs

Library

Melissa Konecky, Chair

Lifespan Religious Growth and Learning

Anita Jeck and Jaime Short, Co-Chairs

Membership

Position available

Music & Worship

Steve Abraham and Julie Kirn, Co-Chairs

Aesthetics/Second Showing

Dodie Robison and Vija Kopecky, Contacts

Nominations/Leadership Development

Steve Abraham, Chair

Personnel

Sue Aschinger, Contact

Social Justice Coordinating Council

Pat Caffrey, Chair

Care for the Environment

Julie Carda, Chair

Closing the Economic Gap

Pat Caffrey and Cheri Cody, Contacts

Welcoming Congregation / LGBTQ Beacon

Tammy Hunter, Contact

Technology

Bill Kuhn, Chair

Writing for Spiritual Growth

David Martin, Contact

Many church communications are sent via e-mail. A weekly e-news update is transmitted each Wednesday. If you have no access to a computer, please let the church office administrator know the best way to convey information to you.

Second Unitarian Church

3012 S. 119th Street

Omaha, NE 68144

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

**MISSION STATEMENT
SECOND UNITARIAN CHURCH OF OMAHA**

“Second Unitarian Church of Omaha is an inclusive and nurturing religious community engaged in thoughtful pursuit of truth and meaning. Our mission is to grow as a beacon of hope – sharing a vision of a world community that embraces diversity and promotes justice and respectful stewardship within the interdependent web of existence.”

Adopted May 16, 2004