



# Second Unitarian Church of Omaha *Second Thoughts*

March, 2016

**Join Us This Sunday!**

**Worship Services**

**10 a.m.**



**Faith-Funding-Action  
2016 Stewardship  
Dinner & Forum  
Saturday,  
March 5, 6 p.m.  
(RSVP – see page 4)**



**Game Night  
FUNdraiser  
Saturday,  
March 19, 6 p.m.  
(RSVP – see page 5)**

March 6

Music & Worship

**Piano Centennial**

Join us as we celebrate the 100th birthday of our Steinway Grand Piano with a special service including music and hymns from the last hundred years, a history of our Steinway and how it got to Second Unitarian, an overview of the special role of music in worship, and a rousing rendition of Happy Birthday — followed, of course, by birthday cake!

March 13

Rev. Frieda Gillespie

**Creating the Church of Your Future**

The question of how much to give to the church confronts us yearly. Perhaps remembering what you are creating for the future - yours and those to come- will give us a clearer answer.

March 20

Rev. Frieda Gillespie

**Spring Equinox**

Come to our multigenerational Spring Equinox/Ostera service to find the perfect token to inspire your spring rebirth!

March 27

Rev. Frieda Gillespie

**Jesus, the Zealot**

In this Easter Service, we explore the real legacy of Jesus' story and the courage he exemplified.

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

Please send articles and submissions to [info@2Uomaha.org](mailto:info@2Uomaha.org).

Deadline is the fifteenth of each month.



## In the Interim

By Rev. Frieda Gillespie



Change is coming. Spring is on the way. The weather is beginning to change and we hope that it will steadily get warmer and brighter.

Gary Emenitove, Second Unitarian's Office Administrator of seven years will be leaving 2U on March 3. He has done such an excellent job for the church and helped all of us in many ways. Just to name one, he has partnered with Kathy Bell to maintain and improve the current church website. He has done his best to keep me organized which is no mean feat! We don't want him to leave without letting him know how much he has been appreciated. We will be celebrating Gary's time with us and giving him a great sendoff after the service on March 20.

After a thorough search, we found the next Office Administrator right here at the church! Jaime Short will be taking over the position and in fact has already started. Jaime has all of the qualifications for the job plus she knows the congregation well. She has made many contributions to the church, especially to RGL, and has served on the Transition Team and Minister Search Committee and now she will be in a new role, a new relationship with everyone. I hope you will join me in welcoming her and in making her transition from member to staff a good one. One of the challenges of being a member in a paid staff role is the difficulty in attending services or events and being accosted by requests for office services. Knowing this, I hope you can assist Jaime by treating her strictly as another member when she is not officially in her OA role.

Hopefully, the Developmental Minister Search Committee will have some packets to look over from interested ministers soon if not already.

Our household (the Gillespie/Long household) is always in a state of flux. Last month our foster son, Pablo, was moved to a group home which better serves his needs right now. We are still looking forward to his graduation from high school in May. My wife, Jennifer, will be visiting us in Omaha the last week of March. She's planning to bring her little dog 'Lil' with her.

Happy Spring!  
*Rev. Frieda*



## Share the Plate for March: The Malcolm X Foundation

One half of Second Unitarian's offering received in March will go to **The Malcolm X Foundation.**

**The Malcolm X Memorial Foundation** is headquartered in Omaha. Founded by Mrs. Rowena Moore in 1971, the Foundation serves as a historical landmark for the birthplace of Malcolm X, now covering 12 acres of manicured greenspace in the heart of North Omaha. The Foundation offers public programs and events inviting all to participate in the positive social action motivated by the teachings of Malcolm X, focusing on Leadership Development, Social Action, and Civic Engagement. Visit [malcolmxfoundation.org](http://malcolmxfoundation.org).

To nominate an organization for our Share the Plate program, [visit the church website](http://www.secondunitarian.org) or contact the Social Justice Committee.



# Planks and Slivers from the Board

By Craig Piquette, Chair, Board of Trustees



## The Secret to Life, the Universe and God

The stewardship drive is winding down and this is my appeal to those of you who need a reason to pledge to Second Unitarian. Many of us would pay to know the secret to Life, the Universe and Everything. Those of you old enough to remember Douglas Adams and the [Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy](#) will remember that the answer to the secret is 42. For those of you who are wondering what a Hitchhiker is, it is a person who lived pre-[Uber](#). Even though we may have a Deep Blue, Deep Mind or Watson, we have not been able to arrive at the answer, 42, as provided by Deep Thought, the supercomputer in Hitchhikers Guide. But we know 42 isn't the right answer. As you may recall, Deep Thought designed the Earth, the giant computer that was to provide the correct answer. This is where you come in.

As a component in this giant computer system we call Earth, you have a role to play in discovering the secret to life, the universe and everything. Maybe that includes God. The questions we struggle with, Why are we here?, What is my purpose in life? and How can I be a better person? are all wrapped up in life's experiences. That is why adherents to a covenantal, non-creedal religion are more likely to discover the correct answer. We are not told what to believe and are not programmed like the aforementioned computers with artificial intelligence, to arrive at a pre-programmed answer. We have REAL intelligence. We know if we treat each other as we would want to be treated and treat others as they would want to be treated, we feel good inside. When we give of ourselves whether it be time or money, we feel good inside. I doubt a computer ever FEELS GOOD inside. As humans, we have survived because we work within a society and have prospered on this planet, not due to self-interest but through self-sacrifice for the greater good.

At Second Unitarian, each and every one of us is free to explore these ideas and to discover our place in the Universe. When you give to Second Unitarian, at a level that requires some self-sacrifice, you benefit by creating and expanding the venue to explore these questions and to double-check your answers with non-judgmental friends. You are contributing to the building of the system that will define the secret to Life, the Universe and Everything....and there you will find God. Isn't that worth your pledge to keep the program running?

*Craig*

## THANK YOU!

The Marketing Advisory Council says **thank you** for all of the generous contributions which will help us get out the word about our church and its work.

Recently we took up collections for our KIOS ads and for the new outdoor signs for the corner and in the parking lot.

**Sign contributors** include: Clyde Anderson, Rick and Kathy Bell, Joan Benziger, Pat Caffrey, JoAnne and Darrell Draper, David and Carol Johnson, Richard and Norma Koelling, Greg Minter, and Ronda Stevens. **KIOS contributors** include: Steve and Gay Abraham, Clyde Anderson, Sue Aschinger, Betty Bange, Rick and Kathy Bell, Joan Benziger, Pat Caffrey, Cheri Cody, Ruth Corwin, JoAnne and Darrell Draper, Joel and Kathy Haskins, David and Carol Johnson, Melissa Konecky, Larry Kurtz and Carlynn Hartman-Kurtz, Monica Meier and Jonnathan Pinzon, Pete and Carolyn Miller, Janet Nichols, Vicki Pratt, Tom and Shirley Rundquist, Betty Segell, and Ronda Stevens.

And a *big thanks* to the Building and Grounds Committee for their assistance with the signs!

— Nancy Amsler



## Treasurer's Report

By Vicki Pratt, Treasurer

In January, our income was higher than expenses – this is good news for building up a surplus to finish out our fiscal year on June 30.

	January 2016	Year To Date
Income	\$19,215.39	\$126,334.63 (58% of budget)
Expense	17,872.32	121,663.04 (56% of budget)
Net Over/Short	+\$1,343.07	+\$4,671.59

Income came from Stewardship Campaign Pledges (\$18,100.00); New Pledges from Current Members (\$190.00); New Pledges from New Members (\$200.00); Other Income (\$22.79); and Offering (\$1,496.00).

Expenses were from Salaries and Benefits (\$5,306.88); Minister's Compensation (\$6,714.42); Administrative Expenses (\$83.88); General Expenses (\$5,132.09); and Committee Expenses (\$635.05).

If you would like to see more detailed financial reports, you can join the Finance Committee, or contact me at [treasurer@2uomaha.org](mailto:treasurer@2uomaha.org).



### STEWARDSHIP DINNER & FORUM Saturday, March 5, 6:00 p.m. @ Second Unitarian

6:00 pm – Family Dinner - All  
7:00 pm – Forum/Discussion  
7:00 pm – Child care available in RGL

*Stewardship Committee is hosting an all-church dinner and forum to discuss funding our 2016-17 church year.*

- Proposed 2016-17 budget will be distributed and discussed
  - Opportunity to win \$50 Target gift certificate
    - Free food
    - Entertainment

**RSVP** to [stewardship@2uomaha.org](mailto:stewardship@2uomaha.org). List name, # of adults, # of children, special diet requirements, childcare needs

# 2U Game Night!



***It's a FUNdraiser!***

**Saturday, March 19, 6 to 9 p.m. at Second Unitarian**

Doors open at 5:30, games begin promptly at 6,  
prizes and raffle drawing at 8:45.

Free childcare available downstairs

Different game stations set up including Scattergories, UNO, Yahtzee. and more! Players will rotate games every 35 minutes.

There will be door prizes and a raffle!

Cost: \$15 per adult, children free. Includes pizza, drinks and snacks.  
Pay at the door or in advance. If in advance, please note GAME NIGHT.

**RSVP to [FUNdraiser@2uomaha.org](mailto:FUNdraiser@2uomaha.org) — please include how many children will be in childcare (if needed)**

## Developmental Ministry Search

*By Sue Aschinger, Lead Contact*

*Are you ready for change?* The Search Team (Sue Aschinger, Lead Contact, Lorraine Duggin, Pete Miller, Jaime Short, Rachel Yamamoto, and Jack Frost) is ready to start our interviewing process. We have developed a set of interview questions that will help us to determine the best minister candidate, who is ready to help lead us in this change to be a growing vibrant congregation. We are excited and anxious as we wait to hear from the Unitarian Universalist Association Transitions office with candidates who want to talk to us.

Of course, there is more to this process than just an interview; there is a thorough assessment process to get to know each candidate. We are also ready with more information about our church and our community that we will send to the interested ministers. We are working with Dori Davenport Thexton, our UUA MidAmerica Region Consultant. Though we cannot share information about candidates, we will continue to keep you informed as we work through the process.



Find us on Facebook:  
[facebook.com/2uomaha](https://www.facebook.com/2uomaha)

### ***Join the New 2UOmaha Forum***

**We have a new Facebook discussion group only for members and affiliates of Second Unitarian Church. Search for "2UOmaha Forum" on Facebook!**





## Religious Growth & Learning

By Molly Kliment-Jenkins, Director of Religious Education



Lately I've been letting the dogs out in the early morning and been overwhelmed by the feeling that spring is nearly here. The smells, the sounds and the colors are all saying "Spring is here!" And the dogs' leisurely attitude doesn't help - that's one thing about cold weather: they don't dawdle outside very long!

I was fortunate to get some of my spring yard work done last fall - a new experience for me! As a result of that, I know I'll be chomping at the bit to get the garden started. Unlike some of my spring bulbs that make an early appearance every year, I hope, though, I'm able to hold off just long enough so I don't get burned by a late frost.

I do that with our programs, too... try to hold off just in case something makes a difference. In the case of our Service Learning Projects, I was hoping that we would see an uptick in attendance. I tried increased promotion of the multigenerational aspect of it as well as adding more diverse topics. Unfortunately, in the past three years, there has been a consistent decrease in attendance as well as interest. It has evolved to be a project that the Religious Education classes do with no participation by other congregants.

As a result, I have made the decision to discontinue this program on a monthly basis. It has been a drain to find projects that can fit into the narrow spectrum initially set out in the program. Although we could move it to a different time, I'm concerned about finding one or more individuals who can facilitate the experience. Our volunteer pool is getting pretty tapped currently.

But that doesn't mean the end of Service Learning! On the contrary, I am thinking we will bring it back during the summer months as a few longer-term projects that all the classes work on together on Sundays. We have the opportunity to make a larger difference and focus on better learning, not just tackling a service project. If you have an idea or would like to facilitate one with the children and youth, please let me know! We have some ideas we'd like to try, but are always open to find more.

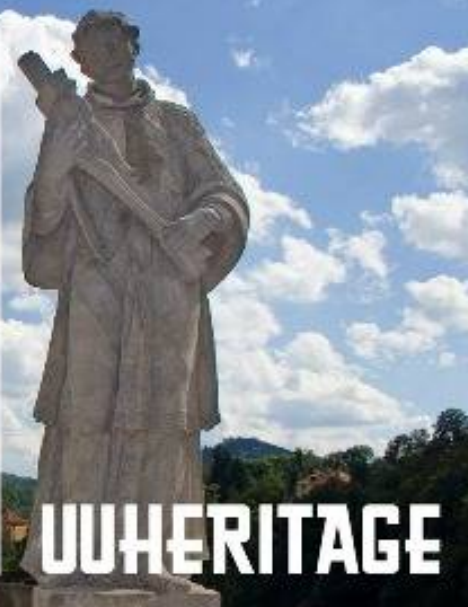
*Molly*

The Adult Religious Education Subcommittee is sponsoring another round of **UU Heritage** classes with Russ Alberts.

The series will begin on **Wednesday, March 23** with a look at the Historical Jesus (just in time for Easter), and run Wednesday evenings through April 20.

Sessions will be held in the downstairs meeting area and begin at 7 p.m.

Please join us for these inspiring and informative classes.





## Your Generosity In Action!

By Pat Caffrey

Recent discussions about the identity of Second Unitarian Church have been thought-provoking. As I reflected on this, the Share The Plate program came to mind. Also, outgoing Office Administrator Gary Emenitove suggested this article – thank you, Gary!

**Did you know that last month was the 53<sup>rd</sup> month of the Share The Plate program at Second Unitarian?** That's right, we started in September, 2011. With Share The Plate, we donate ½ of the Sunday offerings during a month to a nonprofit, 501(c)3 organization. Because of you, this has been a successful program. **49 different organizations have benefited from your generosity!** Relationships are being built with others in our communities as we learn about them and they learn about Second Unitarian. This is one way that we accomplish our mission **to be Authentic, Compassionate, and Transformative in our lives, in our faith, and in the world.**

As of 01/31/16, the total donated to these organizations was **\$27,211.29**. As you can see from the list below, these worthwhile organizations provide an array of services. If you would like to nominate an organization for Share The Plate, simply complete an application and email it to [stp@2uomaha.org](mailto:stp@2uomaha.org). Here is a quick link: <http://www.2uomaha.org/share-the-plate>. As a reminder, please indicate pledge or offering on the envelope or check memo line. **Thank you for making a difference!**

**Benson Plant Rescue, Ministers Discretionary Fund, Saving Grace Perishable Food Rescue, Centro Latino of Council Bluffs, My Sister's Keeper, Siena/Francis House, CERG UU Disaster Relief Fund - Hurricane Sandy Victims, Nebraska AIDS Project, St. Augustine Indian Mission School, Chickasaw Nation Disaster Relief & Recovery Fund, Nebraska Coalition for Lifesaving Cures, Table Grace Ministries, City Sprouts, Nebraska Humane Society, The ARTery, COPE (Christian outreach Program - Elkhorn), No More Empty Pots, Educare of Omaha, North Omaha Area Health (NOAH) Clinic, The Nebraska Innocence Project, Epilepsy Foundation – Nebraska, One Spirit - Pine Ridge Reservation, The Women's Fund of Omaha, Standing on the Side of Love Fund – Tornado Relief for Undocumented Families, One World Community Health Center, Together, Food Bank for the Heartland, Partnership 4 Kids, Tom Mahony Pride Prom, Girls Inc. of Omaha, Planned Parenthood of the Heartland, Tornado Victim Fund - Thurman, IA, GLSEN - Gay Lesbian Straight Ed Network, Project Harmony, Tracy Iwersen Memorial Pride Players Scholarship Fund, Heartland Family Service-Better Together, Project Interfaith, UUA Association Sunday, HELP Adult Services, Radio Talking Book Service, Women's Center for Advancement, Inclusive Communities, reEnergize Program, Wounded Warriors Family Support, Inc., Justice for our Neighbors – Nebraska, RESPECT**



### Regional Assembly 2016 The **WHO** in the New Era of Unitarian Universalism

April 29 - May 1 • St. Paul, MN

[MidAmericaRegionUUA.org/ra](http://MidAmericaRegionUUA.org/ra)

#### Registration is open for Regional Assembly!

Join us to explore "The Who in the New Era." Our three keynote presenters will share their thoughts on how Unitarian Universalism could be exactly what current religious explorers want from faith communities. There will be many great workshops and outstanding worship services led by ministers from across the region.

For complete information and a link to register, please visit our website:

<https://www.midamericauua.org/events/regional-assembly>

Be sure to check out the volunteer opportunities for a reduced rate when you register.



## Women's Alliance

By Kathi Oliver

Women, and those who identify as women, are invited to attend Women's Alliance on **Monday, March 14**, at First Unitarian Church, 3114 Harney St. Socializing and beverages start at 6:30 p.m. with dinner at 7.

The program will be Doris Moore, founder and CEO of the nonprofit behavioral healthcare organization Center for Holistic Development. Visit [www.chdomaha.org](http://www.chdomaha.org).

We ask for \$15 which goes to the cost of dinner, the Merritt Education Fund, the Partner Church scholarship, and various activities at First Unitarian. If this will be your first time attending a WA get-together, please be our guest. Our dinner selection will be corned beef and cabbage from Eddie's Catering; the vegetarian meal will be decided at a later date.

RSVP: [click here to reply by EMAIL](#) or 402-214-2718 (please leave a message). **RSVP by March 10** and please indicate if you would like meat or veggie.

## Retirees' Group

By Carol Johnson

The Homestead Exemption provides relief from property taxes by exempting all or a portion of the valuation of a home from taxation. A representative from the Douglas County Assessor/Register of Deeds Office will speak with our Retirees' Group for an informational presentation about the homestead program on **Tuesday, March 8, at 1:00 p.m.** All are invited!

Second Unitarian Retirees meet monthly for socializing, fun, personal growth, and learning.

## 2016 Community Garden Plots Now Available

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 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 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 31 will be made available to the wider community.

### 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!





# Membership Journeys

By Kathy Bell

## Just a Few Spots Left on Hospitality Teams

Whether you are a newcomer or a long-time member, we invite you to join a Hospitality Team to help create a welcoming experience for members and guests on Sunday mornings.

- **Team Activities:** Give people a hearty welcome as you open the door for them. Help newcomers get oriented. Take new families downstairs to help them settle their children into the right classrooms. Prepare coffee and treats. Chat with newcomers during coffee hour. Clean up after coffee.
- **Team Details:** Nine teams. Eight persons per team. A team serves one Sunday every other month (six times per year). That is 72 people all working to make Second Unitarian the most welcoming church in Omaha!

Make welcoming others your Sunday morning spiritual practice. Contact Kathy Bell at [membership@2uomaha.org](mailto:membership@2uomaha.org).

**Love to make a joyful noise and have fun with a delightful group?**

***Please join the Second Unitarian Choir!***

If you enjoy singing, we'd love to have you join us in the choir! ***Beginning in March, the choir is rehearsing on WEDNESDAY evenings at 7 p.m.*** Childcare available upon request.

To join or for more information, contact [music@2uomaha.org](mailto:music@2uomaha.org).

Attendance	
Date	Adults in Worship
1/31	49
2/7	59
2/14	72
2/21	66

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## Staff

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**Pam Curtiss-Smith, Nursery Supervisor**

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 Nancy Amsler, Richard Koelling, Betty Segell,  
 Kathie Haskins, Jaime Short

**Second Unitarian Church**

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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*