

July 2019

The Flame



**The Monthly Newsletter of
First Unitarian Church of
Omaha**

Page 2

Sunday Services

Pages 4 & 5

Church Events

Page 11

NAMI Walk Team
Information

Sunday Services

Sunday, July 7 at 10:30am

A service focusing on mental health and First Unitarian's support of NAMI (National Alliance on Mental Illness).

Sunday, July 14 at 10:30am

Brian Carpenter, VNA Hospice Chaplain

The challenges and special moments of hospice work: Chaplain Carpenter will share some of his experiences.

Sunday, July 21 at 10:30am

"The Courage to be Kind"

Ben Wallace & Friends

How does our faith call us to be kind in an atmosphere of fear and xenophobia? We will look at how we can move past our fear to create more kindness in our world, especially towards those most vulnerable in our community.

Sunday, July 28 at 10:30am

"The Nine Muses"

Mystic Sojourn CUUPS

Celebrating sacred music, dance, arts and sciences of the Nine Muses.

The Sunday Forums take the summer off. The forums will return in September.

Share the Plate

Each month one-half of the loose currency collected in the offering plate is donated to a local cause that advances important principles of Unitarianism.

Our Share the Plate recipient for July is **Black & Pink**. Black & Pink is an open family of LGBTQ prisoners and "free world" allies who support each other. Their work toward the abolition of the prison industrial complex is rooted in the experience of currently and formerly incarcerated people. This organization responds through advocacy, education, direct service, and organizing.

Visit www.blackandpink.org for more information.

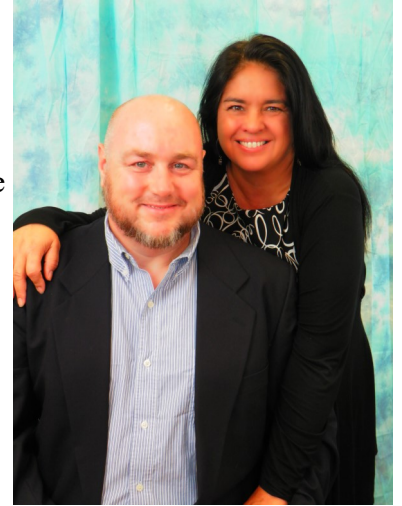
See page 10 for information about a way to help this organization in July.

To nominate a nonprofit organization for the 2020 Share the Plate schedule, please see page 14.

Summer Greetings from Your Board President, Joe Schaaf

Hello everyone! I hope your summer is off to a fantastic beginning and that you are getting some necessary relaxation time with your families! Lori and I are planning for a busy summer of travel and family time mixed in with plenty of work to help our congregation prepare for the upcoming very important year.

Important year, you say? Well, yes—this is one of the more important years in recent First Unitarian history. We're embarking on finding and (hopefully) calling a settled minister at the end of this church year. It has been at least 15 years since we have done this critical activity, and much has changed in the way we go about fulfilling this important task. Suffice it to say, carefully planning and executing on our goals will go a long way to helping us find our ideal minister's new home!



I will spare you the details on the new and improved processes that we are employing with the help of the UUA, but it is safe to say that I am very confident we have never had this much assistance and guidance in any of our previous searches. Our board has great confidence in our new Settled Minister Search Team, and there will be opportunities this year for you to ask questions of them about the new process and give input on fulfilling this important duty.

One seed I want to plant in this letter: I would like the board to implement a new ***Mid-Year Congregational Meeting*** to be held in Dec, Jan, or Feb and your participation/attendance will be greatly appreciated. More details to follow.

What else is your Board of Trustees up to this summer, you may ask? Well, we are welcoming our four amazing new members to the board (Sarah Copeland, Peg Pidgeon, Harold Cruz-Sanchez, and Bill Tull) with a training session on necessary board information (policies & procedures, by-laws, articles of incorporation, interpreting financial documents, and in the informal ways we interact) so that they are fully prepared to assume their roles on YOUR board.

In addition to this training session, we will get together along with our spouses to have a nice social gathering in a Get-To-Know each other party. Hey, a little fun is a healthy way to bond! Right?

Other things we are beginning to work on is developing the Annual Vision on Ministry; working with Rev. Michelle on our joint Board/Minister Annual Review for the 2018/19 church year (critical for “sharpening the saw”); helping the Stewardship Team plan for a successful re-pledge drive for 2019/20 (tentatively called the “Mind the Gap” initiative, after the Euro phrase for carefully entering a train) as well as plan for a successful 2020/21 stewardship campaign; and finally, developing a five-year plan that carefully outlines our goals and the steps needed to reach those goals over the next five years.

That is a lot, to be sure, but we are in a critical year for our congregation and we will most certainly need everyone's help and patience in successfully navigating all of these goals. Next month I will roll out my five goals that I would like to see the board achieve over the next year, so please be on the lookout for the President's Letter in July (I will be sure to advertise those five goals in other ways as well so you are kept in the loop on our progress this year).

I hope your June/July summer months are pleasant and relaxing, and until we see each other again, I wish you happy trails!

Joseph Schaaf

Church Events

Fellowship with Clair Memorial, Our Sister Church

Sunday, June 30 at noon in the Common Room. Please join us for a time of Fellowship with Clair Memorial Church members at First Unitarian on Sunday, June 30th at 12pm—after the Sunday service. This is a potluck so please bring goodies. See page 7 for details.

Bill, Margaret & Friends: An Afternoon of Music

Sunday, June 30 at 2pm in the Sanctuary. See page 7 for details.

People's Film Festival

Monday, July 1 at 7pm in the Common Room. We will watch *Soldiers of Conscience*. This film is a profoundly balanced film about a mostly taboo topic: killing in war. It was made to start discussions and to encourage mental-health for soldiers. Conscientious objectors, families of members of the armed services, as well as active-duty individuals of all kinds have told us how much they appreciate and learned from this film.

Compassionate Communication Group

Meets the 1st & 3rd Tuesday of each month at 7pm in the Common Room. July dates: July 2 and July 16. Using Compassionate Communication developed by Marshall Rosenberg, PhD, we learn to connect with ourselves and others with empathy and to act in greater harmony with our values. Learning to communicate more compassionately, like speaking a new language, takes practice. Contact Suzanne: nvcsuz@gmail.com for details.

CommUUnity Night: Splash Pad

Friday, July 5 at 6pm offsite. We will meet at the Schwer Park Splash Pad at 800 West Centennial Road in Papillion. It will be a picnic potluck. Swimsuits will be the proper attire. See the Facebook event here: www.facebook.com/events/2213545395365494/. See flyer on page 8.

Memorial Service for Lee Fettig

Saturday, July 6 at 11am.

WAYS TO HELP: Black & Pink Mail Processing Event

Thursday, July 11 at 5pm in the Common Room. Join us as we help Black and Pink, the share the plate recipient for the month of July. See page 10 for details.

Summer Pool Party Hosted by the Callaghans

Saturday, July 13, 7-9pm, offsite at Gilbert Pool in Bellevue (address: 29th & Jackson, Bellevue, NE 68005). All church members are invited, but we need you to RSVP please so there are enough lifeguards. Please send your RSVP to Kim at kjcallaghan@hotmail.com. Details: This pool is zero-depth entry, water toys such as balls and tubes are OK, but floating devices are not permitted. Feel free to bring a snack, but it's not required. Alcohol and glass containers are prohibited at city pools. We hope to see you there! See flyer on page 9.

The Flame Newsletter Deadline

July 15 at noon. Please send articles to the church office: admin@firstuuomaha.org.

People's Film Festival

Monday, July 15 at 7pm in the Common Room. We will watch *A Quest For Meaning*, which tells the story of two childhood friends that hit the road to question the way of the world. Equipped with nothing more than a tiny camera and a microphone, they will attempt to uncover the causes of the current world crisis and discover a way to bring about change, by meeting philosophers, teachers, and environmental activists.

Breaking Bread for Believers

Tuesday, July 16 at 6:30pm in the Merritt Lounge. Are you a Believer or a Christian in any form? This group is to share/express Christian beliefs. As Unitarians, ALL religious and spiritual paths should be considered equally valid and therefore need to be represented within our community. This group will give you a sanctuary to hold those spiritual beliefs close to your heart. We're discussing *Understanding the Bible: An Introduction for Skeptics, Seekers, and*

Religious Liberals by John Buehrens. This book is available at the UU Bookstore, Amazon, and on Kindle. If you need a copy or if you have questions, please contact Ben at bmwallace@gmail.com. July's discussion topic will be compassion. Childcare is available.

Women's Religious Studies Covenant Group

Thursday, July 18 at 1pm in the lounge. This group meets the 3rd Thursday of each month. Our book is *On the Brink of Everything: Grace, Gravity, and Getting Old* by Parker J Palmer. We welcome all self-identified women. If you're interested, please contact Rae: raeb1@hotmail.com.

WAYS TO HELP:

YES Meal Prep

Friday, July 19 at 9am in the Kitchen. See page 13.

NAMI WALK

Saturday, July 20 at Elmwood Park Pavilion. Join our walking team to participate as we have in past NAMI WALKS and represent First Unitarian in our continued support of stigma-free mental health. See flyer on page 10.

Leadership Talk Back

Sunday, July 21 at 11:30am in the Common Room. The MTC and the Church Board want to hear from you. Have questions? Suggestions? Please join your church leaders at a table in the Common Room during coffee hour.

Young Adult Discussion Group & YA Game Night

The YA Group will not meet in the summer. We are looking for new leadership. If interested, contact MTC@firstuuomaha.org.

more events on next page...

Church Events

Recurring Events

Women's Religious Studies Group

*This group meets every Thursday, except for the 3rd week of the month at 1pm in the Merritt Lounge. We will NOT meet on July 4. We're starting a new book, *The Hate U Give* by Angie Thomas. This novel is about an ordinary girl in extraordinary circumstances. The story addresses issues of racism and police violence with intelligence, unflinching honesty, and heart. If you're interested, please contact Linda Parker at lparkerlib@gmail.com.*

Dharma Chautauqua

Every Thursday, 6pm to 7:30pm, in the Whitney Young Classroom. More info can be found online: dharma.chautauqua.drycreekhost.net/.

Bridge Group

Meets the 2nd and 4th Sunday of each month in the Conference Room at 11:30am. Contact Scott Kemper at scott.kemper@gmail.com.

YRUU (Youth Group)

Meets every Wednesday at 7pm in the Common Room from September to May. For more information, contact DRE@firstuuomaha.org.

Choir Rehearsals

Every Wednesday at 7pm in the Sanctuary from September to May. For more info, email: choirdirector@firstuuomaha.org.

Soul Matters Small Groups

Various meeting dates. See here: www.firstuuomaha.org/soulmatters
We will take July and August off.

Parent's Choice Listening Circle

We will not meet in the summer.

AHA Listening Circle

Meets the 3rd Sunday of the month at 11:45am in the Merritt Lounge. In this group we will deepen our understanding of our personal Atheist, Humanist, and Agnostic values through readings, listening and discussion which will help to enhance the UU experience. Please contact AHA@firstuuomaha.org with questions.

Future Events

The 3F Book Bonanza Group

*There's no meeting in July. Our next meeting will be on Wednesday, August 14 at 7pm in the Merritt Lounge. The August book is *Hanta Yo* by Ruth Bebe Hill. Folks should be sure the copy they use has the Lakota glossary in the back of the book. Our September book is *The Trial* by Franz Kafka. Please contact Sheri with questions: ksvortex@msn.com.*

Heritage Event: Revival of Newton Mann Superstar Musical

Saturday, August 24 at 6pm. Save the date! This event will feature UU actors and musicians. Help us celebrate the 150th anniversary of our congregation and enjoy the show! See page 6 to learn how you can be part of the show!

Book Club

Monday, August 26 at 7pm in the Merritt Lounge. We do not meet in July. We'll gather in August to discuss what we read over the summer. Questions? Contact Dave at drichardson821@gmail.com.

Teams Meeting

Saturday, Sept. 7 at 9am in the Common Room. See page 12.

See page 13 Ways You Can Help and Get Involved at Church!

Minister Out of the Office

Rev. Michelle is on leave for the summer starting the first week of July until mid-August. Please contact the church office at admin@firstuuomaha.org or 402-345-3039 ext. 101.

Note from the Church Office

By Catharine Dixon,
Church Admin



In August, I will celebrate ten years at First Unitarian Church. Because I am in the office, I know my face may not be familiar to some newcomers.

What do I do?

Record contributions, deposit funds to the bank, manage the church calendar, the website, social media and other communications like this newsletter and the weekly enews, answer the church phone and emails, attend board meetings, Ministry Team Council Meetings, and Teams Meetings, and so many other things.

What do I love about my job?

The people. We have an amazing group of volunteers who are fun, generous and caring. There are not enough thank you's in the world to express the gratitude for everything that is done by volunteers.

Why am I writing this?

One, we needed another article so I wrote one. Two, I want to be sure that church visitors, friends, and members know that they can reach out to the church office if there is a question. I will answer your question or find someone who can.

Email: admin@firstuuomaha.org
Phone: 402-345-3039 ext. 101

Thank you and I look forward to more church adventures!

Save the Date!Revival of ***Newton Mann: Superstar***

Satirical Homage to the life of Newton Mann written by Barb Ross

~~Blatantly Stealing From~~ Drawing Influence from Jesus Christ Superstar

Coming to the First Unitarian Church of Omaha

Saturday, August 24th @ 6pm

This is a free all church event.

We want YOU for parts in the production- whatever your interest or comfort level- we have a place for you! More information coming this summer but contact Kate Wiig bkatewiig@gmail.com for more information.

We are bringing back the satirical musical of Newton Mann's life with a couple new songs!

This all-church event needs you!! We have solo show-stopping numbers for you divas, and fun, small chorus roles for folks who just wanna have fun but don't want to memorize much. We could also use help with costumes and props!

If you are at all interested in taking a lead or dipping in a two—we need you!

Tentative Dates Below:

Sunday, July 28th- "Auditions" 2pm to 4pm

Sunday, August 11th- 2pm to 6pm

Sunday, August 18th- 2pm to 6pm

Friday, August 23rd- 6pm to 9pm

Saturday, August 24th- 2pm to 6pm

Get acquainted with the music by checking out *Jesus Christ Superstar*.

Contact Kate Wiig at bkatewiig@gmail.com for more information.

REVIVAL OF *NEWTON MANN:* *SUPERSTAR*

Bill, Margaret, & Friends: An Afternoon of Music

Sunday, June 30 at 2pm in the Sanctuary

Join us for an afternoon concert featuring the music of composers Duke Ellington, William Grant Still, and American spirituals and folksongs. Freewill donations will be accepted. All are welcome!



Before the music, join us for a Fellowship Potluck with Clair Memorial Church to take place on **Sunday, June 30th** at First Unitarian Church!

On April 28th, many First Unitarian members and friends attended a potluck at Clair Memorial Church after the Sunday service. Now it's our turn to host! Please join us for a time for Fellowship with Clair at First Unitarian on Sunday, June 30th at 12pm—after the Sunday service. This is a potluck so please bring goodies. After the fellowship time, we will invite Clair and First U guests upstairs to enjoy a concert by Bill Tull at 2pm in the Sanctuary. See above.

CommUUnity Night — Splash Park

Friday, July 5 at 6:00pm

Address: 800 West Centennial Rd., Papillion, 68046

We will meet at the Schwer Park, Splash Pad in Papillion for CommUUnity Night. It will be a picnic potluck. Swimsuits will be the proper attire.

Everyone is invited. Questions?

Contact Sheri at ksvortex@msn.com





Summer Pool Party! Hosted by the Callaghans

**Saturday, July 13, 7-9pm, offsite, at Gilbert Pool in Bellevue
(address: 29th & Jackson, Bellevue, Nebraska 68005).**

All church members are invited, but we need you to **RSVP** please
so there are enough lifeguards on duty.

Please send your RSVP to Kim at kjcallaghan@hotmail.com

Details: This pool is zero-depth entry, water toys like balls and tubes are okay, but floating devices are not permitted. Feel free to bring a snack, but it's not required. Alcohol and glass containers are prohibited at city pools.

We hope to see you there!

Community Mail Processing

First Unitarian Church | Common Room



July 11 | 5 - 8 PM



www.blackandpink.org

First Unitarian Church will be hosting the monthly mail processing event for Black and Pink on Thursday, July 11 from 5pm-8pm in the Common Room in concert with our partnership with Black and Pink as the Share the Plate Beneficiary in July.

Black and Pink is a national organization, headquartered in Omaha, NE whose mission is to abolish the criminal punishment system and to liberate LGBTQ+ people/people living with HIV who are affected by that system, through advocacy, support, and organizing. In our work, we receive thousands of letters from inside members every month. With those letters come the need to read through and process them. Our mail processing system operates with our outside members reading through, and organizing them based upon what our members are requesting, to be entered into our database. Mail processing events are a chance for the community to be in complete solidarity with our inside siblings, engage in uplifting and caring for our community, and continuing the groundwork of dismantling these inhumane systems.

We encourage everyone to come and join us for some good work, great community, and some good food. We ask for people to register for the event so that we can get an accurate food count.

Registration via the FB event is available at <http://bit.ly/FirstUBPMailJuly2019>.

If you have questions, please contact Ben Wallace at 402-680-6226 or bmwallace@gmail.com.

Omaha Together One Community (OTOC)

What is OTOC? It is a local Omaha organization which “teaches people to become effective leaders, [while] exploring their legitimate interests, doing solid research, engaging in tough, but always respectful public discourse, holding elected officials accountable and creating positive change through collective action.”

OTOC’s vision: Create a connected community that bridges race, social and economic status that works together to influence policy about issues that we care about. First Unitarian Church is a member of OTOC along with 25 other congregations and organizations.



Upcoming OTOC Events:

Issue Cafe: Environmental Sustainability- OPPD's Programs and Policies

On Thursday June 27, 6:45pm-8pm at Urban Abbey (1026 Jackson St.) Learn about Omaha Public Power District's work on developing community solar projects and other policies working to make Omaha a greener community. Looking for an easy way to reduce your carbon footprint? Considering buying an electric vehicle? Or, just looking for something different to do? Then join us for a great evening as we learn about OPPD’s Solar Community project and electric vehicle rebate program.

Summer Organizing Training: Community Organizing through Congregations and Caring Institutions

On Monday, July 8, explore OTOC's history, affiliations, and accomplishments as we look at why democracy matters and what role faith institutions play in democracy. Event at 7pm - 8:30pm, Augustana Lutheran Church, 3647 Lafayette Ave.

Visit the OTOC Facebook page here: www.facebook.com/OmahaTogetherOneCommunity/ or its website here: <https://otoc.org>. For more information, contact Laurie Gift at tothegifts@icloud.com.

NAMI Walking Team

Saturday, July 20 at Elmwood Park Pavilion. We will meet at 9am and the walk begins at 10am.

Join us to participate in, as we have in the past, NAMI Walks and represent First Unitarian Church in our continued support of stigma-free mental health. We are walking to raise awareness and raise funds for the important work of NAMI, the National Alliance on Mental Illness.

To support a First UU NAMI walker or register to be a walker, go to our Team DyNAMite page here: <https://bit.ly/2ZsHraW>.

All funds raised directly support the mission of NAMI to provide support, education, and advocacy to individuals and families right here in our community.

For more info, please email Terri Lynn at quburrt77@outlook.com.



Hope in Action

Our church believes in community, and that is what Hope in Action, a sub-team of the Caring Team, is all about. Any one of us might need assistance, and we want to make it easier for you to ask for support and easier for you to offer support when others are in need.

WHO IS SERVED?

Church members, friends, regular attendees and their spouses are eligible for assistance from Hope in Action.

WHO CAN HELP?

Everyone! Hope in Action is an opportunity for everyone in our church community to support each other by sharing knowledge, skills and resources. Hope in Action will use church communications, including the enews, to let our church community know when help is needed to respond to a request for support. And we will report back to the church community about how we were able to respond. All communication will be done in a manner that maintains the degree of confidentiality requested by the person seeking assistance.

WHAT SUPPORT CAN BE EXPECTED?

Hope in Action is there when people are dealing with a medical problem, need transportation or help around the house, can use assistance with referrals to social service agencies or just need someone to talk to about the ups and downs of life. Our response will vary depending on the type of support that is needed in our church community and what resources we have available. Although Hope in Action is not able to respond to emergencies, short-term financial assistance may be available for lodging, food, clothing, medication, transportation and utilities. Financial disbursements are not made directly to the person making the request for assistance.

HOW TO ASK FOR SUPPORT

Requests for assistance must be made directly by the person needing help. Hope in Action does not respond to any anonymous or third-party requests for assistance. Here are the ways you can ask for support from Hope in Action. You may send an email to hopeinaction@firstuuomaha.org or use the Hope in Action link on the church website. Or, you may simply complete a Caring

Card, located in the church pews and place it in the offering plate.

WHO DECIDES WHAT SUPPORT WILL BE OFFERED?

Hope in Action will use a team approach, so at least three members of Hope in Action must participate in determining the nature of the response.

CHANGE FOR CHANGE

Each week generous people put change in the collection plate. This change goes to the Sunday School kids who decide what to do with the money. In the past they have helped Community Meals and International Bridges for Justice. The kids are now donating this change to the **Neighborhood Ministry Team**, which purchases bus tickets and food cards and gives out blessing bags to people who come to the church door from our area. Your change makes a difference! Thank you for your generosity!

Team Leaders: Next Meeting to Happen Sept. 7th

Our next Teams Meeting will be held on Saturday, September 7 at 9am in the Common Room. We will provide bagels, coffee and juice. If you have an item for the agenda, please email MTC@firstuuomaha.org.

CHURCH PARKING

Parking is directly west of the church in the surface parking lot or on the street. We want to save the surface lot for those who need to park closer. You may park in the Midtown Crossing Parking Garage to the west of the church lot. The entrance to the parking garage is on Farnam Street. Have your ticket validated downstairs in the Common Room. Please have your ticket validated for free parking—with validation you receive FREE PARKING for the ENTIRE day. Questions? Email the church office at admin@firstuuomaha.org. See more info at our website here: www.firstuuomaha.org/directions.

SISTER CHURCH EVENTS

As many of you know, we're working to reconnect with our Omaha Sister Church, Clair Memorial United Methodist Church. These events below will take place at Clair Memorial Church. The address is 5544 Ames Ave., Omaha, NE 68104.

First Friday Fish Fry: Happens the 1st Friday of each month. Times: 11am to 2pm and 4-7pm. Cost: \$12 donation includes fried catfish, homemade lemon cake and your choice of sides. For more information, call Brenda at 402-571-5234.

Monthly Food Pantry: Happens the 3rd Saturday of each month from 10am to 2pm. Drop-off pantry donations on Thursday, July 18 from 3pm to 7pm or on Saturday, July 20 from 8am to noon.

106th Clair Memorial Church Anniversary: We'll celebrate with a picnic on Saturday, August 24 and worship and potluck dinner on Sunday, August 25.

Contact the Clair Memorial Church office with any questions about these events: 402-451-8322.

See page 7 for information about the Fellowship event with Clair at First Unitarian on Sunday, June 30th.

Ways You Can Get Involved

Black & Pink Mail Processing Event

Thursday, July 11 at 5pm in the Common Room. Help us support Black and Pink, our share the plate recipient for the month of July, by coming to this event. All the details can be found on page 10 of this newsletter or go to the Facebook event here:

<http://bit.ly/FirstUBPMailJuly2019>.

Search Committee Needs Help

Short-term volunteers needed! The Search Committee needs your help creating and administering the upcoming Congregational Survey. Experience with survey metrics/data collection would be very helpful here, and a great way to give back. We appreciate your willingness to serve. Contact Kate Godfrey at 402-880-1327 or at coachkate@cox.net

YES Meal Prep: Volunteers

Friday, July 19 at 9am in the Kitchen.

We'll serve pulled pork, coleslaw, and bread. Donations of fruit and desserts would be greatly appreciated. Want to help Kim prepare this meal or donate?

Email kjcallaghan@hotmail.com.

Every month Kim and her team prepare a meal for Youth Emergency Services (YES). See this website for more info: www.yesomaha.org.

NAMI Walk Team

The walk takes place on Saturday, July 20, offsite. See page 11 for details.

Newton Mann Musical—YOU are needed

We're looking for people to act, to sew costumes, to make props and so much more. Find a role that fits your schedule and talents. The performance is on Saturday, August 24. See page 6 for information.

Call for Photos!

Like to take pictures? If you capture a great photo at church, please send your photo to the church office at admin@firsttuomaha.org. We are always looking for new photos we can share in our newsletter, on the church website and social media. Thank you!

Transition Team Focus Meetings

Submitted by Marcia and Cy Leise

The Transition Team gathered responses from 56 members during 8 Focus Meetings about their impressions of the church and why they continue to be active members. Most expressed appreciation for the many strengths of our present church community, including our traditions, principles, music, the beauty of our historical building, RE, and diverse groups and activities. Friendships and an intellectually stimulating atmosphere are supported by a respectful, nonjudgmental community.

For the future, many hoped for a highly engaged and energetic settled minister who will directly interact with all the subgroups to support their integration within the church community on the basis of UU principles and traditions. There were many commonalities within the responses but also many intriguing ideas that may become important in the future. Many expressed enthusiasm for creative improvement of adult RE programming as well as strengthening of child and youth programming. They suggested ways to connect our Sunday services, social justice activities, and uses of our building and facilities to needs beyond our doors.

A full report is available for church members and leaders, including those on the Ministerial Search Committee who will help us select a settled minister in 2020.

[Click here to view the full report.](#)

Ministerial Search Committee elected at the Annual Meeting:

Diana Byrd, Kim Dunovan, Jessica Eman, Kate Godfrey, Mark Loscutoff, Lita Magisana, Dave Richardson, Klyde Warren

From the Church Office

Church Directory: The office can update the Church Directory any time. If you have moved or changed your email address or phone number, please email admin@firsttuomaha.org and let us know. Thank you for helping us keep the directory up-to-date. Would you like to receive a copy of the church directory (either via regular mail or by email as a PDF document)? Email the church office your request. The directory is also available on our church website. If you need assistance finding it on the website, contact the church office. Thank you!



Do you know a nonprofit organization that should be considered for a month in our **Share the Plate** program?

Organizations should be nonprofits and should have a local impact.

Please let the MTC know by the end of August.

The form to fill out is here:

https://docs.wixstatic.com/ug-d/6ac81d_60d1e8c496734397b892cbca2823df70.pdf

The MTC makes the decision in the fall for next year's schedule.

Share the Plate
2020

Please send completed forms to
MTC@firstuuomaha.org

Library Lady

by Linda Parker, Church Librarian, with guest columnist Lin Thompson



On occasion church members will share how books have affected their religious journeys. In this month's article, Lin Thompson writes about children's books she read as a child in the All Souls Church in Washington, D.C. Here is what Lin wrote:

I was born and raised Unitarian. My childhood church had a very active RE program that was built upon the philosophy and curriculum of a UU giant, Sophia Lyon Fahs. One of Fahs' most famous quotes is 'Each night a child is born is a holy night.' Sophia received much of her advanced education in the early 20th century when the Modernist movement was developing ideas of putting the Bible in a historical context and using scientific study and individual experiences in RE education. Fahs' thought was very child-centered using explorations and discussions. My UU experiences reflected that as I remember doing chemistry experiments, going on walks in parks and planning worship services. We also visited houses of worship of many Christian denominations and other faiths.

We used books from The New Beacon Street Series which was primarily written by Fahs and used by the American Unitarian Association. The series was developed for children of specific ages with an introduction for teachers and parents and questions to use for discussion. I still have some of these books and remember others. I believe we used them at earlier ages. Some titles from the Series are: *Beginnings of Earth and Sky*, *Life and Death*, for ages 9-11; *Moses*, ages 11-13; *Jesus the Carpenter's Son*, ages 13-15; and *The Church Across the Street*, Ages 15-18. ages. Only *From Long Ago and Many Lands* and *Old Tales for a New Day: Early Answers to Life's Eternal Questions* are still in print. Some titles are in our church library.

My UU education started with a series for 3-4 year olds that was a wonderful basis for life. There were three *Martin and Judy Books* written by Verna Hills and edited by Fahs. They were about the title children in their little white houses. They explored the world and the forces of nature in their lives and surroundings. These three books were written avoiding the word God or thought of a personal God. Kittens and babies were born, birds and a grandmother died. When the bird died the story says, "the wonder part of the bird had gone out of it." Children learned about cooperation, kindness and mutual respect. I read those stories to the nursery kids when I was a tween. These books and those in the new Beacon Street Series became the basis for my own developing religious ideas.

In the Series books we learned about creation stories from other countries and religions. We were discovering how other people looked at the mysteries and problems of life and trying to find universal themes. I remember we explored the lives of Jesus, Muhammed, Confucius and Buddha looking at similarities and differences in their teachings and even magical birth stories and the religions that developed around and from them. In *One God and the Ways We Worship Him*, we learned more about the major religions in America in the 1950's-The Jewish, Catholic, and the Protestant Ways. A book published by the Beacon Press but not in its Series was *Child of the Sun* which introduced the concept of monotheism. It was about Akhenaten and his new religion and had ideas of one god for all and fascinating photos of ancient Egypt.

Two Fahs books that I still have really helped formulate some of my own thinking about Christianity. One book was *The Old Story of Salvation*. I learned that the Bible as presented is really a collection of ancient writings and books with ideas about Jesus and his life, some written years after his death. Some of these writings were accepted and others rejected at a time back in the 4th Century. We discussed the idea that there are different ways to look at Jesus and his relationship to God and to a trinity. We learned that decisions were made at councils (Nicea) and through creeds (Apostles) to codify Christian thinking.

The last book I have was helpful and yet difficult for me as I grew up. It is entitled simply, *Jesus the Carpenter's Son*. It was written by Fahs in 1945, one year after I was born. The book gave me a basis of thinking when hearing about Christianity from my friends. Fahs opens her book with a verse from Matthew 13:55,56 "Is this not the carpenter's son?" That is how I think of Jesus today. I found a human Jesus and learned how others might have felt about him and written about him after his death. They were spreading his thoughts from a small circle of friends to millions and thus changing the course of history.

In the end, I have found many of the ideas I learned about in all of these books from *Martin and Judy in Their Two Little Houses* to *Jesus the Carpenter's Son* have helped me develop my own religious philosophy and provide good guidelines for trying to live the best life one can. I usually go right back to the Golden Rule and all the foundations I received growing up a Unitarian.

Rolinda (Lin) Thompson, church member

A Quilt Weekend in Photos

On Saturday, June 8, First Unitarian Church hung its 1898 historic quilt along with a brand new quilt created by Barb Dewell and Nancy Scott in the Sanctuary and Common Room, and invited all to come see the quilts up close. Both quilts were featured in an article in the *Omaha World Herald* on June 8 as well. To read the article, go here: <https://bit.ly/2L70q79>.

Thanks to the quilters and members of the Heritage Task Force for helping us celebrate the 100th anniversary of our building and the 150th anniversary of the congregation.

Thanks to Nancy Scott and Kate Wiig for the photos. To the right: A close-up of the new quilt which features signatures of church members. Bottom left-hand corner: a shot of the OWH article. Bottom right-hand corner, the 1898 quilt in the Sanctuary. On the next page: Nancy Scott and Barb Dewell pose with the new quilt.

To learn more about the quilts, please go to: www.firstuuomaha.org/quilt.





Interim Minister

Rev. Michelle LaGrave
minister@firstuuomaha.org

**Lifespan Director
of Religious Education**

Christina Strong
dre@firstuuomaha.org

Membership Coordinator

Carrie Helmberger
coordinator@firstuuomaha.org

Church Administrator

Catharine Dixon
admin@firstuuomaha.org

Sanctuary Singers Director

William Miller
choirdirector@firstuuomaha.org

Organist

Pat Will

Sanctuary Singers Accompanist

J. Gawf

EMR Director

Stan Harper

Minister Emeriti

Ronald Knapp
 Frank Rivas

Affiliated Community Minister

Rev. Dr. Sarah Voss

Nursery Coordinator

Andrea Laudi
childcare@firstuuomaha.org

Custodian

Bobby Medrano

THE FLAME

Deadlines are the 15th of each month. Word limit: 200.
 Send submissions to
admin@firstuuomaha.org.

Editor/Designer: Cat Dixon

Proofers:

Brian Callaghan, Scott Kemper,
 Lois Norris

Flame Mailing Team:

Debbie Hunsberger, Lois Norris,
 Linda Hruska, Kim Callaghan

Meet Our Leaders

Board Members

Joe Schaaf (President), Sharon Piehler (President-Elect), Catherine Plumlee (Secretary), Sarah Copeland, Harold Cruz-Sanchez, Peg Pidgeon, Bill Tull, Donna Tubach Davis
 Email: board@firstuuomaha.org

Trustees of the Capital Trust

Daniel Byrd (2020), Bob Hess (2021), Christopher Schmidt (2022)

Ministry Team Council

Amy Lucas, Sarah Monaghan, Sharon Piehler, Rev. Michelle LaGrave
 Email: mtc@firstuuomaha.org

Nominating Committee: Nellie Chenoweth, Kate Godfrey, Mike McAtee, Carolyn McNamara, Kathi Oliver

Right Relations Committee: Della Bynum, Carol Cronin, Mark Loscutoff, Sarah Voss

Transition Team: Kathy Alexander, Skip Ciulla, Carol Cronin, Kay Lynn Goldner, John Hruska, Marcia Leise

Ministerial Search Committee: Diana Byrd, Kim Dunovan, Jessica Eman, Kate Godfrey, Mark Loscutoff, Lita Magisana, Dave Richardson, Klyde Warren

Ministry Teams and Team Leaders

AHA—Sheri Conner
 Archives/Library—Linda Parker
 Baby Welcoming Team—Katrina Schmidt, & Sara Switzer
 Black Lives Matter—Rene Harper
 Caring—Louise Jeffrey
 Chalice Guild—Kay Lynn Goldner
 CUUPS—Steve Switzer
 Early Morning Risers—Mary Kay Peters & Lloyd Olson
 Fellowship Team—Nadine Keith & Nellie Chenoweth
 Finance Team—Walt Jesteadt
 Garden—Sharon Conlon
 Governance—open
 Fundraising Team—Donna Neff & Katrina Schmidt
 Hope in Action—open
 Hospitality Teams—Carolyn McNamara
 House and Grounds Team—open
 Listening Circles—Katrina Schmidt
 Membership Team—Mike McAtee
 Midtown Helping Hands—open
 Office Team—Carolyn McNamara
 Omaha Together One Community—Laurie Gift
 Partner Church Team—Dave Olson
 Recycling Coordinators—Dave & Evy Rosser
 Right Relations—Nadine Keith
 Social Justice Coordinator—open
 Soul Matters—Michael McAtee
 Stewardship Team—Mary Kay Peters & Peg Pidgeon
 Wayside Pulpit—Kim Dunovan
 Women's Alliance—Catherine Plumlee
 Worship Arts Team—Mary Thomas
 Young Adult Group—open
 YRUU—Carol Cronin & Tom Seguin

First Unitarian Church of Omaha

www.firstuuomaha.org

402-345-3039

Church Events

Fellowship with Clair Memorial, Our Sister Church

Sunday, June 30 at noon in the
Common Room. See page 7.

Bill, Margaret & Friends: An Afternoon of Music

Sunday, June 30 at 2pm in the
Sanctuary. See page 7.

People's Film Festival

Monday, July 1 at 7pm in the
Common Room. See page 4.

Compassionate Communication Group

Tuesdays, July 2 & July 16 at 7pm in
the Common Room. See page 4.

CommUnity Night: Splash Pad (offsite)

Friday, July 5 at Schwer Park Splash
Pad at 800 West Centennial Road in
Papillion at 6pm. See page 8.

Memorial Service for Lee Fetting

Saturday, July 6 at 11am.

Board Meeting

Tuesday, July 9 at 6pm in the
Common Room.

MTC Meeting

Wednesday, July 10 at 5:30pm in the
Merritt Lounge.

WAYS TO HELP: Black & Pink Mail Processing Event

Thursday, July 11 at 5pm in the
Common Room. See page 10.

Private Wedding

Friday, July 12 at 3pm.

Summer Pool Party

Hosted by the Callaghans (offsite)
Saturday, July 13 at 7pm at Gilbert
Pool in Bellevue. See page 9.

The Flame Newsletter Deadline

July 15 at noon. Send articles to the
church office:

admin@firstuuomaha.org.

People's Film Festival

Monday, July 15 at 7pm in the
Common Room. See page 4.

Breaking Bread for Believers

Tuesday, July 16 at 6:30pm in the
Merritt Lounge. See page 4.

Women's Religious Studies Covenant Group

Thursday, July 18 at 1pm in the
Merritt Lounge. See page 4.

WAYS TO HELP: Yes Meal Prep

Friday, July 19 at 9am in the
kitchen. See page 13.

NAMI WALK

Saturday, July 20 at Elmwood Park
Pavilion. See page 11.

Leadership Talk Back

Sunday, July 21 at 11:30am in the
Common Room. See page 4.

Private Wedding

Saturday, July 27 at 3pm.

Sister Church Events

Many events happen at our Sister
Church, Clair Memorial. See a list of
upcoming events on page 12.

Young Adult Discussion Group

This group doesn't meet in the summer.

Women's Alliance

This group doesn't meet in the summer.

Recurring...

Bridge Group

Meets the 2nd and 4th Sundays of each
month. See page 5.

Parent's Choice Listening Circle

This group will not meet in the summer.

AHA Listening Circle

Meets the 3rd Sunday of the month.
See page 5.

YRUU (Youth Group) Meetings

Wednesdays at 7pm in the Common
Room. September to May.

Choir Rehearsals

Wednesdays at 7pm in the Sanctuary.
September to May.

Women's Religious Studies Group

Meets most Thursdays at 1pm in the
Merritt Lounge. We will not meet on
July 4th. See page 5.

Dharma Chautauqua

Every Thursday, 6pm to 7:30pm in the
Whitney Young Classroom. See page 5.

Soul Matters Small Groups

Various meeting dates. See here:

www.firstuuomaha.org/soulmatters

We will take July and August off.

Future Events...

3F Book Bonanza Group

Wednesday, August 14 at 7pm in the
Merritt Lounge. See page 4. We do not
meet in July.

Heritage Event: Revival of Newton Mann Superstar Musical

Saturday, August 24 at 6pm.
See page 6.

Book Club

Monday, August 26 at 7pm in the
Merritt Lounge. See page 5.

Teams Meeting

Saturday, Sept. 7 at 9am in the
Common Room. See page 12.

Social Media & First U

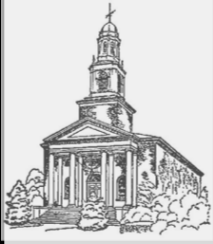
Find our public Facebook page here:

www.facebook.com/firstuuomaha/

Find us on Twitter here:

[@FirstUUOmaha](https://twitter.com/FirstUUOmaha)

Be sure to like the church and follow
us!



We whose names are here subscribed associate ourselves together as a Religious Society for mutual helpfulness in right living and for the advancement of sound morals and pure religion in the community: and we hereby pledge ourselves to bear our part in the common cause and to care for the welfare and influence of the Society of which by this act we become members. Basing our union upon this expressed moral and religious purpose rather than upon any dogmatic statement of belief, and emphasizing the religion of character and daily life above all creedal confessions, we invite to our membership all who are seriously drawn to us in our spirit and aims and who desire to have with us their Church Home under the Articles of Incorporation.

— **Bond of Union, August 22, 1869**

**First Unitarian Church of Omaha
3114 Harney St.
Omaha, NE 68131**

www.firstuomaha.org