

THE FLAME

June 2014



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

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information

Meet Our Leaders

Staff

Minister

Frank Rivas

minister@firstuomaha.org

Director of Religious

Education

Jan Wilson

dre@firstuomaha.org

Office Administrator

Catharine Dixon

admin@firstuomaha.org

Organist

Pat Will

Choir Director

Bob McMeen

Nursery Aide

Jackie Dross

Custodian

Bobby Medrano

Early Service Pianist

Stan Harper

Choir Accompanist

Reuline Nightingale

Summer Musician

Judi Torneten

Minister Emeritus

Ronald Knapp

Nominating Committee

Mary Bort, Abby Cape, Nadine

Keith, Joe Schaaf, Dave Olson,

Kim Callaghan, Nadine Keith

Board meetings are held the 2nd Tuesday of each month and are open to all members.

THE FLAME

Deadlines are the 15th of each month. Word limit: 200.

Send your submissions to

admin@firstuomaha.org

Editor/Designer: Cat Dixon

Proofers: Anita Horn, Cyndi

Nather, Lana Hammel, Scott

Kemper

Flame Mailing Team: Anne

Massoud, Evelyn Whitehill,

Shelton Hendricks, Howard

Bolton.

Board Members

Louise Jeffrey (President), Dean Christensen, Sheri Conner, Lynette Ryder, Jack Round (President-Elect), Ron Withem, Cy Leise, Jack Heidel

board@firstuomaha.org

Trustees of the Capital Trust

Tim Duggan (2016), Sandy Host (2015), Steven Hutchinson (2017)

Pastoral Advisory Team

Jaime Alexander, Joe Schaaf, Susan Thomas, Alan Vovolka

Ministry Team Council

Rev. Frank Rivas, Carolyn McNamara, Jack Round, Amy Barlow

mtc@firstuomaha.org

Ministry Teams and Team Leaders

Adult Religious Education - Crystal DiGiorgi

Archives - Dave Richardson

Caring - Douglas Lee-Regier

Chalice Guild - Kay Lynn Goldner

Community Meals - Dana Meister & Diane Withem

Covenant Groups - Julia Thompson

Fellowship - Judith Wright & Nadine Keith & Nellie Chenoweth

Finance - Walt Jesteadt

Fundraising - Donna Neff & Kathi Oliver

Governance - Alex Nather

Hope in Action - Kim Dunovan

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Membership - Jackie Anderegg

Office - Carolyn McNamara

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Partner Church - Janet West

Religious Education - Sheri Conner

Religious Services - Megan Gustafson

Women's Alliance - Nellie Chenoweth

Young Adult Group - Maria Wallace

YRUU - Ben Wallace & Shawne Coonfare

Sunday, May 4 we celebrated with a May Pole

**June 1—Recreation****Rev. Frank Rivas**

Challenges and responsibilities add depth to our lives, yet they take a toll. So we take time to step back, to rest, to travel, in order to recreate our primal response to life.

June 8—Tramping the Perpetual Journey...

The stories of prophets and heroes often entail journeys both literal and metaphorical. Whether called scripture, legend, or just a good story, texts both ancient and modern teach that the human spirit is driven to explore, to learn, to grow. Church member Stephen Meister explores the idea of spiritual growth as a perpetual journey.

June 15—Coming Out**Rev. Royal D. Bush**

Most everyone has a coming out story. This story is about coming out in Omaha to family, friends, colleagues and the public. It is about owning who you are and understanding your own pride.

June 22—We Come from the Goddess

This Summer Solstice, we celebrate the female aspect of the divine. This service is with member Douglas Lee-Regier.

**Join us for Sunday
service at 10:30am at
First Unitarian
Church**

June 29—Pride Sunday

Rev. Elations

Monthly Column from our Minister, Rev. Frank Rivas

Each of us has experienced infatuation, times when we have met Someone Perfect, and that person somehow mistook us for Someone Perfect as well. Infatuation can't last, of course, but it's a sublime delusion.

I always breathe a sigh of relief when the Event—the disagreement, the misunderstanding, the struggle—occurs. Perfect turns out to be merely human, and the Mere Human Formerly Known as Perfect sees us as human too. We each become real. Some relationships end here; others deepen.

We are at that moment as a congregation. “Infatuation” is too strong a word, but things have been coasting along smoothly: attendance is up, giving is up, and we've been feeling pretty good about ourselves. “Event” is also too strong a word. In our case micro-events, conflicts not handled well, became visible, and a pattern began to emerge.

I breathe a sigh of relief. The delusion was fun, but now we have the opportunity to grow into deeper relationship. Now we can struggle together—not only to give voice to our differences, but also to make explicit our rules of combat. Are all conflict behaviors acceptable? Or are we bound by a covenant of our own choosing? At what point does passionate expression, which we value, become disrespect, which we try to avoid? How do we empower those who would prefer remaining silent to verbalize their concerns? How do we control indirection, talking about someone rather than talking with them?

Some rules of engagement work against establishing a strong community. Different rules of engagement within a community guarantee that someone will get hurt. But if we together can create and maintain community-affirming norms, our bonds one to another will deepen.

The mini-events invite us to a deeper reality. If we accept the invitation, if we speak respectfully and listen openly, each of our lives will be blessed.

Blessings and love,
Frank

HEARTLAND PRIDE

JUNE 26-28, 2014

FREE TO BE ME

Prep Meetings and Gatherings:

Volunteers should come to a meeting to hear more about this exciting opportunity and help us get ready:

Sunday, June 8—Meet at 11:30am in the Whitney Young Room

Saturday, June 21—Pride Parade Creation and Planning— Meet at 10am in the Common Room

Friday, June 27—Finalizing Meeting — 10am in the Common Room

Heartland Pride Events:

June 26: Candlelight Vigil and movie at Hanafan Park in Council Bluffs

June 27: Youth Pride Festival and evening dance at Hanafan Park in Council Bluffs

June 28: Heartland Pride Parade in Council Bluffs
Festival and entertainment to begin

Volunteers are needed for the following events:

Sno-Cone booth—sales and sno-cone makers. Shifts are 2-5 hours long. Events run all day long Saturday. 9am is setup and 7pm is teardown.

Pride Parade: prep, drivers, walkers, float makers. Event is Saturday, June 28 from 7am to 10:30am. Volunteers are needed June 13-16 and June 20-22 to help design the float. Volunteers can do both or one. Any help is appreciated.

Want to volunteer for Heartland Pride? Contact Kathi Oliver at kathryn.lewis.kl@gmail.com.

Spirit Circle

Sunday, June 1

We will be discussing Animism. We will gather at 6pm and begin at 7pm. Afterwards we will have a pot luck. Meet us in the Common Room.

UU & You

Sunday, June 1

Unitarian Universalism and You classes provide an introduction to Unitarian Universalism and our church, along with an opportunity to share our religious journeys. Visitors, newcomers, and the just curious are cordially invited. The class will convene in the Whitney Young Room 15 minutes after the ending of the 10:30 service. That usually works out to be about an 11:45 starting time. A light lunch will be served to bolster the always interesting conversation. The class lasts about an hour and 30 minutes so ending time will be about 1:15pm although those interested in a brief tour of the church may be a little later. If you need child care please let us know by the Friday before. RSVP or questions can be addressed to uuclass@firstuomaha.org or call Jaime Alexander, 402-657-9386.

A New Church Year and a Leadership Retreat

by Louise Jeffrey, Board President

It is my pleasure to write my first column as president of the Board of Trustees of First Unitarian Church. My term begins at a happy and healthy time in the life of our congregation. We are well financially and growing spiritually. Our well-being is due to the work and participation of all of us, under the leadership of Rev. Frank Rivas, our minister, and Tony Host, our Board of Trustees president. Especially, with regard to church governance, we have had a great deal of congregational support and participation. We have the best Church Administrator in the world in Catharine Dixon, and with her, Our Ministry Team led by the Ministry Team Council (Amy Barlow, Louise Jeffrey, Carolyn McNamara, Janet West, and Rev. Frank) have done an outstanding job with the day-to-day running of the church. And many of our team leaders have been absolutely integral to our success this year.

As many of us know, First Unitarian Church has a tradition of a Board retreat each summer. The purposes of this endeavor are for the minister and the Board to set priorities and goals for the upcoming church year, to evaluate how we did last year, and to re-evaluate and modify our mission statement in light of our goals for the church.

So, with the strengthening and broadening of our church leadership, it seems appropriate this year to broaden the participation in our annual retreat. For that reason, **all members of The Board and the Ministry Team Council, all Team Leaders, and anyone who wishes to self-identify as a member of the church leadership** are invited to register to participate in this year's annual retreat. Save the date: **Saturday, June 21**. We will have our retreat at First Central Congregational Church (at 36th and Harney). Our meeting will be about 6 hours long, starting at 9am, and will consist of both large group events and smaller group breakouts, as well as a fabulous lunch.

Come and be a part of this event; help us all set a tone of continuing growth for the upcoming year. Drop an e-mail to Catharine (admin@firstuomaha.org) to register.

Adelante!
Louise Jeffrey



Circle Suppers

Saturday, June 21 — offsite

UU Circle Suppers are a gathering of 6 to 8 people who meet for an organized potluck dinner. The host/hostess provides the home or place, firms up the date with assigned guests and provides the main dish. The host/hostess then calls each guest to confirm attendance, gives directions to home or location and assigns the part of dinner the guest would like to bring: appetizer, bread, vegetable and/or salad, dessert or beverage. You do not need to be a host/hostess to participate. To find out more information and to sign up to participate please go here: <http://www.signupgenius.com/go/10C0D44A9AE29A02-circle>

Tolerant Atheist Discussion Group

Thursday, June 5 in the Common Room

Our Minister Emeritus, Reverend Ron Knapp will review the book Regaining Balance: The Evolution of the UUA by Michael Werner. Here is an excerpt from the Goodreads.com's review: "The author details the cultural, philosophical and political history of the Unitarian Universalist Association (UUA) especially in regards to Humanism and critical thinking. The evolution of the UUA from a focus on reason in religion to one of radical tolerance is described along with the loss of membership." Gosh, it will be hard to wait until June 5 for Ron's review and the resulting discussion! All are cordially invited to the TADG meeting. The conversation and fun start in the Common Room at 6pm with a BYOD (Bring Your Own Dinner). The meeting starts at 7pm. Questions and RSVP's can be addressed to jaimealexander@cox.net.

Summer Picnic—Save the Date

We are celebrating our Sharing Books Project on Saturday, July 12 at 5:30pm at Halleck Park in Papillion. Our kids would like to meet the friends who shared stories in their books. We began the year in RE with the idea that children would like to meet the wonderful adults in our congregation. Many have responded generously by contributing stories, pictures and drawings in the children's books we call Sharing Books. Please come meet the children and families. Bring with you a potluck side, dishes, games, and chairs. We will grill hotdogs and burgers and have a good time.

Thank you for your generosity. These books will last a lifetime.

All About Emerson

by Jan Wilson, Director of R.E.

Ralph Waldo Emerson is one of the heroes of our Unitarian Universalist faith. He and Henry David Thoreau, Walt Whitman, and Margaret Fuller pushed the boundaries of thinking about religious life, to encompass a more direct experience of transcendent wonder with nature.

As I write, cracks of lightning light up the sky, and thunder shakes the rain to the ground. I see churchgoers run from the safety of their cars to the cover of our building for the Sunday service. Emerson would have celebrated the wonder and power of the lightning bolts, while finding solace in the internal communion with friends.

Friendship was a source of strength and a subject of reflection for him. Even in the midst of the personal tragedy and intellectual questioning, Emerson found friends that would challenge and support his changing views. He wrote of the initial meetings where friends are considered to be vastly superior in every way to us. We dust everything, put on a fresh outfit of clothes, present our polished-up self, and admire our ability to be so clever.

Against this, he compared the friend who comes to the door, and we are happy to crawl out of bed, in a disheveled mess, and welcome the visitor with hugs and gladness. This is the friend who understands without pretense and approves without evidence of virtue.

The children's Summer Art Camp, June 2-6, will focus on the theme of friendship. We will be acting, singing and creating sets to tell a story of friends. I think Emerson would be proud.

Marble Run-Off

UU Can Build a Marble Run

Intergenerational, Interactive, Ingenious

Teams will create their marble runs out of recycled materials such as cardboard, popsicle sticks, paper or plastic cups and paper towel tubes. Please leave your donations of these materials in Jan's office. The goal is to create a marble run which lasts the longest (timed in seconds), has unique features, and involves the broadest range in ages on the construction team. A toddler may drop the marble to start the run. We want to get YOU involved. Contact Jan to join a team or start a team. Email dre@firstuomaha.org or pick up a marble run-off form at church. The teams' creations will be celebrated, timed, and displayed at our Welcome Home Service in the fall.



Adult Religious Ed

We have one remaining session in June

For those who know that in America, religion matters, and for those who wish it didn't matter so much, comes *God in America*, a sweeping history of how religious faith has shaped America. Interweaving documentary footage, historical dramatizations, and interviews with religious historians, this series from the award-winning producers of American Experience and Frontline is an in-depth (but not comprehensive) exploration of the historical role of religion in the public life of the United States. The documentary film is one hour with one hour for discussion afterward. There will be a Study Guide provided to facilitate discussions.

June 12: Of God and Caesar—The final hour brings the series into the present day, exploring the religious and political aspirations of conservative evangelicals' moral crusade over divisive social issues, such as abortion and gay marriage.

Our brown bag dinner starts at 6pm. The session will start at 7pm and end at 9pm. Please RSVP to Crystal DiGiorgi at adultre.firstuu.omaha@gmail.com if you have any questions, need childcare or would like to sign up.

Sarah Joslyn Society

The Sarah Joslyn Society of our church was founded in 2004 to encourage, enable and thank those who wish to leave a bequest to the First Unitarian Church or otherwise participate in the Planned Giving Program. The society has already recognized 70 people who have named the church in their estate planning.

Since this is an intensely personal decision, appeals are limited to oral and written pleas such as this. You will not be approached individually. Rather, if you wish more information about the details of Planned Giving, contact Dixie Lemon or any member of the Finance Committee. If you have made your decision and have firmed it up by incorporating your wishes into your will, all you have to do is let the Finance Committee know. No written statement is necessary. You will then be invited to the celebratory event and will become a life-time member of the Sarah Joslyn Society, receiving a commemorative slate made from the original roof of the church. It's a very simple and effective way to help ensure the financial security of the church. Future generations will thank you. —Dixie Lemon 402-393-2882

Leadership Development Team Forming

Are you a former graduate of a UU Leadership School? We are forming a Leadership Development Team whose mission is to promote learning and leadership skills by individuals and teams within the church, assist with organizational development issues and recruit leadership school candidates. This team is open to all former graduates of leadership schools. We want to utilize the skills we have learned to help our church community. We are looking at putting together Leadership 101 workshops, being a resource for existing teams and being intentional about seeking out and encouraging church members to consider attending Midwest Leadership Schools, both adults and youth. If you are a former graduate and this sounds like something you would like to be part of, please contact Tony Host at tozhost@gmail.com or (712) 256-9178. Let's make a difference!

The Women's Religious Studies Group

The Women's Religious Studies Group meets from 1 to 2:30pm most Thursdays. We are preparing to read and discuss David Parke's Epic of Unitarianism. We have also enjoyed a visit from Reverend Frank and Copper, the Church Dog, to explore the two creation stories in Genesis. Last month we visited a shrine. See photo to the right.

Please contact Rae Barry at raeb1@hotmail.com

or 402-422-1404 for more information.

All self-identified women are welcome!



Share the Plate—NAMI

Each month one-half of the loose currency in the offering plate is donated to a cause with a local presence which advances important principles of Unitarianism. This month's recipient is NAMI (National Alliance on Mental Illness). From www.nami.org:

Mental illness affects everyone. Nearly 60 million Americans experience a mental health condition every year. Regardless of race, age, religion or economic status, mental illness impacts the lives of at least one in four adults and one in 10 children across the United States.

People living with mental illness need help and hope: they need a community that supports them, their families and their recovery.

NAMI is the National Alliance on Mental Illness, the nation's largest grassroots mental health organization dedicated to building better lives for the millions of Americans affected by mental illness. NAMI advocates for access to services, treatment, supports and research and is steadfast in its commitment to raise awareness and build a community for hope for all of those in need.

NAMI Walk

June 14, 2014 at Elmwood Park in Omaha

Registration opens at 9:00am

Walk starts at 10:00am

Are you interested in walking for NAMI? Every year our church has a team that participates in the NAMI Walk. Terri Lynn Brewer is organizing the team. If you have not been able to attend the NAMI Walk meetings, but still want to do the walk, contact Terri Lynn to let her know at tlynnmunchkin@cox.net. For more info, go to the team website: <http://namiwalks.nami.org/firstunitarianchurchofomaha>.

Church Events Coming Up

UU & You Class

Sunday, June 1 at 11:45am in the Whitney Young Room
See page 5 for details.

Spirit Circle

Sunday, June 1 at 6pm in the Common Room
See page 5 for details.

Book Club

Monday, June 2 at 7pm in the Merritt Lounge
Book selection: *The Righteous Mind: Why Good People Are Divided by Politics and Religion* by Jonathan Haidt

UU Summer Kids Camp

June 2-6 during the day at church.
Contact dre@firstuuomaha.org for more information.

Tolerant Atheist Discussion Group

Thursday, June 5 in the Common Room
See page 7 for more information.

CommUUnity Night

Friday, June 6 at 5:30pm in the Common Room
See page 17 for details.

Ministry Team Meeting

Saturday, June 7 at 2pm in the Common Room
All church leaders and anyone interested in church management is invited to attend this meeting.

Pride Parade Team Meeting

Sunday, June 8 at 11:30am in the Whitney Young Room

Caring Team Meeting

Sunday, June 8 at 11:45am in the Merritt Lounge

Adult Religious Education

Thursday, June 12 in the Common Room
See page 9 for details.

NAMI Walk Team

Offsite on Saturday, June 14
See page 10 for details.

Pride Parade Team Meeting

Saturday, June 21 at 10am in the Common Room

Circle Suppers

Offsite on Saturday, June 21
See page 7 for information.

Leadership Retreat

Offsite on Saturday, June 21
See page 6 for information.

Transition Omaha

Sunday, June 22 at 2pm in the Common Room
Scott Williams of Omaha BioFuels Coop will be featured.

Pride Parade Team Meeting

Friday, June 27 at 10am in the Common Room

Heartland Pride Parade

Offsite during the weekend of June 26-28
See page 5 for details.

RE Council Meeting

Sunday, June 29 at 11:45am in Jan's office
All are invited to attend who are interested in religious education. A light lunch will be served.



At our RE Visioning Session on May 4 we came up with great ideas!

Recurring...

Women's Religious Studies Group

Meets every Thursday at 1pm in the Merritt Lounge
See page 10 for information.

Bridge Group

Meets the 2nd and 4th Sunday of each month after the service in the Whitney Young Room or in the corner of the Common Room

Looking ahead...

Summer Picnic

Offsite on Saturday, July 12 at 5:30pm.
See page 7 for details.

A Pioneer of Religious Education and Social Justice: D. Louise Henderson (1881-1972) *by Dave Richardson*

This church has a long history of active and influential women leaders. Our articles of incorporation signed in 1869 bore 26 signatures of which ten were women, a rarity in its day. Actually, our church would not have survived the lean times of 1913-15 were it not for the efforts of the Women's Alliance and Mrs. Holdrege, their leader. We honor the names of Sarah Joslyn, Rowena Morse Mann and many others who served this church and whose influence and achievements went far beyond our community. There is another lesser-known figure who deserves a place in that pantheon of significant women of this church.

D.(for Delia) Louise Henderson served as assistant pastor to Reverend Robert Leavens from 1919 to 1922. Despite her short tenure she left an indelible mark on our church. She was born in Hingham MA and educated at The Tuckerman School for Social and Parish Work, a Unitarian institution located in Boston. Before coming to Omaha she served Unitarian churches in Salem MA, Bridgeport CN and Montreal. Ms. Henderson's chief responsibilities were with religious education. Within a few weeks of her arrival, she had begun a service club for youth called the "Lend-a-Hand Club." This group operated mostly during the summer, doing work for charitable institutions in Omaha. A group of the older girls volunteered for a mission to help "the mountain schools of the South." The girls obtained school supplies and gave assistance to remote and under-served schools in the Appalachians.

Ms. Henderson wrote in a church bulletin that the goal of these and other projects was to develop a sense of "citizenship for the future."

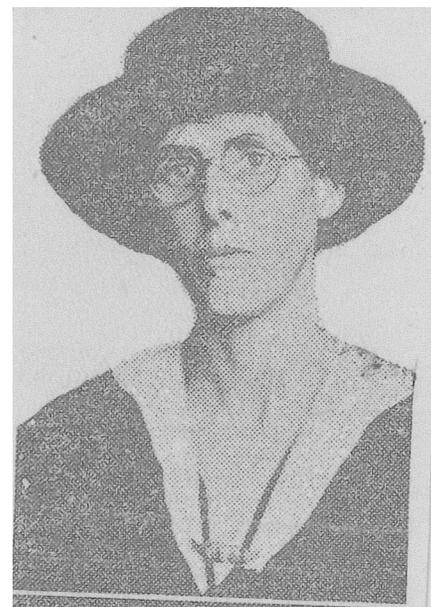
Perhaps her most significant contribution to the Religious Education program was the development of her "Beacon Course" which featured age-appropriate teachings in a vast array of topics including theology, ethics, and the humanities. Her stated goal was to develop in the youngsters "a love for the true, and the beautiful." She successfully recruited church members and citizens as teachers and guest lecturers. Her focus on service to others was a big part of her work in the church and also in the community as a whole.

In 1920 she was asked to help form the Omaha Society of Professional Social Workers. She was a charter member of this organization, the first of its kind in Omaha. It was her passion for social service that ultimately led to her leaving First Unitarian in 1922, to take a regional position with the American Unitarian Association as "Secretary of the Midwestern Area" which was based in Chicago. She traveled throughout the Midwest helping churches develop what we now call "social justice programs," as well as assisting with Religious Education. She also served for a while as associate pastor at All Souls Unitarian Church in New York City.

During WW II she worked for the Unitarian Service Committee, an organization that continues today as

our international aid organization. An expert seamstress and tailor herself, she oversaw a massive program to provide clothing for those who were suffering from the ravages of war. In the period immediately following the war she continued this work for refugees and "displaced persons" as they were called then. For her efforts in this area she received many formal awards and letters of thanks from various government and private organizations.

She eventually retired to her home parish in Hingham MA. She continued to be active in church activities into her 90s. Her pastor Reverend Louis Cornish, who later served as President of the American Unitarian Association, noted, "If anyone wants anything done they call on Louise to do it." Our church was honored to have this dedicated educator and socially conscious person with us at a very critical and exciting time in our history. She arrived two years after the building was completed and she certainly left it a better place for her having been here.



Taking the Church's "Pulse"

By Evaluation Team (Beth Conover, Triparna de Vreede, Kate Godfrey, Donna Neff, Joe Schaaf, Ron Withem)

Time flies. Two years ago (2011), the Board appointed an *ad hoc* group to develop, administer and analyze results for two surveys: a general survey of our church life and a survey specific to the minister. The intent was to have tools we could use EVERY year consistently to take the "pulse" of the church and guide Board action. We missed a year, but we're back at the Board's request.

Shortly you will receive by email (or mail if you don't use computers) an invitation to complete these surveys. **Please take the time to complete these surveys**, regardless of how active or inactive you have been this past year in church life. An accurate "pulse" of our church can only result if we hear opinions from as many of you as possible. The survey is designed to easily be completed on-line, but both paper copies and access to a computer will be provided every Sunday at church for those who prefer.

A few details:

You will be assigned a number to use instead of your name. This increases confidentiality and assures one survey completed per person. The link of numbers-to-names will be destroyed when survey access is ended and analysis started. These surveys are identical to those from two years ago, with the exception of minor changes (e.g. pronouns), and revamping four questions that were outdated or worked poorly. It may not be perfect, but the goal is to have consistent benchmarks year to year. There are optional open-ended questions at the end. These comments will be passed on in entirety to the Board and Minister.

Again, PLEASE take the time to weigh in with your thoughts and opinions. We value them. Contact any member of the Evaluation Team with survey questions or problems.



Dinner Celebrates New Church Members

Congratulations to all of our new members who were celebrated on Sunday, April 27 at the New Member Dinner in the common room. Pictured to the right are:

Liz and Adam Sagert,
Evy Boonyawiroj, Chelsea Ross,
Brian and Kim Callaghan, Sheri Conner,
Troy and Wendi Jensen,
Deanna Meyler, Floyd and Carol Prine,
and Mary Kay Peters.

They were welcomed by Rev. Rivas and Jaime Alexander. Membership Chair Jackie Anderegg presented each new member with a gift of ivy symbolizing the bond of friendship we will weave with each other.

Are you interested in joining First Unitarian or learning more about the church? Our next UU & Class is scheduled Sunday, June 1st. See page 5 for details. This class will inform you about the church and Unitarian Universalism. If you have other questions about the church or membership, please contact Jaime at uuclass@firstuuomaha.org.



Mother's Day in the sanctuary was packed. We enjoyed a Mother's Day Brunch in the Common Room.

Sanctuary Light Fixtures *by Bob Perrin*

During the sanctuary restoration of 2004, when all the pews were removed and refinished, the floors sanded down and refinished, and the cleaning and the interior walls and ceiling were cleaned and repainted, it was discovered that some of the pendant light fixture globes were cracked and in danger of falling. The 1912 fixtures were designed for 100 watt bulbs, which were replaced over the years with 300 watt bulbs. The higher wattages produced more heat, causing some of the globes to expand and eventually crack. Each globe was carefully inspected, resulting in two being removed for safety reasons. An exhaustive search over a period of years for replacement globes turned up empty, and eventually manufacturing the globes was the only option.



Dean Christensen found a glass foundry in Iowa that could replicate the original globes by making a rubber mold from one of the salvaged units and cast new globes to replace original fixtures.

Dean is donating these fixtures, as he did for the arched windows in the cupula, in memory of his late wife Carol.

Special Thank You

A special thanks from the office to Carolyn McNamara who helped Catharine a lot in the month of May. Carolyn is always an invaluable volunteer to the church, and her exceptional proofreading and organizational skills were put to work with the Annual Report this year and other projects.

Thank you!

Pilgrimage to Our Partner Church in Firtosmartonos, Transylvania, Romania in September 2014

Three of us, and we hope a few more, will be traveling to Romania, our Partner Church village (Firtosmartonos, Transylvania), and Budapest during September 2014. The travelers will fly from Omaha to Bucharest. While in Bucharest, the travelers will attend a concert and go to various museums.

Traveling by minivan north to Transylvania, we will travel a night in a Romanian village and visit a castle, hot springs, a monastery, the Fagaras Mountains, and more. There are many UNESCO Heritage Sites in Romania.

We will visit to our Partner village, Firtosmartonos for at least six days. While there, we will stay with Rev. Katalin, her husband Boti, and their son Matte in the parsonage. There are many important historic Unitarian sites within easy driving distances of the village. Of most importance, we will meet and have meals with the people of Firtosmartonos and will attend a service at the village Church.

Next stop is Kolazsvar (Cluj) which was a Unitarian city. This is where the Unitarian bishop presides. We will meet the Bishop, tour the seminary, and worship at the Unitarian church.

The travelers will then take the train from Kolazsar (Cluj) to Budapest. There are options for those who would rather have a shorter trip. The full trip will be about \$3,000

including airfare, transportation in Transylvania, Romania, and Budapest, and food and housing. We will be leaving Omaha on about September 8 and be back in Omaha about September 30. If you would like to join this pilgrimage, email Janet West, jmasonwest77@yahoo.com.



Suggestions from First U's Membership Team

- Think about mentioning a positive experience you have had as a member of First Unitarian Church to a friend, relative or acquaintance.
- Get pushy... bring a friend to church. Promise them lunch.
- Suggest the website belief.net to people you know that fit in the category of a "None" meaning they have no religious affiliation. Many "Nones" fit our profile.

CommUUnity Night

Friday, June 6 at 5:30pm

This family-friendly event is a potluck with the main dish provided by RE. Enjoy a relaxed atmosphere. We always have fun conversation and play games. Please note: We will not have a CommUUnity Night in July.

Caring Notes

On Saturday, May 17th we remembered long-time church member Kop Ramsey, mother of Carol Ramsey, who passed away. Pictured below is a photo of the sanctuary after the service. Our condolences to her family and friends.

Betty Holloway, long-time church member, passed away on Friday, May 16th. There was a visitation on Sunday, May 18th, and the informal memorial service will be on Sunday, June 8 at 3pm in the Common Room.



New Member News *by Carolyn McNamara*

Chelsea Ross had always been uncomfortable attending a church where worship and spirituality continually focused on one doctrine, a doctrine she didn't believe. She values growth, spiritual journey and the opportunity to explore her own truth. She became curious about Unitarianism after her fiancé (and soon-to-be husband) Luke Furman told her that he had discovered what religion she is. After doing some research, Chelsea visited First Unitarian and found people who value community without requiring that she believe a specific doctrine just to belong. She has attended some Young Adult Nights, but would like to get more involved and is interested in religious studies, book club, and youth education.

Chelsea was raised in Bellevue and attended Creighton University where she earned a bachelor's degree in Studio Arts. She is currently pursuing a teaching certificate in elementary and special education at UNO while working in the electronics department at Wal-Mart where she helps raise funds for Children's Miracle Network. She shares her home with two rescued felines, Smokey and three-legged Dreifutz, and she enjoys video games, reading, cooking, writing, and learning. She secretly writes with the hope of someday making a name for herself as an author and teacher. She loves helping people which is what inspires her to teach and makes her a humanist to the core.

Chelsea describes herself as both a realist and an idealist, wanting to help people reach their ideals, but also recognizing that "reality is a witch." She is a pessimistic optimist, hoping for the best but always expecting the worst. She has never had a secure living situation which has encouraged her to educate and assist those in similar situations in healthy and constructive ways.

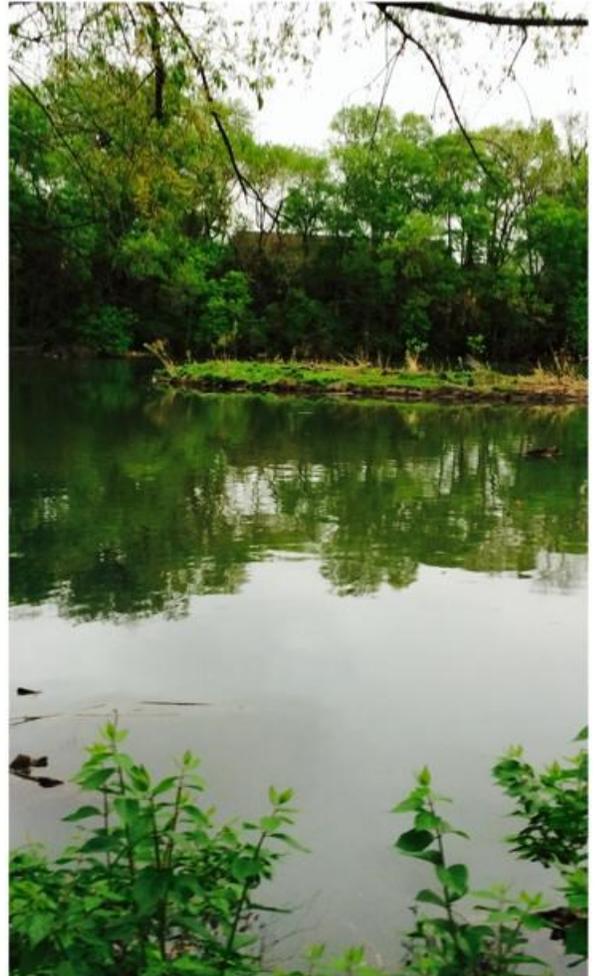
Please welcome her.



What About YOU?

Have you ever thought of joining First Unitarian? Or do you want to learn more about Unitarian Universalism and this church? Please join us on Sunday, June 1 for a UU & You session. See page 5 for more information. All are welcome!

Heron Haven



In May the Women's Alliance went to Heron Haven and enjoyed themselves. Photo collage credit to Kathi Oliver. The Women's Alliance meets September to May. For more information, please contact the president of Women's Alliance Nellie Chenoweth.

**Heartland Pride Weekend is
June 26-28. Help us
celebrate! Join us for
Pride Sunday on June 29.**

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