

April 2019

The Flame



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

Page 2

Sunday Services

Pages 4 & 5

Church Events

Page 8

Spring Carnival

Sunday Services

Sunday, April 7 at 10:30am

“To Boldly Go Where No UU Has Gone Before”

Rev. Michelle La Grave

Did you ever notice there's no church on Star Trek? Does the Church have a future? If so, what might it look like? What might be its role in society? This year's auction sermon, purchased by Dave and Evy Rosser, will explore the near future of UU congregations, particularly in relation to societal mental health issues.

Sunday, April 14 at 10:30am

Henry Lemon Sermon: “What I Learned from Anna (and Other Fictional Characters)”

Sarah Copeland

How are fictional characters different from characters in scripture – and can we learn from both? Does it matter what kind of writing accompanies you on your way through life and just what have I learned from my friends on paper? “Letting your soul, or whatever fancy name you like to give it, out of its cage and into the daylight is perhaps the hardest thing anyone can do.” —Fynn, from the book, *Mister God, This is Anna* (written by Sydney Hopkins).

Sunday, April 21 at 10:30am

“Stories of Transformation: Ostara, Passover, Easter”

Rev. Michelle La Grave

Spring has arrived. The earth has been, once again, transformed. Passover is upon us. Easter morning is here. Let us gather together to celebrate the power of transformation.

Sunday, April 28 at 10:30am

White Supremacy Culture Teach In 2

Rev. Michelle La Grave

"White supremacy" is a provocative phrase as it conjures up images of hoods and mobs. Yet in 2019, actual "white supremacists" are not required in order to uphold white supremacist culture. Building a faith full of people who understand that key distinction is essential as we work toward a more just society in difficult political times.

Sunday Forum

We only have ONE forum each month. The forum will focus on the Soul Matters topic for that month. This month's forum information:

Sunday, April 7 at 9:30am in the Common Room.

Soul Matters Monthly Topic:

“What Does It Mean To Be A People of Wholeness”

With Denise Allain

"We Unitarian Universalists understand the urge to restore what once was. Nothing is more human. Who doesn't want to reverse the damage? Who doesn't hold on to the humpty dumpty hope that all can be put back together again? But our faith teaches us that this is just not how the world works. Transition and change rule the flow of life. There is no going back. The current of time is just too strong.

And so the wholeness offered us is not that returning our lives to their original state but working with what remains to make something new. The shards are not pieces of a puzzle that needs put perfectly back together, but building blocks waiting to be molded into a yet to be imagined form. To be made whole again is to be reorganized, not restored."

—Excerpt from April's Soul Matters Small Group Packet.

Come join us for a taste of the Soul Matters small group experience as we explore this month's topic.

Invitation to Fellowship

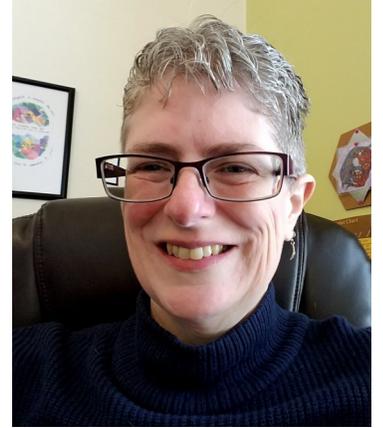
Sunday, April 28 after the service we will have a special potluck offsite. Please join us to help revitalize our sister church relationship with Clair Memorial. On April 28, each congregation will worship at its usual time and place. Immediately after the Sunday service, we will travel to Clair Memorial for a potluck gathering. Bring food and if you have extra room in your car, please carpool. Our plan is to meet at Clair by noon. The address: Clair Memorial United Methodist Church, 5544 Ames Avenue, Omaha, Nebraska 68104. We hope to see you there!

Ministerial Musings from the Interim Minister

By Rev. Michelle LaGrave

Just yesterday, as I was driving down the road with Micah, he pointed out a pick-up truck with a bumper sticker. It said: “I (heart) BOOBS.” My first reaction was dismay. How is it, I wondered, that this kind of thing can still be going on? Why isn’t he embarrassed to put that on his truck? Who even sells these sorts of things anymore?

My second reaction was to remember an experience I had just a few months ago after visiting a local craft festival. I was dressed casually, in jeans and a t-shirt, accompanied by Bella, my service dog, while wandering around looking at the sellers’ wares when, all of a sudden, I heard a loud male voice say: “Fine dog you got there, young lady.” I was, of course, polite. After all, society dictates ministers must always be polite. But inside I was angry. I wondered how old he would have to be to think he could call me “young lady.” After all, I am almost fifty, far from being a young girl. And I wondered if he would have changed how he spoke to me if I didn’t appear disabled or if he knew that others call me “Reverend.” And I wondered what it would mean if that did or did not change the way he addressed me.



While these are two rather minor examples, they are indications of how much work we, as a society, have left to do in the face of oppression. Work which, when accomplished well, will be nothing less than an act of transformation. The road blocks and detours (or, dare I say, potholes?) on this road to transformation often feel enormous, perhaps even insurmountable. We, as an Association of Congregations, have encountered some big ones recently. Namely, the results of a study about the experiences of transgender and genderqueer people in our UU congregations and a hurtful article in the UU World Magazine.

But there are positive signs, too. Black Lives UU (BLUU) is going strong. We have elected the first woman President of the UUA. MeToo, Time’s Up, and even a ChurchToo movement has emerged. This is a long way of saying that the road to transformation is long and arduous, filled with both hope and despair, accomplishments and setbacks. Grief and joy are its natural companions and we must be able to hold both if we are to continue in the work.

I’d like to end with a special invitation to each one of you. In an effort to revitalize the sister church relationship between Clair Memorial United Methodist Church and First Unitarian Church, we will be holding a joint fellowship hour on Sunday, April 28th. Each congregation will worship at its usual time and place. Immediately after the service at First is over, we will travel together to Clair Memorial for a potluck gathering. (There will NOT be any coffee or social hour at First.) I urge each one of you to attend. Bring some food and, if you have extra room in your car, offer to bring some people who do not have their own mode of transportation. I hope to see you there!

In Hope,
Rev. Michelle

Church Events

People's Film Festival

Monday, April 1 at 7pm in the Common Room. We will watch an elegantly filmed documentary, *Planet Ocean*, which takes us on a beautiful adventure into the strangest domains of our planet—the oceans. Directed by Yann Arthus-Bertrand, this award-winning documentary pivots around the relationship between the Earth's oceans and the entire planet's ecosystem.

Breaking Bread for Believers

Tuesday, April 2 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 are 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. Childcare is available.

Compassionate Communication Group

Meets the 1st & 3rd Tuesday of each month at 7pm in the Common Room. 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.

CommUuity Night—Special Event Farewell to Jan, our DRE

Friday, April 5 at 5:30pm in the Common Room. This monthly potluck event is open to everyone. This month, we say farewell to Jan Wilson who is retiring from the church in May. Help us celebrate Jan! See flyer on page 11.

Team Leaders Meeting

Saturday, April 6 at 9am in the Common Room. This meeting is for team leaders and volunteers. We will discuss plans for the future and hope you can join us. We will provide bagels, coffee and juice. If you have an item for the agenda, please email MTC@firstuomaha.org.

Transition Team Meetings at Church—You're Invited!

Various Meeting dates/times. Your input is wanted! Please see page 6 to find a time/date that works for you. We would like to hear from everyone about what you would like for the future of the church.

Right Relations Committee Talk Back

Sunday, April 7 during Coffee Hour in the Common Room. Committee members will be available for a talk-back about their work.

Young Adult Discussion Group

Sunday, April 7 at 11:45am in the Whitney Young Classroom. This group welcomes everyone ages 18-35 from all over the Omaha metro. Questions? Please email: youngadults@firstuomaha.org.

Memorial Concert for Sid Wilson

Sunday, April 7 at 2pm in the Sanctuary. The Wilson Family invites you to a live classical music concert with professional musicians from the Omaha Symphony. Light refreshments will follow in the Common Room after the concert.

Women's Alliance

Monday, April 8 in the Common Room. Socializing and beverages start at 6:15pm and dinner at 6:30pm. All who identify as women are invited to attend this gathering. Suzanne Arney, our guest speaker, will talk about past transitions in the church. We ask for a freewill donation of \$15, which goes to the cost of food and the Merritt Education Fund. Please let us know if you are a first time attendee. Need childcare to join us? No problem! RSVP with your child's name and age. RSVP FOR CHILDCARE NO LATER THAN April 1. PLEASE

RSVP TO ATTEND NO LATER THAN April 5. Please RSVP via the [Facebook event page](#) or by EMAILING Denise Allain at denise.allain@yahoo.com.

Ware Lecture Showing Event

Thursday, April 11 at 7pm in the Common Room. Brittany Packnett delivered the 2018 Ware Lecture to the UUA General Assembly in Kansas City, Missouri, on June 23, 2018. Together we will view the 45-minute lecture and share insights. Packnett challenges us to examine the ideas presented and our own choices and individual actions or inactions.

Friday, April 12—deadline

Team Leader Annual Reports due to the Church Office. See page 12 for more information.

Leadership Talk Back

Sunday, April 14 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.

The Flame Newsletter Deadline

April 15 at noon. Please send articles to the church office: admin@firstuomaha.org

People's Film Festival

Monday, April 15 at 7pm in the Common Room. We will watch Wim Wenders' new documentary, *Pope Francis: A Man of His Word*, which is intended to be a personal journey with Pope Francis, rather than a biographical documentary about him. The pope's ideas and his message are central to this documentary, which sets out to present his work of reform.

The 3F Book Bonanza Group

Wednesday, April 17 at 7pm in the Merritt Lounge. The book we'll read is *Alias Grace* by Margaret Atwood. If you have questions, please email: denise.allain@yahoo.com. Our May book is *Future Home of the Living God* by Louise Eldridge.

More events on next page...

Church Events

Women's Religious Studies Covenant Group

Thursday, April 18 at 1pm in the lounge. This group meets the 3rd Thursday of each month. Our book is *Lifecraft* by Forrest Church. We welcome all self-identified women. If you're interested, please contact Rae: raeb1@hotmail.com.

Young Adult Game Night

Friday, April 19 at 6pm in the Common Room. All are invited to join the Young Adults for this event. We will have childcare! Bring snacks and board games. Questions? Email: youngadults@firstuomaha.org.

Compassionate Communication Workshop

Saturday, April 20 at 9am in the Common Room. RSVPs are required. Limited spots. Please see flyer on page 9 for more information.

Spring Carnival

Sunday, April 21. See page 8.

WAYS TO HELP: Yes Meal Prep

Monday, April 22 at 9:30am in the kitchen. Come help prepare a meal for the youth at YES. See page 13.

Fellowship with Clair Memorial Church

Sunday, April 28, after service at Clair Memorial. See page 2 for information.

First Steps Class

Sunday, April 28 at 11:45am in the Whitney Young Classroom. Join us for an introduction to First Unitarian Church and Unitarian Universalism. This session is run by Carrie, our membership coordinator. All are welcome to attend. See page 17 for more information.

Book Club

Monday, April 29 at 7pm in the Merritt Lounge. Our selection is *Red Clocks* by Leni Zumas. Questions? Contact Dave at dritchardson821@gmail.com.

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're reading *Justice on Earth: People of Faith Working at the Intersections of Race, Class, and the Environment* by Manish Mishra-Marzetti and Jennifer Nordstrom, Editors. For questions, please contact Marcia at mkleise@cox.net.

Dharma Chautauqua

Every Thursday, 6pm to 7:30pm, in the Whitney Young Classroom. More info can be found online: dharmachautauqua.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. For more info, contact Jan at DRE@firstuomaha.org.

Choir Rehearsals

Every Wednesday at 7pm in the Sanctuary. For more info, email: choirdirector@firstuomaha.org.

Parent's Choice Listening Circle

Meets the 2nd Sunday of the month at 11:45am in the Merritt Lounge. For questions or to join, please contact Sarah Eades Hamilton (402-306-6339/ seades.hamilton@gmail.com).

AHA Listening Circle--Open to new members!

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 Unitarian Universalist experience for those who attend. Please contact AHA@firstuomaha.org with questions.

Future Events

Church Annual Meeting

Sunday, May 19 at 10:30am. The Annual Meeting this year will take the place of a Sunday service. See page 10.

"White Fragility" Book Discussion Group

Thursdays, May 30, June 6, and June 13 at 7pm in the Common Room. Join Rev. Michelle LaGrave as we discuss *White Fragility: Why It's So Hard for White People to Talk About Racism* by Robin DiAngelo. This book is available from the [UU Bookstore](#), Amazon, and the Omaha Public Library.

Save the Date: The 2019 Pride

Parade & Festival is scheduled for Saturday, June 29 this year. Please go to "[2019 Pride Parade & Festival](#)" on Facebook for more information. The parade will be held in Omaha this year and not Council Bluffs. We hope to have a vehicle or float this year in line with the theme of the day, the 50th Anniversary of Stonewall. We would like everyone who wishes to participate in the parade be able to do so this year. More information to come.

Interested? Please email Peg at

sjconnect@firstuomaha.org.

See page 13 for Heart & Hand Auction Events and Ways You Can Help and Get Involved at Church!

Transition Team Meetings—You Are Invited to Take Part!

The First Unitarian Transition Team is charged with helping to discern who we are and who we want to become as a congregation as part of the search for a settled minister. To do this we will be hosting a series of meetings both at church and in some homes over the next few weeks. Your ideas and hopes for our church in the next few years will help the Search Committee provide a clearer picture of our church community for ourselves and to prospective ministers. Because this is such an important part of our search for a new minister, we encourage you to please check your calendars and plan to attend one of these meetings. Home meeting dates/times are pending.

Currently, the following dates are scheduled for the church meetings:

Sunday, April 7, 12 to 1pm in the Merritt Lounge

Sunday, April 14, 9am to 10:15am in the Whitney Young Room

Sunday, April 14, 12pm to 1pm in the Whitney Young Room

Sunday, April 28, 9am to 10:15am in the Whitney Young Room

Sunday, May 5, 9am to 10:15am in the Whitney Young Room

Sunday, May 5, 12pm to 1pm in the Merritt Lounge

Monday, May 13 during the Women's Alliance Meeting



OTOC
10th Annual Spring Fundraiser

Celebrating Community

Kaneko
1111 Jones Street, Omaha
Tickets: \$25 per person in advance
For Tickets call: (402) 344-4401

Silent Auction ♦ Cash Bar ♦ Appetizers ♦ Live Music

Saturday, April 13th, 2019
6:00 p.m. to 9:30 p.m.

Stewardship Campaign 2019-2020

By Mary Kay Peters

While the Stewardship Campaign happens in March, we accept pledges all year. So if you missed pledging last month, there's still time to get your pledge in. We are living through an exciting and challenging time of transition for our congregation. Rev. Michelle is leading us through this change and helping us to manifest our dreams and our potential for the future of our congregation. This year we are celebrating 150 years together as a congregation, with 100 years in our current Midtown location. Do you realize how special that is? The vast majority of UU congregations these days are located in the suburbs. An inner city location in a building as historic as ours is very rare, especially in the Midwest region. In order to maintain or increase our programs as well as our beautiful building, please consider giving generously this year so we can all continue to enjoy what this wonderful church provides us. Your generous financial support of our church is much appreciated. Thank you for your generosity!

Ready to make your pledge? Pledge forms are in the church pews and you can access the Stewardship Campaign web page here:

www.firstuomaha.org/stewardship

[Click here for the pledge form.](#)

Once you have your pledge form finished, mail it to the church office:

First Unitarian Church

3114 Harney St.

Omaha, NE 68131

OR bring your pledge form to church and drop it in the offering plate.

New this year: make credit card payments through the church website. See more details below.

Finance Matters

By Walt Jesteadt, Church Treasurer

We will be nearing the official end of the stewardship campaign by the time this edition of the *Flame* reaches you. The unofficial campaign will continue through April with phone calls to those who have not yet pledged. We have made it easier than ever to pledge this year. There is a **donate** tab on the top right of the home page of the church website, <https://www.firstuomaha.org>. The pull down menu for **donate** has two options. The **stewardship** option provides information on why you should pledge and copies of the necessary forms. The **donate** option allows you to sign up online for monthly contributions from your checking account, credit card or debit card. If you encounter any problems with that process, send an email to treasurer@firstuomaha.org. We will assume 12 monthly contributions and will enter that as a pledge, so no pledge form is necessary.

The online options are new this year and are available through Vanco Payment Solutions, the company we have been using for several years to facilitate monthly transfers from your bank account to ours. We now have the long-awaited credit card option. The bank account option will still be better for most of you because credit card payments can contribute to your long-term debt and for the church because processing fees are lower. But if you would like to use a credit card, feel free to do so. You will be asked if you want to pay the 2.75% processing fee. Please say Yes. About 40 members of the church have been using Vanco for automatic transfers from checking accounts for several years. Most pay their pledges automatically and those who encounter job changes or other unexpected problems just send me an email note and I put the transfers on hold until things improve. I will be able to do the same for credit card payments. There is more information on the church website. Let me know if you have any questions.



@ **CURIOSITY**
CARNIVAL
for Easter

**Sunday,
April 21st!**

Easter Egg Hunt*
and children's games
on the east lawn
Beginning in sanctuary
at 10:30-11:30

*bring baskets

**The Right Relations Committee invites you to
A Compassionate Communication Workshop**

Facilitated by Suzanne King and the Compassionate Communication Group

Date: Saturday, April 20, 9am to 12:30pm

Where: First Unitarian Church of Omaha, Common Room

Explore the idea of empathy (play Empathy Poker!), learn about universal needs, and gain awareness about observations vs. judgments. This is a step in the process of preparing our congregation to develop a plan for and a covenant of Right Relations. Join us for a continental breakfast at 9am. Come discover what Compassionate Communication is and how it can help your relationships and congregation. Please join us.

Important: This workshop only has 25 spots—first come, first served. Don't delay. Deadline to RSVP is April 17th.

Please RSVP to the church office: admin@firstuomaha.org



The Mission of the Right Relations Committee (RRC) is to:
Support the congregation in upholding its Covenant; facilitate effective communication within the congregation; encourage safe, respectful, and healthy dialogue and collaboration; and provide periodic training in communication, conflict resolution, and building healthy communities.

First Unitarian Church of Omaha — Annual Meeting Notice

The 150th Annual Congregational Meeting of First Unitarian Church of Omaha will take place at the church on Sunday, May 19 at 10:30am. (The meeting will take the place of the service that Sunday.)

Eligible voting members* of the church will adopt an operating budget for the 2019-20 church year; elect a President-elect, members of the Board of Trustees, a Trustee of the Trust Fund, Right Relations Committee members, and Nominating Committee members; hear select reports from church leaders, vote on important items on the agenda and reveal our Unitarian of the Year! We will send out a letter to all church members in mid-April with more details.

Childcare will be provided and your Board of Trustees will host coffee hour following the 10:30 a.m. meeting and provide snacks and drinks. We encourage all members to attend this important church event.

If you are not able to attend this meeting in person and would like to view it online, please contact the church office (admin@firstuomaha.org) by Tuesday, May 7th to let us know. We will attempt to stream the annual meeting online for those who cannot attend in person. Please note: our streaming process still faces some technical challenges, and we cannot guarantee that it will work perfectly. We will not stream the meeting unless we have church members who have notified the church office that they need the meeting streamed online.

**Individuals are eligible to vote who have been members of the church for at least three months and have made a financial contribution in their name to the church between April 19, 2018 and April 19, 2019.*

Sincerely,

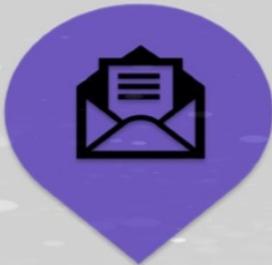
Board of Trustees
First Unitarian Church of Omaha

Questions? Email the board at board@firstuomaha.org. See the Board President's letter on page 14 of this newsletter.

You're invited!



You're invited!



Farewell to Jan Wilson, Director of Religious Education, A Special CommUnity Night to Celebrate Jan

When: Friday, April 5 at 5:30pm

Where: First Unitarian Church Common Room

What to Bring: This is a potluck. RE provides the main dish. If you're too busy to make something or pick it up, come anyway!

Jan is retiring after serving our church for six years. Please come help us celebrate Jan! Her last Sunday as our DRE is May 12th.

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!

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 April is **Black and 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.

Church Parking Information

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

Team Leaders: Next Meeting to Happen April 6th

Our next Teams Meeting will be held on Saturday, April 6 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.

Team Leaders: Annual Reports Due Friday, April 12th

Every year all teams/committees submit a report to the church office so it can be included in the Annual Packet that is given out at the Annual Meeting in May. This helps the church with its archives and informs the congregation what your team has accomplished in the last year. To submit your report or if you have questions, email the office: admin@firstuuomaha.org.

Ways You Can Get Involved

Spring Carnival

Sunday, April 21st. Join Jan and other volunteers in setting up and running our Easter Carnival. This annual tradition is fun—egg hunts, games, prizes. Kids love coming to church on Easter.

Email dre@firstuuomaha.org to sign up to help. Thank you!

YES Meal Prep: Volunteers and Donations

Monday, April 22 at 9:30am in the Kitchen.

We will make potato casserole and serve fruit. This month we will collect baby supplies (diapers, clothes, wipes) for the YES Maternity Home. Donations can be left in the big YES donation box in the coat area off the Common Room. Every month Kim and her team prepare a meal for Youth Emergency Services (YES) and collect donations for the shelter. See this website for more info: www.yesomaha.org.

Want to help Kim? Email kjcallaghan@hotmail.com.

Omaha Together One Community (OTOC) Environmental Sustainability Action Team

Concerned about the environment? Concerned about climate change? Looking for a way to influence policy makers? Then, come to the next meeting of OTOC's Environmental Sustainability Action Team. The goal of this team is to take better care of our environment thru advocacy. We believe that our voices are stronger by joining together with like-minded members of OTOC. If you want to begin your advocacy journey, then please join us at our next meeting on Thursday, April 4 at 7pm at First United Methodist Church, 7020 Cass Street, Room 111. Subsequent meetings are always on the first Thursday of each month at the same location and time (7pm at First United Methodist Church). Please email Laurie Gift at tothegifts@cox.net with questions or for more information.

Heart & Hand Auction Events with Open Seats

Want to support the church AND be entertained? Come to an auction event! Email auction@firstuuomaha.org to sign-up, and get details online at the auction website ([click here](#)). If finances are a challenge, email auction@firstuuomaha.org or call 402-916-9741 to arrange a guest seat.

Upcoming Events:

Family Movie Night

Saturday, April 13 at 3pm in the Common Room. Cost is \$10/Family. Join us for a family friendly movie afternoon. Our favorite movies are from Studio Ghibli. We will provide the movie and light snacks. Claim one spot per "family."

Stitching Bee and Tea

Saturday, April 27 at 2pm in the Common Room. Cost is \$15/person. Do you knit or crochet? Come join Denise Allain and Sara Switzer for an afternoon of yarn fun as we sit back, knit, crochet, and enjoy some tea! Please bring your own "yarning" supplies, we will provide the refreshments!

Tea & Tarot

Sunday, April 28 at 2pm in the Common Room. Cost is \$30/person. Join Megan Gustafson for a whimsical tea party of Dessert and Divination. The hostess will conduct individual Tarot readings for each guest. Practitioners of Tarot are welcome to bring their own cards to show, or share their talents. Cos-Play or Fancy Dress encouraged, never required.

Church Chicks Brunch

Saturday, May 4 at 11am at Jackie Anderegg's Home. Cost is \$25/person. All church women (chicks, spring chickens and us older hens) and their friends are invited to a spring champagne brunch—quiches, waffles, pastries of all kinds, delicious treats, fun females, cuteness of all kinds, and a chance to rub shoulders with other church women!

Monarch Seed-ball Party

Sunday, May 5 at 2pm at Nancy Scott's Home. Cost is \$20/person. Join us as we make milkweed seed balls from soil and clay with milkweed seed and nectar flowers inside the seed balls. The seed balls will be distributed to bicycle riders at RAGBRAI in 2019. This event is family-friendly!

Board President's Letter

Dear members and friends,

April showers bring May flowers. We are deep into Stewardship season, hoping that the seeds we plant and water will continue to flower for decades to come. We are looking with hope to the future of our church. Over the coming year, an intrepid group of church members will undertake the most important task than can face a fellowship. No, I'm not talking about returning the 'One Ring' to Mordor. This incredible journey will be to search for a new settled minister.

You have had the opportunity to nominate members for the search committee, and at the Annual Meeting in May, you will have the opportunity to elect this vital team. We need to elect people with a variety of unique viewpoints; someone involved with youth, someone involved with social justice, a young adult, someone on the LGBT spectrum, someone with a different racial or cultural background, etc. The goal is for everyone in the congregation to feel like someone on the search team represents them and their interests.

We need search team members with the wisdom of Gandalf, the curiosity of Frodo, the loyalty of Sam, the courage of Gimli, and the heart of Arwen. Some of their work will engage the entire church, to help discern who we are, who we want to be, and what kind of minister we need, which may not necessarily be the kind of minister we think we want. They will have a lot of help along the way, but much of their work will be confidential and will not be able to be shared with anyone else in the church.

After the team is chosen, we will trust, support and inform them in any way we can. Hopefully no fingers will be lost in the process.

Maria Wallace, Board of Trustees President



Photo by Jackie Anderegg

General Assembly 2019

General Assembly (GA) is the annual meeting of our Unitarian Universalist Association (UUA). Attendees worship, witness, learn, connect, and make policy for the Association through democratic process.

Dates: June 19-23, 2019

Place: Spokane, WA

Overview: The Power of We

In a time of great challenge and heartbreak in our world, what does our faith demand from us? At this year's General Assembly we will explore the power, possibility, purpose, struggle and joy of finding the path forward together as Unitarian Universalists. Join us as we work for collective liberation inside and outside our faith.

Learn more about GA, here: www.uua.org/ga.

Midwest Leadership School

Dates: July 14-20, 2019

Place: Luther College—Decorah, IA

Part of the Unitarian Universalist Association's nationwide network of leadership schools, MidWest Leadership School is a week-long intensive program in leadership and group dynamics. Led by lay and ordained staff with a deep understanding of UU congregations, MWLS develops both youth and adults into congregational leaders, provides leadership tools and skills, and deepens Unitarian Universalist identity. This is an extremely intense week of workshops, discussions, intimate small groups, worship preparation, personal theological exploration and growth.

Learn more here: www.mwls.org

Sarah Joslyn Society

By Deb Duggan, SJS Leader

Acting on her own excellent idea, Dixie Lemon, church member, established the Sarah Joslyn Society in 2004 to encourage, enable and thank those who wish to leave a bequest to the church. Her gentle prods, witty articles and pithy sayings ("You'll never miss the money") have helped the membership grow from 32 original members to more than 75 who have named the church in their estate planning. Membership in this Society requires no on-going effort on your part. There are no dues, no tasks, no committees nor office holders. After your first commitment, you're a member for life, and you get to attend a special gathering, usually in mid-October, and bask in the warmth that comes from having done something important to help ensure the financial security of the church. Come join us! Contact Deb at 402-553-5477 for more information. Thank you!

Are You Thinking about Becoming a Member?

Have you been tossing the idea around for a while, but weren't sure it was the right time? Do you want to be involved in the future of the church and our ministerial search?

Now is the time! Our Search Committee is gearing up to look for our settled minister and in order to be able to give your (very important) input you need to be a member of the church.

Becoming a member is very easy. Contact Carrie Helmberger, Membership Coordinator at coordinator@firstuomaha.org.

Set up a time with Carrie to:

- Go over the membership packet
- Make a pledge of record
- Sign the book (either as part of a church service or in private)

Still not sure about joining? That's okay! Maybe you'd like to attend one of our classes:

First Steps

This group meets at 11:45am in the Whitney Young Room (downstairs classroom) on Sundays 4/28, 5/12, & 6/30. Gather by the visitors' table or come to the Whitney Young Room. You are invited to join us as we gather together to get acquainted with the basics of Unitarian Universalism and our vibrant community. There are many ways to connect with the church and we look forward to discussing the unique opportunities offered by First Unitarian Church of Omaha. (This is a one-time class—choose the meeting date that works for you.)

Pathways

Next session in September/ October (five consecutive Sundays) at 11:45am in the Whitney Young Room (downstairs classroom).

This class explores who we are and what we believe, and provides opportunities for members of our congregation to share with newcomers what it means to be a Unitarian Universalist. Pathways gives newcomers a chance to examine their own personal stories in light of our Unitarian Universalist tradition and heritage. Whether you are new to the church, or have been coming for a while, this is a great opportunity to learn more about this community.

As always, if you need anything, please feel free to contact Carrie at coordinator@firstuomaha.org.

Look forward to seeing you at church!

Carrie



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minister@firstuuomaha.org

Director of Religious Education

Jan Wilson
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Membership Coordinator

Carrie Helmberger
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Sanctuary Singers Accompanist

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EMR Director

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THE FLAME

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

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Meet Our Leaders

Board Members

Maria Wallace (President), Joe Schaaf (President-Elect), Catherine Plumlee (Secretary), Sharon Piehler, Floyd Prine, Carol Ramsey, Tom Seguin, Donna Tubach Davis
 Email: board@firstuuomaha.org

Trustees of the Capital Trust

Ellen Shurson (2019), Daniel Byrd (2020), Bob Hess (2021)

Ministry Team Council

Dave Richardson, Joe Schaaf, Katie Zimmer, Rev. Michelle LaGrave
 Email: mtc@firstuuomaha.org

Nominating Committee

Royal Carleton, Kate Godfrey, Kathi Oliver, Carol Ramsey, Marie Sedlacek, Ben Wallace

Right Relations Committee

Della Byum, Carol Cronin, Nadine Keith, Mark Loscutoff, Tom Seguin (board liaison)

Transition Team

Kathy Alexander, Skip Ciulla, Carol Cronin, Kay Lynn Goldner, John Hruska, Klyde Warren

Ministry Teams and Team Leaders

AHA—Sheri Conner
 Archives—Linda Parker
 Baby Welcoming Team—Becca Hatcher, 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 & Sarah Copeland
 Fellowship Team—Nadine Keith & Nellie Chenoweth
 Finance Team—Walt Jesteadt
 Garden—Sharon Conlon
 Governance—Kim Dunovan
 Fundraising Team—Donna Neff & Katrina Schmidt
 Hope in Action—Kim Dunovan
 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—open
 Recycling Coordinators—Dave & Evy Rosser
 Right Relations—Nadine Keith
 Social Justice Coordinator—Peg Pidgeon
 Soul Matters—Michael McAtee
 Stewardship Team—Mary Kay Peters & Peg Pidgeon
 Wayside Pulpit—Kim Dunovan
 Women's Alliance—Catherine Plumlee
 Worship Arts Team—Denise Allain
 Young Adult Group—Taylor & Jessica Eman
 YRUU—Jessica & Taylor Eman & Tom Seguin

First Unitarian Church of Omaha

www.firstuuomaha.org

402-345-3039

Church Events

People's Film Festival

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

Breaking Bread for Believers

Tuesday, April 2 at 6:30pm in the Merritt Lounge. See page 4.

Compassionate Communication Group

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

CommUnity Night:

Farewell to Jan, DRE

Friday, April 5 at 5:30pm in the Common Room. See pages 4 and 11.

Team Leaders Meeting

Saturday, April 6 at 9am in the Common Room. See page 4.

Transition Team Meetings

Various dates/times. See page 6.

Right Relations Talk Back

Sunday, April 7 during coffee hour. See page 4.

Young Adult Discussion Group

Sunday, April 7 at 11:45am in the WY Classroom. See page 4.

Memorial Concert for Church Member, Sid Wilson

Sunday, April 7 at 2pm in the Sanctuary. See page 4.

Women's Alliance

Monday, April 8 at 6:15pm in the Common Room. See page 4.

Board Meeting

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

Ware Lecture Showing Event

Thursday, April 11 at 7pm in the Common Room. See page 4.

Leadership Annual Reports Deadline

Friday, April 12. See page 12.

Leadership Talk Back

Sunday, April 14 at 11:30am in the Common Room. See page 4.

The Flame Newsletter Deadline

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

admin@firstuomaha.org

People's Film Festival

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

3F Book Bonanza Group

Wednesday, April 17 at 7pm in the Merritt Lounge. See page 4.

Women's Religious Studies Covenant Group

Thursday, April 18 at 1pm in the Merritt Lounge. See page 5.

Young Adult Game Night

Friday, April 19 at 6pm in the Common Room. See page 5.

Compassionate Communication Workshop

Saturday, April 20. See page 9.

Spring Carnival

Sunday, April 21. See page 8.

WAYS TO HELP: Yes Meal Prep

Monday, April 22 at 9:30am in the kitchen. See page 13.

First Steps Class

Sunday, April 28 at 11:45am in the Whitney Young Room. See page 17.

Fellowship Gathering at Clair Memorial Church

Sunday, April 28, after church. See page 2.

Book Club

Monday, April 29 at 7pm in the Merritt Lounge. See page 5.

H&H Auction Events

Various dates and some meet offsite. See page 13 for more information.

Recurring...

Bridge Group

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

Parent's Choice Listening Circle

Meets the 2nd Sunday of the month. See page 5.

AHA Listening Circle

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

YRUU (Youth Group) Meetings

Wednesdays at 7pm in the Common Room.

Choir Rehearsals

Wednesdays at 7pm in the Sanctuary.

Women's Religious Studies Group

Meets most Thursdays at 1pm in the Merritt Lounge. 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.firstuomaha.org/soulmatters

Future Events...

Church Annual Meeting

Sunday, May 19 at 10:30am. The Annual Meeting this year will take the place of a Sunday service. See page 10.

"White Fragility" Book Discussion Group Led by Rev. Michelle

Thursdays, May 30, June 6, and June 13 at 7pm in the Common Room. See page 5.

2019 Pride Parade & Festival

Saturday, June 29, offsite. See page 5.

Social Media & First U

Find our public Facebook page here:

www.facebook.com/firstuomaha/

Find us on Twitter here:

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

Be sure to like the church and follow us!



First Unitarian Church of Omaha
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