



Second Unitarian Church of Omaha

Second Thoughts

What's going on at 2U this month?

- March 1st** - E-Bingo begins!
- March 4th** - Kickoff Dinner Hosted by Stewardship Committee. Page 9
- March 5th** First Hour Conversations - Next Steps. Page 11
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UPCOMING SERVICES

COMMUNITY

- March 5:** *A New Way Forward*
Rev. Cyndi Simpson
- March 12:** *Building Community*
YRUU
- March 19:** *Beloved Belonging*
Rev. Cyndi Simpson
- March 26:** *Flowering After Fire: Resilience and Renewal*
Rev. Florence Caplow

See page 20 for more details.

Join Us This Sunday!

Worship Services

10:30 a.m.

**Stewardship Kickoff
Dinner
At the church
Saturday, March 4th
6:00 p.m.
Bring your pledge forms!**

COMMUNITY

Dear Friends,

I write this as we are experiencing a late-winter Spring Break – record-breaking high temperatures. I have enjoyed these days, yet they are also a painful reminder of the inexorable effects of climate change. We will be back to our regularly-scheduled Winter in the next day or so and I will welcome it!

Our monthly worship theme for March is **COMMUNITY**. This fits so well with our developmental work together. We will be making a big step forward in our shared Developmental Ministry this month. On Saturday, March 18, we invite everyone to join us at church at 9:00 a.m. for a Kick-Off of our Developmental Ministry. Over the last months, the Board of Trustees and I have been working with the Developmental goals to refine them for clarity, shared understanding and commitment, as well as to discern what the key outcomes are for each goal. There was a lot of good stuff written around the goals: why these goals in particular, what they would mean if achieved, as well as quite a few very specific tasks that could be done: a great combination of apples, oranges and grapes! All useful and all needing to be clarified.

And we will be asking for your input into how to move these goals and their key outcomes forward. My hope is that none of this – not reviewing the goals or thinking about how to move them forward or the actual moving forward – will feel like ‘work,’ but like an exciting journey into becoming a more authentic, compassionate and transformative congregation. I hope this feels much more like spiritual growth and development and like spiritual practice, individual and collective and *like living our shared faith together!*

March is also about the ministry of our Stewardship campaign – absolutely vital to our community! Stewardship means “the care for the hall.” And of course, it means so much more than how we take care of our building. It’s also about how we take care of each other and how we take care of our wider community and the larger world itself. Contributing to those efforts with our money and other resources is critical for the continuation and effectiveness and beauty of this UU congregation.



On March 5, I will be preaching to our *New Way Forward* – the theme of this year’s stewardship campaign. It’s all about the many ways in which we take care of our Beloved Religious Community. On March 12, we will have a service from a very important and much-loved part of our community – our YOUTH! Please be there to support them in all ways and to listen to them with your whole heart and mind. On March 19, I will preach to *Beloved Belonging*: what does it mean to say that we “belong” to this congregation? This Unitarian Universalist congregation? On March 26, we will welcome a UU guest minister, the Reverend Florence Caplow. Our pulpit is free and open, and as of this writing, I don’t know Rev. Caplow’s subject – but I know it will be a valuable one for our community. We will also have the pleasure of welcoming Rev Caplow to our community – and that will be a good thing in and of itself!

My hope is that by the end of March, we will have grown together in community through reflection on our present and future and through personal and collective growth towards that future!

May it be so!

Love and blessings,

Cyndi

**FEBRUARY
SERVICE
ATTENDANCE**

<i>Attendance</i>	
Date	Number in Worship
02/05	71
02/12	84
02/19	70
02/26	81

Greetings from the Board of Trustees

Are we becoming the Second Unitarian Church of Omaha that we want to be?

I took a step back this morning to look at what we have been about in the last few weeks. I think it lifts up our response to make our mission statement a reality. There are many more, but here are some highlights:

- During the last few weeks, as UU's, are participation included:
 - ◆ Joining at least 12,000 people in the "Women's March on Omaha".
 - ◆ Joining others for a multi-faith vigil at Turner Park for refugees and immigrants.
 - ◆ Sponsoring a block on 63rd and Dodge for "Light the Way for Refugees and Immigrants - Stand for Welcome on Presidents Day!"
- Social Justice Retreat was held on Feb. 4th.
- First Hours have started up, beginning with a series hosted by the Post-Election Work Group. At the first one, many were with us to share their deepest fears, passion and hope. It was an authentic, compassionate and transformative session. We are looking to the future.
- The De-Escalation Workshop was led by Rev. Cyndi on Feb. 16. It was well attended by members and community members alike.
- The Stewardship Pledge Drive is underway. Ed Bok's Stewardship moments during Sunday Service have been powerful. Our theme this year is "A New Way Forward". The Kickoff Event is Sat., March 4th, at 6:00 p.m. at church. It will be an energizing event that you won't want to miss! Please plan on joining us!

Be the change that you

From the Board:

- We have focused time and energy on a common understanding and ownership of our Developmental Ministry Goals. **You are all encouraged to join us on Sat., March 18th for the Developmental Ministry Kickoff Workshop from 9 a.m. – 3 p.m. (gathering at 8:30 for food and fellowship) at church.** RSVP to Board@2Uomaha.org including child care and dietary needs.
- After watching the webinar, ‘Cracking the Leadership Crisis’, we started incorporating spiritual practices to prepare for our meetings. It has changed the way we work together.
- The Board Covenant, which we affirmed last fall, guides us to effective meetings.
- We are investing time to be learners. One of our last topics was technical vs. adaptive leadership, which will help us reach the goals that we have set.

I want to take a moment to recognize Richard and Norma Koelling. They have been members since June of 2003. In these many years they have given much to us at Second Unitarian Church and we are forever grateful. Please join me in wishing them all the best as they will soon be moving to South Carolina.

Thank you to Rev. Cyndi for her leadership as our Developmental Minister! Thank you to all of you that make Second Unitarian Church what it is today and what we want it to be in the future!

Do you feel the energy, feel the change? We still live in a world as it is, longing for a world as we want it to be. We are inspired by Mahatma Gandhi, “Be the change that you wish to see in the world.” Let’s make that change happen together and create “A New Way Forward”!

wish to see in the world.

Mahatma Gandhi

FROM THE DIRECTOR OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

At the end of February, we had Sophia Fahs Sunday. Although many view her as a stalwart in the development of liberal religious education for children, so much of her ministry is applicable to all of us, regardless of age. One of my favorite quotes of her is this:

*We are resolved to protect individual freedom of belief.
This freedom must include the child as well as the parent.
The freedom for which we stand is not freedom of belief as we please,
... not freedom to evade responsibility,
...but freedom to be honest in speech and action,
freedom to respect one's own integrity of thought and feeling,
freedom to question, to investigate, to try,
to understand life and the universe in which life abounds,
freedom to search anywhere and everywhere to find the meaning of Being,
freedom to experiment with new ways of living that seem better than the old.*

*-[Sophia Lyon Fahs](#), *A New Ministry to Children**

Isn't that just a kick in the pants? Every time I read it, I feel her charge directed to me. We are all RESPONSIBLE to explore and question, as a child does, and to be willing to evolve our thoughts and actions.

That doesn't just happen in a vacuum, though, does it?

We just had my daughter's parent-teacher-student conferences. While we were waiting for the gym teacher, we hung out in the main hallway. There, several classes had filled out a sheet: "Why I love my public school?" I was struck by their responses. They expressed how much they love their teacher. Some were impressed by how clean the building is (one even wrote: "it shines like a jewel"). The playground was a popular love among the kindergarteners, recess among the older children. And, finally, a comment that was repeated on many sheets was how safe they feel there. That there are no bullies at their school. That everyone is a friend.

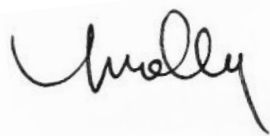
Safe.

I don't know about you, but grade school was not a "safe" place for me. I was picked on. I felt very alone. I was defensive and did not enjoy the social side of those six years much. As I grew older, I learned to reach out more and develop friendships. My self-confidence grew. When I hit junior high and high school, years that are usually fraught with angst for most children, I was having fun, making friends and socially blossoming (as an introvert does), comfortable for the most part in my skin. I know I was lucky in many ways, to go through that process early on.

I hope that you do feel safe here at Second Unitarian. That you are able to blossom into the whole you. And that here, in the sanctuary of Second Unitarian, you can take Sophia's charge and work to evolve your thoughts and actions.

In love and light-

Molly



Treasurer's Report

by Vicki Pratt, Treasurer

In January we spent more than we brought in. But thanks to those who have already paid pledges in full to build up a surplus for this fiscal year, we could dip into that surplus.

The Board approved using \$3,000 from our Reserve Fund to purchase a newer photocopier. The Reserve Fund is kept separate from our annual Operating Budget so the following January numbers do not include that expenditure.

	January 2017	Year to Date
Income	\$13,781.99	\$132,792.72 (62% of budget)
Expense	23,960.93	119,645.21 (55% of budget)
Net Over/Short	-\$10,178.94	+\$13,147.51

Income came from Stewardship Campaign Pledges (\$12,119.57); New Pledges from Current Members (\$30.00); New Pledges from New Members (\$725.00); Offering (\$904.77).

Expenses were from Salaries and Benefits (\$5,832.98); Minister's Compensation (\$11,616.33); Administrative Expenses (\$244.78); General Expenses (\$5,510.18); and Committee Expenses (\$756.66).

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



Pledge Drive Kickoff

by Ed Bok

We are now entering the Stewardship Pledge Drive. The Kickoff event will be held at the church on Saturday, March 4 at 6:00 p.m. There will be a free spaghetti dinner and entertainment. Please bring your pledge forms to the dinner if you haven't already turned them in, in order to be eligible for a drawing for a \$50 gift card! Child care will be provided. Also, if you have artistic ability, it would be great if we could get some artwork on the Second Showing wall that had to do with the theme of A New Way Forward. If you are interested, please see Pam Curtiss-Smith for details.



A New Way Forward



Second Unitarian
Church of Omaha

PRIVACY POLICY FOR CHURCH PUBLICATIONS

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

In general, it's preferable to omit personal information, but in those cases where it's necessary (such as a location for an offsite meeting), those who submit articles should ask for permission to publish the personal information. An alternative is "Please call or email the church office for contact information." Contact the Office Administrator for more information. **Regarding published photographs:** If you do not want your photo published (including in the newsletter or on the website), please inform the Office Administrator in writing. Thanks!

That Mysterious Bathroom Light

Building & Grounds Committee

Have you been mystified by the behavior of the light in our unisex, gender-neutral bathroom in the Garden Level of the Church?

Several years ago because people kept leaving the bathroom light on, Building & Grounds was requested to install a motion sensor light switch. When the switch is in the automatic mode, which is indicated by a little yellow light below the push-button switch, the light automatically turns on when someone enters the bathroom. It remains on for about five minutes after no more motion is detected. If you fall asleep on the toilet and wake up in the dark, just wave your arm to turn the light back on.

Sometimes people leaving the bathroom push the button on the switch causing it to enter manual mode causing the light to stay on. This is indicated by a green light or no light to be displayed on the switch. If this happens, please push the button once or twice until the yellow light is displayed. The light will then turn off in about five minutes.



Spring Clean Up Day

April 29th

8 a.m. to 12 p.m.

**Mark your calendar
now for our 2u church
clean up day!**

First Hour

We invite you to be part of a team that plans our First Hours. There are a couple people that have already said 'yes'. This could be a short term ministry for you if you want to try it out.

Please call Pete Miller if you are interested or have questions.

<u>Date</u>	<u>Facilitators</u>	<u>Topic</u>
March 5	Post-Election Working Group	Summarizing Results of Brainstorm: Next Steps - Coming together to assess where we are and beclear about our forward direction.
March 12		Cracking the Leadership Crisis - Part 1 Whether you're someone who wants to get more involved but does not want to join a committee, or someone at risk of burning out from doing too much, this webinar will give you a radical new perspective on church work as spiritual work. It's a lively and engaging presentation about how to bring fresh eyes to old problems.
March 19		Cracking the Leadership Crisis - Part 2
March 26		TBA

First Hour runs from 9 a.m. to 10 a.m. in the Sanctuary on Sunday morning. Childcare is provided.

Second Unitarian at Omaha Earth Day

Omaha will celebrate Earth Day in Elmwood Park on Saturday, April 22. Our congregation has participated for several years by setting up a booth and handing out organic garden seeds. Our Social Justice Committee is looking for someone to coordinate participation this year.

We've got plenty of tips for a fun day of outreach to the community. If this sounds good to you, contact Vicki Pratt before March 6th.



Retirees' Group *Connecting Through Social Media.*

Back by popular demand, join us **Tuesday, March 14th at 1 p.m.** for a presentation on *Connecting Through Social Media*. This is a follow-up to Elise's previous presentation about Facebook.

Do you consider yourself to be social media illiterate? Do you wonder what your granddaughter is up to when she's tweeting or snapchatting? After a brief overview of different social media platforms Elise Brazeal-Daganaar will show us the basics of setting up and using Twitter and Instagram. She will discuss tips for being a savvy Social Media user including safety and etiquette. She will also highlight groups that retirees may find especially interesting to follow.

Feel free to bring your smart phone, tablet, or laptop computer (*bandwidth permitting*) and any questions you have. Elise has also offered to be available via email and by appointment on Sundays if you need one-on-one assistance.



Meditation Group

A wonderful group meeting takes place on the third Wednesday of each month. The Meditation Group is a loving, caring, and spiritually nurturing group of people who learn about and practice meditation. Meditation is a practice that can be easily learned by anyone and is very helpful in dealing with negative emotions and an overactive mind.



Please feel free to drop in and join us. Meetings start at 8:00 p.m. in the sanctuary. No previous meditation experience is needed. **Upcoming meetings will be on March 15th and April 19th.**

2017 Community Garden Plots

By Larry Kurtz

The Community Garden committee is soliciting applications for the garden plots located north of the church. The plots are the same as previous years: 8 feet by 8 feet, approximately. The expectations for growers are:

1. The 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 14 plots available with a limit of 2 plots per grower. If interested, contact Larry Kurtz to receive an application. Any plots not assigned to members by March 31st will be made available to the wider community.

Winter Weather Warning

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

If you see something unsafe inside or outside the church, please refer to the Emergency Contact Information sheets posted on the bulletin boards and Furnace Room doors, or notify Buildings & Grounds as soon as possible.

Teen Movie Night for March

The Second Unitarian teens (7-12 graders) will be going offsite for their March Movie Night!

The teens will view *I Am Not Your Negro*, an Oscar nominated documentary that explores writer James Baldwin's observations on American race relations. It is a journey into black history that connects the Civil Rights movement to the present of #Black Lives Matter. [You can watch a trailer for the *I Am Not Your Negro* here.](#) (And yes, that is Samuel L. Jackson you hear narrating!)

We will meet at Film Streams on **Sunday March 5th at 3:45 p.m.** for the 4:15 p.m. showing of the movie. Afterwards, Bob Fischbach will lead a discussion over pizza at Goodnight's Pizza. Film Streams is located at the Ruth Sokolof Theater - 1340 Mike Fahey Street. Friends are welcome!



Developmental Ministry Kickoff Workshop

Saturday, March 18th

All at 2U are encouraged to attend this exciting event. Gather and continental breakfast at 8:30 a.m. Workshop from 9 a.m. – 1:30 p.m., at church. Lunch will be served. RSVP to Board@2uomaha.org with childcare and dietary needs. More details to follow.

Share the Plate March 2017

Intercultural Senior Center



The Share the Plate organization for March is Intercultural Senior Center (ISO). At the ISC, they believe that elders deserve dignity, wellness, and the opportunity to share their talents and wisdom with others.

Many seniors in our community, in particular immigrant and refugee seniors, have physical and mental health, education, emotional, and legal needs that go unmet. They are isolated by poverty, language and cultural barriers, and few transportation options. ISC actively welcomes seniors from around the world with culturally-appropriate, high-quality services and programs. Their mission is to improve the dignity, quality of life and physical well-being of seniors from around the world through advocacy, education, access to social services, and cultural enrichment activities that benefit the entire community. [Find out more info at interculturalseniorcenter.org](http://interculturalseniorcenter.org).

If you know of a worthy charitable organization that you would like to nominate for Share the Plate please complete the nomination form. [Here is a fillable PDF form for Share the Plate](#). If you'd like help completing the form, contact Cheri Cody, Carol Johnson, or Pat Caffrey.

POPS Potluck

The POPs Potluck Night is happening on Friday, March 31st. All parents of littles through primary grades are invited to attend POPs Nights to connect with other parents from both First and Second Unitarian communities. Childcare is provided on-site (please RSVP). Arrive by 5:45 p.m. and bring a dish to share. Grown-ups will gather in the First Unitarian Church common room (3114 Harney Street). Kids will eat and play in the First Unitarian nursery. Kindly RSVP (for adults and children): admin@firstuomaha.org.

Save the dates for POPs Potluck Nights for 2017:

Fri, March 31 (RSVP by March 26)

Fri, May 26 (RSVP by May 21)

Fri, April 28 (RSVP by April 23)

Fri, Oct 20 (RSVP by Oct 15)

Food, Art, and Music at KANEKO

by Vicki Pratt, Social Justice Committee

Omaha Together One Community's (OTOC) annual Spring Fundraiser is at a new location -- KANEKO in the Old Market. This fun evening features tasty appetizers, soft drinks (cash bar for wine and beer), live music, a wide variety of silent auction items, and the opportunity to get to know members of congregations throughout Omaha. As a bonus, you can view sculptures and other art throughout KANEKO's recently renovated galleries.

This fundraiser allows OTOC to continue the work of connecting people in Omaha across lines that tend to divide us such as race and ethnicity, economics, religion, geography, and language. Second Unitarian is a proud member of OTOC.

When: Saturday evening, April 1 (no foolin) 6 p.m. to 9:30 p.m.

Where: KANEKO, 1111 Jones Street

Tickets on sale during coffee hour: \$25 advance, \$30 at the door. If you cannot attend, please consider paying for a ticket to donate to refugees involved in OTOC action teams.



General Assembly 2017 June 21-25, New Orleans, LA

[Registration](#) for the 2017 UUA [General Assembly](#) is now open! General Assembly (GA) is the annual meeting of the UUA, where attendees worship, witness, learn, connect, and make policy for the Association through the democratic process. This year's theme: "Resist and Rejoice!"



UUA GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Last Year we made over \$7000! Can we do it again this year?!



OMAHA GIVES!

powered by the Omaha Community Foundation

SAVE THE DATE (and your pennies) MAY 24th!

WHAT IS IT?

Omaha Gives! is a one-day online fundraising event organized by the Omaha Community Foundation and held on May 24 to raise support for nonprofits in Douglas, Sarpy, and Pottawattamie Counties. It is a community-wide event to show off the area's spirit of giving, raise awareness about local nonprofits, and celebrate the collective effort it takes to make this city great. Since 2013, this community give-together has raised over \$27 million for 789 nonprofits!

HOW DOES IT WORK? HOW CAN YOU GET INVOLVED?

- Give to your favorite nonprofit – the minimum donation is only \$10.
- Partner with local nonprofits to help them win big on May 24.
- Provide **CHALLENGE FUNDS** for your favorite nonprofit.
- Schedule a donation starting May 1st or donate during the event on May 24.
- Attend area Omaha Gives! events hosted by nonprofits.
- Be loud and proud to show the community's generous spirit — especially on social media with #OmahaGives!

NONPROFITS WIN

Nonprofits win hourly drawings and prizes for drumming up the most support.

GIVE TWO WAYS

Schedule your gifts ahead of time or make donations throughout the day.
Have more fun - give both ways!

GROW MORE GOOD

Over \$27 million has been raised for 789 local nonprofits since 2013!

OmahaGives24.org

CUUPS Ostara Celebration



Open to all, CUUPS welcomes you to Celebrate the Coming of Spring with our Ostara Ritual on **Saturday March 18th 6 - 8 p.m., First Unitarian Church** in the Sanctuary. Childcare will be provided and it will be followed by a Potluck dinner held jointly with the Young Adult group in the Common Room.

Fun Facts: Eggs, Rabbits, and Sweets originate with Ostara and only later came to be associated with Easter. Ostara flowers: Peony and Violet. Gem: Jasper.

Women's Alliance

Women, and those who identify as women, from First and Second Unitarian Church are invited to attend the Women's Alliance gathering on Monday, March 13, 2017. Our guest speaker will be from the Refugee Empowerment Center. The mission of the Refugee Empowerment Center is to resettle and empower refugees to become self-sufficient through direct services and educational programs.

Drinks and gathering starts at 6:30 p.m. with dinner following at 7:00 and our presentation at 8:00 p.m. Please join us!

Our dinner selection for March will be Corned Beef and Cabbage and a veggie dish to be determined. When you RSVP please indicate if you would like the meat or veggie option.

We ask \$15 which goes to the cost of the dinner, the Merritt Education Fund, the Partner Church scholarship, and various activities at First Unitarian. If this will be your first time attending, please be our guest!

You can RSVP via the Facebook event: [Facebook Event](#)

Second Unitarian Church

3012 S. 119th Street

Omaha, NE 68144

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

COMMUNITY

March 5: *A New Way Forward* - Rev. Cyndi Simpson

We are on the path for a new way forward here at 2U and in our nation! Our religious community is loved and needed more than ever within and beyond our walls. How do we marshal our time, talent and treasure to go forward? Hint: it's all about love.

March 12: *Building Community* YRUU Service

The theme for this month is Community. To fit into this theme, youth of both congregations will lead a worship service focused on building community. It'll be fun & interactive — bring your family and get to know our YRUU youth!

March 19: *Beloved Belonging* - Rev. Cyndi Simpson

When we say we 'belong' here, what does that mean? How is being a member here different from being a member of other organizations or a member of our families? The difference matters greatly for the future of this beloved religious community!

March 26: *Flowering After Fire: Resilience and Renewal* - Rev. Florence Caplow, Guest Minister

After fire on the prairie, the wildflowers bloom brighter the following spring. What does the natural world have to teach us about resilience? Where can we find our own sources of resilience and renewal as we face the uncertainties and losses of this time? How do we find strength, individually and as communities, for the long road ahead, as we continue to stand up for our deepest values?