



Second Unitarian Church of Omaha

Second Thoughts

February, 2015

Join Us This Sunday!

Worship Services
9:30 and 11:30 a.m.

**Fellowship and
Refreshments**
10:30 - 11:15 a.m.

***Build Your
Own Theology
Adult Religious
Education***
(see page 6)

***Service Learning
Project***
Sunday, February 1
(see page 7)

"Inequality for All"
Sunday, March 1
(see page 9)

***Stewardship
Kickoff Party***
Saturday, March 7
(see page 5)

- February 1 Music & Worship
The Education of God
It's beginning of creation - and all of the follies and foibles that Adam and Eve can stumble into. Join us for an entertaining Sunday and another take on the creation stories.
- February 8 Rev. Frieda Gillespie
Belonging: The Meaning of Membership
What does it mean to belong to a UU church and what makes us a UU? Membership is a process from lesser to greater commitment; so why should you commit to a church, this church?
- February 15 Rev. Frieda Gillespie
The Love That Binds Us
Songwriter Dar Williams described falling in love as falling from a great and gruesome height. What is the love that captures us and can ultimately save us? This will be an intergenerational service.
- February 22 Rev. Frieda Gillespie
The Development of Compassion
Karen Armstrong, scholar, identified the fact that we can learn to be compassionate and that learning in itself is a spiritual practice.



In the Interim

By Rev. Frieda Gillespie



Zen Buddhist teacher Thich Nhat Hanh wrote, “We often ask, ‘What’s wrong?’ Doing so, we invite painful seeds of sorrow to come up and manifest. We feel suffering, anger, and depression, and produce more such seeds. We would be much happier if we tried to stay in touch with the healthy, joyful seeds inside of us and around us. We should learn to ask, ‘What’s not wrong?’ and be in touch with that. There are so many elements in the world and within our bodies, feelings, perceptions, and consciousness that are wholesome, refreshing, and healing. If we block ourselves, if we stay in the prison of sorrow, we will not be in touch with these healing elements.”

Behind any negative emotion lies something that we want. We can get caught up in the idea of who is to blame that we don’t have it or blame ourselves for not having it, but all of that is a distraction from the basic desire behind the complaint. If we stay with what that is and focus on ‘what is not wrong’ around us, we have the energy to create something new. And by recognizing the good in what is, we don’t lose things from the past that still serve us well.

These are some of the basic principles of Appreciative Inquiry, where by identifying that which you appreciate, you are able to build on and promote what is good. This gives us positive energy to build the future of the church.

In faith,
Frieda

SAVE THE DATE!

**Plan to join us for the Silent / Live Auction with entertainment, food, and fellowship! Saturday, April 11, from 6—9 p.m.
Watch for more information coming soon!**



Share the Plate for February: Nebraska Humane Society

One half of Second Unitarian's offering received in February will go to the Nebraska Humane Society.

The Nebraska Humane Society (NHS) mission is *to protect, save, and enrich the lives of animals in the communities they serve*. The organization was originally established for the protection of both animals and children. In the mid-1940’s, state agencies began to embrace child welfare issues, leaving NHS as the sole organization within the Omaha area designated for the protection of animals. They provide education, give sanctuary to animals, encourage adoptions and promote responsible pet ownership. By providing animal control services to much of the metro area, they also serve the citizens of our community. Visit www.nehumanesociety.org. Also read about our February Service Learning Project with NHS on page 7.

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



Planks and Slivers from the Board

By Craig Piquette, Chair, Board of Trustees



State of the Congregation

January is almost gone and it feels like early April (Januril, I think it's called) and I feel inspired to write a State of the Congregation address. No, it won't be an hour long! The congregation recently had a Town Hall meeting to discuss our progress thus far this year, to review how we are fulfilling our strategic plan, to have a conversation about building and strengthening connections and the pros and cons regarding two worship services on Sunday. This State of the Congregation address will reflect some of what occurred during that Town Hall meeting, a celebration of our accomplishments, a frank assessment of where we are, and a call for some shared sacrifice.

Pat Caffrey gave an excellent summary of our successes these past six months and it is clear that the energy level in the church is rising. We have accomplished many of the organizational tasks outlined in the strategic plan and the discussion about building connections revolved primarily around encouraging members and friends to pursue their personal ministry within the church whether it was volunteering for the choir, making coffee on Sunday, or fixing up the building on church work days. Every one of us has a talent which we can share that will contribute to the overall health of our congregation, and we need everyone to step forward to share when asked. It is clear that as a congregation we need to reach out more to build those connections with members and friends. We need more adult spiritual education and there are a number of programs, including Building Your Own Theology, that will be starting soon. Please look for those notices and if you are a committee chair or lead a task force, please look for those new faces and ask, "Would you join us in completing this task?" whatever it is you may have to do that can help build connections.

It is clear that a number of members and friends feel a loss of connection since going to two services. The reasons for two services were reiterated at the meeting but the primary reason is that even at our current size, our building no longer serves who we are and is too small to accommodate who we want to be. A few years ago, there was talk of putting the church building up for sale, but other priorities got in the way and that never happened. Until we list the church building for sale, we will never know how much our church is worth, and we will not know the true cost of moving to a building that better suits our needs. The time has come to find out, and the Board will soon reestablish the Building Planning Committee which will explore engaging a commercial realtor to put the building up for sale and begin the search for more suitable space.

I said that I would keep this under an hour and there are many other issues which will need to be addressed before we can move, but the first step is determining the real estate value of our building and exploring financing of a new building. The Board will continue to have regular conversations with the congregation about these issues and will post the minutes of these for all to see. Our next Town Hall will be **April 26** and we will update the entire congregation on our progress. The shared sacrifice will come when it is time to volunteer for various tasks and when it is time to raise money for a new building. We need your commitment to Second Unitarian now more than ever.

Craig



Do you play an instrument or sing?

Would you enjoy performing a selection during church services?

We are looking for musicians from the congregation to participate in the music of our services. You don't have to be a professional. If you're interested, please contact Donna Zebolsky at music@2uomaha.org or on Sunday to discuss your music and arrange a date for you to play.



Treasurer's Report

By Vicki Pratt, Treasurer

December Income and Expenses

This was a good month for income.

	December, 2014	Year To Date
Income	\$23,181.31	\$126,940.49 (54% of budget)
Expense	20,391.20	112,978.18 (48% of budget)
Net Over/Short	+\$3,202.11	+ \$13,962.31

Income came from Stewardship Campaign Pledges (\$21,412); Fundraising (\$349.26 – purchases from Amazon.com through church website plus \$304.78 that will be forwarded to UUSC for Guest At Your Table donations); Offering (\$1,255). No income or pledges have been received toward the \$8,000 budgeted for new pledges from new members this year; no income or new pledges were received toward the \$2,000 budgeted for new pledges from current members this month.

If you would like to see more detailed financial reports, you can join the Finance Committee, contact me at treasurer@2uomaha.org.

Nominations & Leadership Development

By Janet Nichols

Nominations and Leadership Development will be contacting potential candidates for upcoming Board, Endowment, and Nominations vacancies up for vote at the Annual Meeting this spring.

If you would like to serve or know of a congregational member who would be an effective addition to these committees, please send nominations to Tom Peterson, Janet Nichols, or Carol Johnson.

Please be involved in the leadership of our church. We are also recruiting one person to attend the MidWest Leadership School held July 19 through 25 at Beloit College in Beloit, WI. Again, if you have a nominee, please suggest the name to one of the people on the Nominations and Leadership Development Committee.

Women's Alliance

By Kathi Oliver

Women from First and Second Unitarian are invited to attend the Women's Alliance get-together on **Monday, February 9**. Socializing and beverages start at 6:30 p.m. with dinner following at 7.

Please bring a poem, whether you have written it or just love it. This month we will be sharing our favorite poems and hearing some poems written by our special guest, Catharine Dixon from First Unitarian Church.

We ask for \$12 which goes to the cost of dinner and our Merritt Education Fund. If this will be your first time attending, please be our guest.

Lois Norris and Barb Dewell will be making their Fantastic February Ham Dinner. The menu will include elegant potatoes, green beans, and Jell-O salad. The vegetarian dish is still to be determined.

It is important to RSVP with an entrée choice so Lois and Barb know how much food to prepare. Contact wa@firstuomaha.org and please include your entrée option.



Stewardship Campaign Kickoff Party

By Cheri Cody, Chair, Stewardship Committee

United in Purpose - Connected in Love
Saturday, March 7, 7:00 p.m.
Miracle Hill Golf Club
1401 N 120 St.
Childcare available at Second Unitarian



Our theme for this year's stewardship campaign is *United in Purpose - Connected in Love*. After many conversations with members and friends, we learned that the feeling of community and mission that you have within the church is what you most appreciate. We recognize that with this theme so we can continue to support these important priorities.

Come to the campaign kickoff party where you can socialize, be entertained and eat great desserts. Watch your mailbox for a letter with more details.

If you will need childcare, please contact Molly Kliment-Jenkins at dre@2uomaha.org.

Retirees' Group

By Carol Johnson

Please join Second Unitarian Retirees on **Tuesday, February 10, at 1:00 p.m.** for a presentation about Humanities Nebraska. Mary Yager, Associate Director, will describe the projects and programs sponsored and conducted by the organization. Nebraska Humanities inspires and enriches personal and public life by offering opportunities to thoughtfully engage with history and culture.

Second Unitarian Retirees Group meets monthly for socialization, fun, personal growth and learning.

PRIVACY POLICY FOR CHURCH PUBLICATIONS

As stated in church policies: *Respect for the privacy of members, friends, and visitors is a primary consideration. When newsletter submissions contain personal information (phone number, street address, email address, etc.), it is the author's responsibility to get the subject's permission to publish this information.* Since many of our communications are transmitted electronically and information therein may more easily be re-transmitted, it's essential that any personal information be approved for inclusion.

In general, it's preferable to omit personal information, but in those cases where it's necessary (such as a location for an offsite meeting), those who submit articles should ask for permission to publish the personal information. An alternative is "Please call or email the church office for contact information." Contact the Office Administrator for more information.

Regarding published photographs: If you do not want your photo published (including in the newsletter or on the website), please inform the Office Administrator in writing. Thanks!



Religious Growth & Learning

By Molly Kliment-Jenkins, Director of Religious Education



The Month To Love Learning!

February is the month of Valentine’s Day, and, as a UU, what’s not to love... about learning! So central to our values is learning that we even have a principle devoted to it: a free and responsible search for truth and learning (#4).

Now that we are free from the chaos that is the holidays, the transition to a new minister, etc., we are ready to launch the first of our adult RE offerings.

Build Your Own Theology (BYOT)

As Unitarian Universalists, we are all comfortable with the way we each march to the beat of our own drummer. But what if you’re having a hard time figuring out your personal beat?! That’s what Build Your Own Theology (BYOT) is made around. During the course of this class, you will be posed five exercises that will help you figure out where you stand on weighty subjects like ethics, ultimate reality, history, human nature and religious meaning.

This BYOT class will encompass six sessions of two hours each on two Mondays a month — February 9 and 16, March 9 and 16, and April 6 and 13. The class will be led by Rev. Frieda. We will offer two times: afternoon (2 p.m. to 4 p.m.) and evening (7 p.m. to 9 p.m.).

The sign up deadline has passed, but if you haven’t registered yet, [contact me](#) and we’ll fit you in!



In Joy for our Shared Journey,
Molly

Many of you graciously contributed to our Pine Ridge Service Learning Projects in November and December. **Our congregation did a fantastic job meeting -- and exceeding -- our 100 item goal and gifts for the elders.** We asked and you rocked! We are so proud of what we were able to send.

A huge thanks goes to Joan Benziger, who offered to drive to Pine Ridge to deliver our items. Her daughter was her copilot. They headed west with a Prius loaded nearly to the top! They had drop-offs at the youth center for the Elders’ Christmas Party and then, many more miles (and hours) away, at the elementary school to drop off supplies for their parent pantry.

Please, take a moment to thank Joan and her daughter for their efforts. It was a two-day project for them!



As a reminder, Service Learning Projects are part of our lifespan learning. They help each of us get out into the community and learn more. As adults, we are also constantly learning and Service Learning Projects aren’t just for the kids...they’re here for us, too!



Second Circle Teen Movie Nights

By Anita Meyer

Selections for the first half of the calendar year for Second Circle Movie Night have been laid out and were announced at our January meeting. Titles were nominated by the teens and those chosen reflect or raise issues related to our UU principles and present good themes for discussion.

So many good ideas were provided for movies, that we are working on a page for the church website so we can share that list along with a list of movies we've watched and discussed in the past with others.

The Second Circle Movie Night is generally the third Sunday of each month at 4:30 p.m. Come and enjoy snacks and pizza along with the movie. Our discussion is led by our own Bob Fischbach, movie reviewer for the Omaha World-Herald.

On **Sunday, February 15, at 4:30 p.m.**, we will be viewing and discussing the movie *Iron Jawed Angels*. The film follows political suffragist leaders Alice Paul and Lucy Burns as they use peaceful and effective nonviolent strategies, tactics, and dialogues to revolutionize the American feminist movement to grant women the right to vote.

Movies for the months ahead include:

March: *Kidnapped for Christ*

April: *Remember the Titans*

May: *Kundun*

June: *Gandhi*

February Service Learning Project

By Molly Kliment-Jenkins

The next Service Learning Project will be at the Nebraska Humane Society (NHS) just east of 90th and Fort.

We will meet in the Auditorium on **Sunday, February 1, at 10:30 a.m. (PLEASE NOTE: this is on the FIRST Sunday of the month).**

Alex Nather -- a UU herself and former office administrator here at Second Unitarian -- will share some information about the NHS, and then we will get a "Behind The Scenes" tour of their facility. If you've been on this tour before, you know the highlight is their massive washer and dryer!

If you have any leftover fabric, fleece or socks (especially fun, patterned ones) please bring them. We will be making kitty sweaters, doggie bandanas and fleece toys. They will be so cute the dogs and cats will fight over them like... cats and dogs.

People of all ages are welcome (as always) to join us - Service Learning Projects are a part of our lifespan programming.

Some other things the NHS is always looking for that you can donate and/or bring: blankets & towels, 15" crocheted squares, Boomer Balls & Kongs, cat toys, puppy/kitten formula, soy infant formula, clear Rubbermaid tubs, peanut butter, exam gloves, distilled water, canned cat food, yarn, box fans, Ziploc freezer bags, fleece toys, gauze rolls, permanent markers, Vienna sausages or cheap hot dogs for training, and canned cat food.



Building & Grounds

By Clyde Anderson & Tom Rundquist

Maintaining Safe Power to Our Church

During the Fall Church Cleanup, we discovered that the anchor plate on the roof that supports the power line to the church had come loose. After consulting with several electrical contractors, we learned that current Omaha Building Code doesn't allow roof anchors. Cost to bring the power line up to code would range from \$5,000 to \$10,000 or more! Building and Grounds volunteers decided to make our own repairs to the anchor plate, installing new longer screws and sealing the plate and holes to prevent water from entering the roof. We are confident the repairs will last for several years, and the roof anchor system is grandfathered under the old building code.

The electrical contractors visiting the church, consulting on the roof anchor problem, noticed that the circuit breaker box in the Nursery was a model that was subject to a recall because some circuit breakers by that manufacturer fail to trip when there is a short circuit, thus possibly causing fires. B&G recommended to the Board of Trustees that the box be replaced, and that was accomplished in December by a licensed electrician at a cost of \$400 plus \$110 to repair the drywall around the new box. Thanks to Cheri Cody and Tom Peterson who recommended contractors who did this work at very reasonable costs.

Affordable Maintenance Solutions (AMS) is our contract snow removal contractor again this winter. Although there haven't been any heavy snows yet, several light snows have resulted in icy conditions on the parking lot and walks. AMS has done an excellent job so far, clearing the snow and spreading salt and sand to make the area as safe as possible. Please notify Tom Rundquist or Clyde Anderson if you witness unsafe conditions. Supplies of snow melt and sand are located in the foyer under the coat rack.

Blackstone Book Club

By Gwen Eurich

The Blackstone Book Club continues to meet at a new time on the **fourth Tuesday of the month at the church from 1:30 to 3:00**. On February 24 we'll discuss *Wolf Hall* by Hillary Mantel and on March 24, *Baker's Daughter* by Sarah McCoy. We hope you will attend. Bring a question about the book which you would like discussed.

The Pride Players 2015 Performances

By Mary Anne Chisholm, LGBTQ Welcoming Congregation Committee

The Pride Players' 2015 Performances will be
Thursday, February 5, and Saturday, February 7, 7:00 p.m., \$6,
Sunday, February 8, 4:30 p.m., \$6, and
Sunday, February 8, 7:00 p.m., for PFLAG, \$20.
at the Rose Theater upstairs in the Hitchcock Theater, 2001 Farnam St.

The group uses improvisation to create songs, poetry, monologues, and skits that explore what it means to be a gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgendered, or straight-allied teen in Omaha.

Pride Players has been honored by many groups including The National Education Association, Heartland Pride, and American Alliance for Theater and Education

Tickets are available through The Rose Box Office at 402-345-4849 or at the door on the day of show.



Social Justice at Second Unitarian

By Cheri Cody

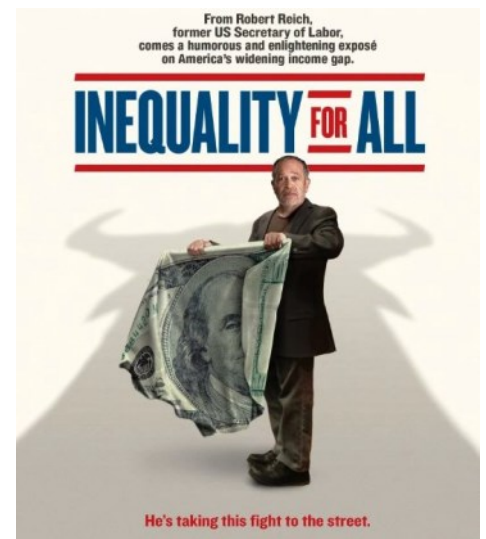
The Social Justice Committee is dedicated to providing education inside and outside the church, advocating for issues that fulfill our mission and values of Unitarian Universalism, and working directly with ministries in the community.

See information below on the showing of the movie *Inequality for All* which is part of *Escalating Inequality*, this year's proposed Congregational Study/Action Issue (CSAI). CSAIs are issues selected by Unitarian Universalist member congregations for four years of study, reflection, and action.



Second Unitarian had a table at the Interdenominational Ministerial Alliance (IMA) Martin Luther King Luncheon on January 19. We sang, prayed, and listened to a dynamic speaker. The president of the IMA expressed his appreciation to us for participating in this great annual celebration. **The Social Justice Committee meets on the third Sunday of the month at 12:30 p.m. after the second service—the next date is February 15.** We have a light lunch while we meet. All interested or curious people are welcome.

The Social Justice Committee presents the film
Inequality for All
featuring former Secretary of Labor Robert Reich.
Join us on **Sunday, March 1 at 5 p.m.**, as part of the
Unitarian Universalist Association's Congregational
Study/Action Issue on Economic Inequality.
For more information, visit inequalityforall.com.





2015 Community Garden Plots Now Available

By Marco Ballarin

The Community Garden committee is soliciting applications for the garden plots located north of the church.

The plots are the same size as last year: 8 feet by 8 feet, approximately. The expectations from growers are:

1. All crops are to be grown organically
2. There is a \$10 fee associated with each plot to reimburse the church for watering costs
3. Growers must be willing to share watering and other gardening responsibilities
4. Growers must sign a liability waiver and two gardening agreements to have access to the plots.

There are a total of 14 plots available, and there is a limit of 2 plots per grower. If interested, please contact Marco Ballarin to receive an application, or attend our first Garden meeting on **Saturday, February 21, 10 a.m., downstairs at church.**

Any plots not assigned to the members of our congregation by March 31 will be made available to the wider Omaha community.

Regional Assembly to Explore New Era of UUism

From the MidAmerica Region

Join fellow UUs the weekend of April 17-19, 2015, in Naperville, Illinois (a western suburb of Chicago) for **Regional Assembly 2015**. It will be a chance to be together as one region to explore “The New in a New Era of Unitarian Universalism” with presentations by two major speakers: the Rev. Rosemary Bray McNatt and the Rev. Dr. Marlin Lavanhar.

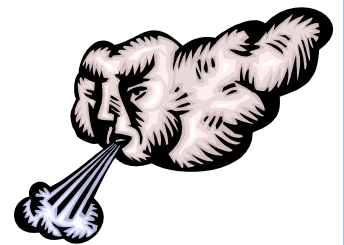
You can benefit from workshops designed to strengthen your congregation, deepen your social justice work, and enrich you on a personal level. Come and experience the Regional Business Meeting, good food, and time for meeting new friends and old from congregations across our great region, culminating with the joy of shared worship and musical celebration on Sunday morning.

Visit <http://www.midamericauua.org/events/regional-assembly>. **Early registration discount ends March 15.** MidAmerica Region is building a new era in Unitarian Universalism, where UUs visibly live our faith, create connections, grow our membership, and welcome all persons who share our UU values.

Weather-Related Cancellations

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

1. Placing a message on the church phone (402-334-0537),
2. Sending a message to the **weekly email** list,
3. Sending a message on **Facebook**, and
4. Placing a message on the church website (www.2Uomaha.org).



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

If you arrive at church and experience patches of ice on the walks and parking lot, deicer and sand are in the foyer. Feel free to use them or alert a member of Building & Grounds to treat the ice. A shovel and broom are also available for snow, with more shovels and brooms in the furnace room.



Membership Journeys

By Kathy Bell, Chair, Membership Committee

Pathways to Membership Class Moved to February 7

Are you thinking about becoming a member of Second Unitarian Church? We invite all who are interested in membership to participate in our next “Pathways to Membership” class on **Saturday, February 7, from 8:45 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.**

After a tasty breakfast, you will learn about the history of Unitarian Universalism and of this church, be given the opportunity to share a few words about your religious journeys with each other, hear about our ministries, and learn about the benefits and expectations of church membership. We will wrap up the morning with lunch and fellowship with several church leaders. Some find this a meaningful time to become a member so an opportunity to sign the Membership Book will be provided at the end of lunch.

To reserve a seat, please contact Katie Tessin at membership@2uomaha.org by Sunday, February 1, and also indicate if you will need childcare.

Join Us for Newcomers Lunch Bunch

We invite newcomers to join us for lunch at a local restaurant on the **second Sunday of each month at 12:45 p.m.** Newcomers can find a Lunch Bunch coupon for one free lunch for their entire family in their guest packets. Lunch Bunch is a great way to get to know some of our members and to ask questions about Unitarian Universalism and this church. Please check with the Welcome Desk staff for details.

Greetings from Joan Busacca

Former member Joan Busacca sends greetings from New Jersey. She misses Second Unitarian, but she enjoys living within a few blocks of her brother, good transportation, and a senior center.

Attendance

Date	Adults in Worship	Adults in R.E.	Children in R.E.	Service Learning
12/28	40	2	6	—
1/4	42	10	10	—
1/11	110	9	13	—
1/18	81	7	8	—

Second Unitarian Church of Omaha
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www.2Uomaha.org

Staff

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Donna Zebolsky, *Music Director*

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Katie Tessin, *Volunteer Connections Coordinator*

membership@2uomaha.org

Pam Curtiss-Smith, *Nursery Supervisor*

Second Thoughts Staff: Rev. Frieda Gillespie,
 Nancy Amsler, Richard Koelling, Betty Segell,
 Tom Peterson, Gary Emenitove

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