



Second Unitarian Church of Omaha

Second Thoughts

June/July, 2015

Join Us This Sunday!

Worship Services

10 a.m.

**Service Learning
Project**

Sunday, June 7
(see page 9)

**Heartland Pride
Parade and Festival**
June 18-20
(see page 6)

**Family Fun Night
Summer Potluck**
Saturday, June 20,
6 to 8:30 p.m.
(see page 2)

**Awakening the
Dreamer Seminar**
Saturday, June 13,
3 pm
(see page 10)

June 7
10:00

Rev. Frieda Gillespie

Forgiveness, Retribution, and the Death Penalty

Three years after the Boston Marathon bombing, Bostonians are reeling from the pronouncement of the death sentence for the perpetrator. What is the death penalty for?

June 14
10:00

Rev. Frieda Gillespie

Good Heavens!

"We build heaven out of our joys, suffering, grief, and experiences..." wrote Henry Ward Beecher. Let's look at some of the ways we imagine heaven and what desires these visions satisfy.

June 21
10:00

Carla/Bill Kuhn

Gender Identity, A Journey of Discovery

Carla/Bill will relate the experiences of trying to find comfort in the real world and one's own skin. A story of how feeling and being different from a very young age, set me on a path of trying to navigate between my desires or conforming to the gender assigned at birth.

June 28
10:00

Lorraine Duggin

The Music of Carolyn McDade

Some of UU's most frequently sung hymns were composed by this artist. We will look at her background and sing the songs from our hymnal(s) while exploring how McDade's lifelong social activism contributed to the composition and reception of her beautiful and beloved music.

(July Service descriptions continued on page 5)

Second Thoughts is a publication of Second Unitarian Church of Omaha.

Please send articles and submissions to info@2Uomaha.org.

Deadline is the fifteenth of each month.



In the Interim

By Rev. Frieda Gillespie



Summer is a time of outdoor fun, exploration and adventure, especially for children. I remember long, lazy days with neighborhood friends and the inevitable family vacation. This summer, Jennifer and I are going camping, just the two of us, at Acadia State Park, a beautiful island park off the coast of Maine.

Jennifer, Tim, Pablo and Ben will be working and Julia will be doing the “Save the Bay Swim” across Narragansett Bay in Rhode Island among other things. I’ll be preparing for next year, doing lots of house projects and finishing up a quilt that’s been lingering for seven years.

Summer is also a fertile time to reflect on ways to improve the church. What five things would you like to see accomplished in the next 5-7 years? Don’t hesitate to share your thoughts.

I look forward to our last three services, June 7, 14, and 21, and seeing you all in the fall. I’ll leave for home on June 22 and return to Omaha in mid-August. I’d be very happy to hear from any of you should you wish to get in touch, and I will be available for emergencies. Most of you I’ll see on September 13 for the Water Communion Service that gathers us all together again and begins the church year. The Music and Worship Committee has planned some wonderful, not-to-be-missed, lay-led services for the summer.

Whatever you do, stay safe, be well, care for each other, and wear sunscreen!

In faith,
Frieda

FAMILY FUN NIGHT SUMMER POTLUCK!

Join your friends **Saturday night, June 20, 6:00 to 8:30 p.m.** for FOOD and FUN!

We’ll meet downstairs and on the east lawn — bring lawn chairs if you wish.

We’ll have fun activities outside for all ages!

Please bring a dish to share that can serve 12 people.

You won’t want to miss the fun!



Share the Plate for June and July will be announced in the Weekly Enews and in your Order of Service

One half of Second Unitarian’s offering received goes to our Share the Plate recipient.

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



In this, my last ‘Planks’ as board chair, I want to review some of this board’s accomplishments and outline my vision for the future of Second Unitarian. I know that this vision may not be shared and as such may never come to pass but it is important to dream. My hope is that by providing a picture of what might be, enough people will recall what the serpent said to Eve in George B. Shaw’s *Back to Methuselah* as paraphrased by Robert F. Kennedy: “Some people see things that are and ask why?, I dream things that never were and say, why not?”

The board developed three goals this year and those have been outlined in the annual report. Briefly, we wanted to build a culture where everyone knew how they were fulfilling the mission of the church, build greater connections within the church community, and to celebrate the commitment to Second Unitarian. We initiated regular Town Hall meetings to communicate directly with the congregation, to celebrate recent happenings and to encourage involvement in all the great work the congregation is doing. We have explored entering into developmental ministry and communicated why this is an important next step for the congregation. We have initiated the work to determine the value of our building and have begun the process of securing financial backing for resources to purchase a new building that serves our needs. Finally, we have established regular meetings with the leadership of First Unitarian to coordinate our activities and raise the profile of Unitarian Universalism in Omaha.

My vision for Second Unitarian is that in the next six months, we will complete our work on our goals for developmental ministry. I hope that we can engage every member and affiliate in this work and build a common identity and vision of Second Unitarian. Everyone should be able to say to neighbors and friends, this is why I belong to Second Unitarian and this is how we play a critical role in the life of Omaha and the world.

I envision that in a year or two, through the efforts of teams of individuals, we would develop a robust series of adult spiritual education offerings. These would include a growing meditation group, more Circle Suppers, Reading Roundtables utilizing a common book to expand spiritual growth, more Building Your Own Theology classes, discussion groups to explore our spiritual roots, and providing a church home for the Writing for Spiritual Growth group. These groups would meet in members’ homes and at the church on various days of the week. Saturdays would be utilized for service learning projects or for giving back to Omaha through volunteer work. Sundays could be utilized for joint adult/child service learning projects involving the whole congregation, but time would be reserved for worship: an opportunity for the community to come together and celebrate our faith and our commitment to Unitarian-Universalism.

If we do these things and are successful in developmental ministry, our shared identity and vision will be both infectious and attractive. We have the potential to grow to a congregation of 250 or 300 members, but in doing so will need to change where we worship, how we communicate, how we organize ourselves, and maybe even what we call our organization. These are the challenges for the future, but with commitment and continued learning we can surmount them. Second Unitarian is capable of great things but only if we have a unified identity and a common vision for the future. It has been an honor to lead during this time of transition and I know that this board has set us on a path to a greater community.

Craig



Treasurer's Report

By Vicki Pratt, Treasurer

April Income and Expenses

With the \$7,311 income from the Live and Silent Auction Fundraiser, April income was higher than expenses.

	April, 2015	Year To Date
Income	\$20,776.99	\$191,945.42 (82% of budget)
Expense	17,062.07	183,884.73 (78% of budget)
Net Over/Short	+\$3,714.92	+ \$8,060.69

Income came from Stewardship Campaign Pledges (\$11,817.00); New Pledges from New Members (\$117.00); Fundraising (\$7,443.99); and Offering (\$1,154.00). 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, or contact me at treasurer@2uomaha.org.

Second Unitarian Ends Participation in Amazon Program

By Clyde Anderson, Chair, Finance Coordinating Council

Last December, the Library Committee recommended to the Finance Coordinating Council (FCC) that Second Unitarian Church end its relationship with Amazon.com. For many years, the church has participated in Amazon's Affiliates Program where the church gets a small rebate on purchases made by customers who accessed the Amazon website using a special link from our church website.

Quoting from Library's letter, "Amazon.com is a very controversial company with a well-documented history of labor abuses that stand in direct contradiction to the social justice principles of fairness and human dignity that are the cornerstone of Second Unitarian. The Library Committee believes that linking to Amazon.com on church website, and advertising the link in the Order of Service, amount to a tacit endorsement of a company that isn't a good corporate citizen."

During the 2013-2014 budget year the church received \$476 income from Amazon.com. This year's income is \$389 as of April 30.

FCC brought this recommendation to the Social Justice Committee, and that group also recommended that Second Unitarian end its relationship with Amazon.

Therefore, Finance recommended to the Board and the Board concurred to end our relationship with Amazon.com. Links to the program have been removed from the Church website.



July Worship Services

(continued from page 1)

July 5
10:00

Tom Peterson

Building a House for Hope

John Buehrens and Rebecca Parker make the case for progressive, liberal religion to counter the tide of regressive fundamentalism in the twenty-first century. Together, we will tour A House for Hope, from laying the foundations to capping the roof and planting the gardens.

July 12
10:00

Anna Peters

Ubuntu - We Are One

How can we be "one" with many different beliefs, backgrounds, and priorities? We'll explore models from the New Testament book of John on what unity in diversity can look like.

July 19
10:00

Lucille Saunders

Storytelling

Lucille Saunders, a professional storyteller and Member of OOPS, Omaha Organization for the Purpose of Storytelling, will be telling inspirational stories.

July 26
10:00

Michael Lynne

Visions of Human Connection

Humanity as one species, one life, one being. Spiritual and philosophical insights into who we are and how we might live together more nobly and more joyfully.

(Mark your calendar for a tasty and informative time after the service)

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!



Heartland Pride Parade and Festival: June 18-20

By Tammy Hunter, LGBTQ Welcoming Congregation Committee

Please join us for the annual Heartland Gay Pride Parade and Festival, taking place **June 18-20**. Through our involvement, we affirm our support for LGBTQ individuals to be fully themselves, as well as our commitment to work for equal rights for all.

We'll join First Unitarian Church in both the parade and the festival. The following events will take place during the weekend:

- **Thursday, June 18, 8 p.m.:** Candlelight Vigil at Stinson Park in Omaha's Aksarben Village
- **Friday, June 19, 6-10 p.m.:** Youth Pride Celebration and Dance at Stinson Park in Aksarben Village
- **Saturday, June 20:**

10 a.m.: Pride Parade in Council Bluffs, beginning at the intersection of 9th Avenue and South Main Street. Come and walk with us! To see the parade route, please visit <http://heartlandpride.org/pride-2015-festival-paving-the-way>.

11 a.m.: Pride Festival and Entertainment begins at Stinson Park in Aksarben Village. Visit or help staff our booth at the Festival. Setup begins at 10:30 a.m., and our booth will be open until 4:30 p.m. Entertainment continues until 10 p.m.

For more information, contact Tammy Hunter.

YRUU to Participate in 2015-16 IncluCity Program

By Ben Wallace, Youth Advisor, YRUU

The YRUU (Young Religious Unitarian Universalists) Youth Group is excited to announce its participation in the 2015-16 **IncluCity Program** through Inclusive Communities Omaha.

The IncluCity program works to reduce acts of school violence and bullying by challenging the assumptions, attitudes and beliefs around issues of difference (appearance, gender, race, faith, sexual orientation, ability, etc.). The program includes a full day workshop for youth and adults, a year-long internship program for two youth that will focus on putting the tenets of the Inclusive Communities program into action, and a 4-day Intensive Residential Program that will be held in Ashland in January.

This is a wonderful opportunity for our youth to learn skills to confront and challenge prejudice, bias and stereotypes and discover new ways to become allies for one another. The program has a significant cost and will require fundraising efforts by our group over the next 6 months. We will be publishing opportunities to support those fundraising efforts. If community members have questions about the program or are interested in donating towards defraying the program costs, they can contact Ben Wallace or Shawne Coonfare via email at omahayruu@gmail.com.

Weeds-I, Building & Grounds-0

By Clyde Anderson, Co-Chair, Building & Grounds

Last month I wrote about how we were experimenting with a non-chemical technique to help control weeds in the church lawns – especially those pesky dandelions. We requested Whitney Loucks, our lawn care contractor, to start mowing using the higher setting and mow only every other week. The theory is that the taller grass shades the weeds slowing their germination and growth.

By Mothers' Day the lawn looked really bad, and it was only ten days since Whitney last mowed. We requested that he mow on May 11 and he had to charge extra because of the time it took to mow the tall, thick grass. So we are back on a weekly mowing schedule, at least until the rainy weather subsides.

Our B&G volunteers do the edging and other lawn-mowing support work.



Meditation Group

By Kevin Dunlop

The Meditation Group has a new name and a new meeting time.

We now meet on the third Thursday of each month at 7:45 p.m. downstairs at church. Upcoming meetings are Thursday, June 18, July 16, and August 20.

At our meetings we have both a meditation-related discussion and an actual meditation. No previous meditation experience is necessary, so please come and check us out.

Retirees' Group

By Carol Johnson

Anyone interested is invited Tuesday, June 9, at 1 p.m. at church for a presentation by Kathy Krogh, staff member of the Nebraska Tourism Bureau. Kathy will be speaking about various programs of the Commission particularly the Nebraska Passport Program. The purpose of the Nebraska Tourism Commission is to expand Nebraska's dynamic and diverse travel industry.

Retirees' Group is not just for persons officially retired—it's for anyone looking for socializing, fun, personal growth and learning.

How About This for Your Summer Plans?

By the MidAmerica Region, Unitarian Universalist Association

Making your summer plans? Why not go to camp? Several camps for Unitarian Universalists are located within the MidAmerica Region. Some are rustic; some have air-conditioned housing. Some have programming scheduled from morning until night; at others, the programming is minimal and you have lots of time to relax and renew your spirit. Some are for all ages; two camps in Michigan are just for adults.



- **Camp UniStar** - On Star Island in Cass Lake, near Bemidji, in northern Minnesota - 2 weeks for youth and 10 program weeks for all ages, Summer 2015 <http://www.campunistar.org/>
- **MUUSA** - Midwest UU Summer Assembly in Potoski, Missouri - July 5 - 11, 2015 Come gather with hundreds of other UUs in the beautiful forests and rolling hills of the Missouri Ozarks at YMCA Trout Lodge, located 75 miles SSW of St. Louis, where you can connect with old friends, make new ones and participate in a wide variety of activities. For all ages. This year Reverend Dr. Tony Larsen will lead the daily Morning Celebration service on this year's theme: "Can We Talk?" <http://www.muusa.org>
- **Chalice Sparx** - Located in Southwest Michigan - July 14 - 19, 2015 for all ages. Nature-based programs for children. <http://www.chalicesparx.org/>

Read about **all of the camps located in MidAmerica** Region at:
<https://www.midamericauua.org/programs/camps>



Religious Growth & Learning

By Molly Kliment-Jenkins, Director of Religious Education



The upcoming summer session has combined classes for our kids... we are looking for a few cisgender, transgender, agender, trigender, and pangender folks to help! (Well, I could have said “men and women,” but how often do I get to work a plethora of gender identities into a newsletter article?)

It's laid back in the summer. We will be doing some interesting things, inside and outside, for the elementary and younger. Meanwhile, the youth will be starting work on a social justice topic they selected at the end of their last curriculum: LGBTQ issues. We have a curriculum from GLSEN (Gay Lesbian Straight Education Network) that will help us get started. Please consider helping - it's only a couple weeks.

In the fall, our Sunday youth class is going to be focusing on world religions soon and how they relate to UUism. If you've ever had a fascination with another religion, this is a great opportunity for you to learn right along with them. Several topics have been taken (cults, some Eastern philosophy for example) but others are still available! I will provide you with all the necessary materials and you get to share the materials with the kids. To quote the materials:

“Leaders need not be knowledgeable about world religions to facilitate this program. You do need:

- *Respect for and curiosity about religions*
- *Enthusiasm for guiding youth through the explorations of this program*
- *Ability to respectfully engage with youth in both serious inquiry and fun.*

Having respect for faiths does not necessarily mean agreeing with them. To successfully facilitate Building Bridges, you must be able to suspend judgment of a religion's impact on yourself, accept its validity for other people, and help youth decide what they believe is true and good. An attitude of respect and compassion is as important as any information gleaned in this program.”

Please let me know if you are interested. We still have fun topics like Islam, Humanism, Evangelical Christianity, Indigenous Faiths, Judaism and others available. We will work with your schedule to get you in when you are available. Each workshop is two Sundays and then an extension (field trip or visitor) that gives a firsthand perspective on that faith. Fascinating? Heck, yeah!

OWL facilitator training will happen on July 31-August 1. Please see the article on the next page. **If you are interested, please fill out the registration and return it to me as soon as possible!**

Finally, take a moment to admire the beautiful work completed by the children and youth on our sign. They talked about what issues are important to communicate to the greater community and came up with some terrific slogans!

Warm regards,
Molly



OWL Training

By Molly Kliment-Jenkins, Director of Religious Education



OWL stands for *Our Whole Lives*. It is our sex-and-relationship education class. It is AMAZING. And we're going to offer it in the fall/spring to our kindergarten -1 grade and 4-6 grade children.

You may have heard rumblings about an OWL facilitator training coming up. What exactly is a "facilitator training?" In order to offer the OWL classes, two adults for each section need to learn how to facilitate the class. **The training will be offered on Friday, July 31, and Saturday, August 1.** It's a two-day program, from 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. The cost for the class registration and two books is being determined. Scholarships are available. This class will be taught here at Second Unitarian Church and will include members from other UU

congregations as well as UCC folks and perhaps some aligned agencies and nonprofits.

Want to learn more about OWL? Visit uua.org/owl. Want to register for the class? Contact Molly Kliment-Jenkins at dre@2uomaha.org or 402-334-0537 ext. 112.

OWL Training Home Hospitality and Catering

We are looking for anyone who is willing to extend home hospitality to individuals coming in for the facilitator training on July 31-August 1 (Friday and Saturday). We are also looking for individuals who may be willing to make a meal or two for the event. We are providing lunch and dinner to everyone in the class. I can help you with ideas/recipes. If you can help on either of these, please contact Molly Kliment-Jenkins.

June Service Learning Project

By Molly Kliment-Jenkins, Director of Religious Education

Our next Service Learning Project is **Sunday, June 7, at 10 a.m. at the Nebraska Humane Society**. This is the one we had to cancel due to bad weather in February! Patty Russell, our host, 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 before, you know the highlight is their massive washer and dryer! People of all ages are welcome (as always) to join us – Service Learning Projects are a part of our lifespan programming.

If you have any leftover or scrap fabric, fleece, t-shirts, empty water bottles or socks (especially fun, patterned ones) please bring them. We will be making kitty and doggie toys. They will be so cute the dogs and cats will fight over them like... well, cats and dogs.

Summer Fun for Second Circle Teen Movie Group

By Anita Meyer

The teens will continue meeting in the sanctuary on the **third Sunday of each month** this summer, but since it's summer, the meetings will be more on a social level and will include watching some movies just for fun.

Youth entering seventh grade and older are invited to join us. Watch your Weekly Enews for announcements of these movies.

We will be returning in the fall with our movie viewing and discussions starting with the movie *Gandhi*.



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.

Membership Journeys

By Kathy Bell, Membership Committee Chair

Please join us in celebrating our new members during the June 7 worship service. Look for their biographies on the new member board in the foyer in the coming months. I hope you will take a moment to welcome them.

SATURDAY, JUNE 13, 3 P.M., AT SECOND UNITARIAN

Pachamama Alliance

How we can **[actually]** change the world

A Transformative Educational Initiative of The **Pachamama Alliance**.

Visit www.NebraskaPachamamaAlliance.org for more information



Omaha Together One Community

By Vicki Pratt, Social Justice Committee

How to Become a Faithful Leader for Public Life

Iowa's congregation-based community organization, called AMOS (A Mid-Iowa Organizing Strategy), is hosting leadership training. AMOS is the sister organization to Omaha's OTOC (Omaha Together One Community). It's at Corinthian Baptist Church, Des Moines, **Sunday afternoon, August 2 through Tuesday afternoon, August 4.** \$250 for double occupancy hotel room; \$150 without hotel room; includes tuition, materials and all. We have space for several people from Second Unitarian to attend, and we can carpool.

Don't miss this opportunity to hear from national experts talk about:

- Dealing with tension between the "World As It Is" and the "World As It Should Be."
- Acting with Power/Acting with Love
- Building relationships across lines that divide us
- Reorganizing/Rebuilding our congregations

This training applies to building relationships within our congregation, the larger community, your work environment, and personal life.

OTOC Offering Training to Make Omaha a Better Place to Live.

These sessions are preparation for the 3-day training in Des Moines, but are also applicable as stand-alone training.

Monday, June 8, 7 p.m.: ABCs of Community Organizing -- universal concepts, definitions, examples of successes in Omaha, action is in the reaction, doing the right thing for the wrong reasons

Monday, July 13, 7 p.m.: A deeper look at the top three participant-selected topics from June 8 Monday, August 10: What we learned in Des Moines, how can we apply it in Omaha?

Both sessions are at Augustana Lutheran Church, 38th and Lafayette.

For more information on any of these events, contact Vicki Pratt.

<i>Attendance</i>				
Date	Adults in Worship	Adults in R.E.	Children in R.E.	Service Learning
4/26	82	<i>Intergenerational</i>		—
5/3	72			—
5/10	110	<i>Intergenerational</i>		—
5/17	76	6		—
5/24	63			—

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 Tom Peterson, Gary Emenitove

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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