

June 2016

# The Flame



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

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this Month

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Summer in  
Sunday School

*The First Unitarian Choir at the May 15th concert. Photo by Scott Kemper*



## Sunday Services — All are welcome

**June 5 — One Service at 10:30am**

### **Flower Communion**

Join Maria Wallace and Royal Carleton as we celebrate the Unitarian Universalist Tradition of Flower Communion. This is what community looks like, this vibrant jostle, stem by stem declaring the marvelous joining. This is the face of communion, the incarnation once more gracefully resurrected." You are welcomed to bring flowers that we will share with one another.

**June 12 — One Service at 10:30am**

### **The Prayers of an Agnostic**

A service of music, dance, readings and ritual investigating the question, "Can you have prayer without theology?" (Hint – yes.) Douglas Lee-Regier is organizing this service of talented performers. He may have a few titillating words as well, based on personal experience.

**June 19 — One Service at 10:30am**

### **Topic To Be Announced**

**June 26 — One Service at 10:30am**

### **Topic to be Announced**

#### **Rev. Cari Frus**

Our speaker for this week will be Reverend Cari Frus. She is a chaplain from the Pastoral Care Department at St. Elizabeth's Hospital in Belleville, IL.

# Rev. Elations

## Monthly Column from our Minister, Rev. Frank Rivas

Our bodies remember summer as the time when school was over, play lasted all day, and sunlight went on forever. Our windows flung open, there is a richness to these days. Each spring, after a long, monochrome winter, I'm taken aback by the vibrancy of green. And each year the rich fragrances overwhelm.

Summer is also the chance to reflect on the passing of another church year. Here's what I considered to be our greatest accomplishment this year: we disagreed, loudly and well, and we survived. Actually, we got stronger.

We disagreed first when the Black Lives Matter banner went up and then was taken down with no one's permission. We disagreed as we talked about the possibility of putting the banner up a second time. Some of our words on Facebook were immoderate, to be sure, but, in addition to speaking openly, we listened hard. We welcomed open discussion, we heard one another, and we took a stand.

Do not believe that this congregation is so fragile that we cannot withstand disagreement. These words are attributed for Ferenc Dávid, bishop of the Unitarian church in Transylvania: "We need not think alike to love alike." It is still so. May ours always be a church that does not shy from issues.

Blessings and love,  
Frank

P.S. There are so many volunteers without whom the programs of our church would not be possible. Two of them are Ben Wallace and Shawne Coonfare, who have served as advisors to the YRUU (Young Religious Unitarian Universalists) group we share with Second Church for the past several years. The group is huge, energized, and visionary because of them. They retired from their positions at the youth service in May, and the advisors will be announced soon.

Thank you, Ben and Shawne. Your work lives on.

## Church Events

### Personal Finance Class

*Classes Thursday at 7pm-8:30pm in the Common Room: June 2 and June 16. Facilitator: Clyde Kramer.*

Do the smart stuff to avoid debt and money blunders. Simple financial worksheets will be used that will help you find out where your money goes each month and how to handle your checkbook. Learn about good money habits and saving money each month for retirement and emergencies. To register for the class, email the office: [admin@firstuuomaha.org](mailto:admin@firstuuomaha.org).

### CommUnity Night

*Friday, June 3 at 5:30pm in the Common Room.* We gather for a potluck of side items (the main dish will be provided by RE) and eat together as a group and then just chill. If you can't bring anything or you are feeling too rushed to grab or make something last minute COME ANYWAY! There is always plenty of food and what we really want is YOUU!

### Teams Meeting (Previously called the Ministry Team Meeting)

*Saturday, June 4 at 2pm in the Common Room.* All team leaders and church volunteers are invited to this meeting. We discuss upcoming projects and plans for our church. Need more info? Contact the Ministry Team Council (MTC) at [mtc@firstuuomaha.org](mailto:mtc@firstuuomaha.org).

### UU&You Introductory Class next offered on Sunday, June 5

Unitarian Universalism and You class will return in the popular summertime after-service format on June 5. The class will convene right after the 10:30am service in

the Whitney Young Classroom. A light lunch will be served. The class lasts about an hour and 30 minutes. Visitors, newcomers, and the just curious are cordially invited. Child care is available by prior arrangement. RSVP (recommended) or questions can be addressed to [uuclass@firstuuomaha.org](mailto:uuclass@firstuuomaha.org) or call Jaime Alexander 402-657-9386.

### Summer Camp for Kids

*June 6-10 at the church.* Questions? Contact Jan at [dre@firstuuomaha.org](mailto:dre@firstuuomaha.org).

### People's Film Festival

*Monday, June 6 at 7pm in the Common Room.* We will show *Spotlight*. Revealing a string of cover-ups stretching back decades, a team of "Boston Globe" reporters exposes the Catholic Archdiocese's history of keeping reports about child molestation and other priest-initiated abuses under wraps.

### Book Club

*Monday, June 6 at 7pm in the Merritt Lounge.* We will discuss *Japan and the Shackles of the Past* by Murphy Taggart. For information, email Dave at [richardson.david@westside66.net](mailto:richardson.david@westside66.net).

### The Tolerant Atheist Group

*Thursday, June 9 at 7pm in the Common Room; Doors open at 6pm for bring-your-own dinner.* Ron Knapp will be giving a presentation entitled "A Preliminary Appraisal of Islam from a Humanistic Perspective." Ron points out that 23% of the world's population is Muslim; this makes Islam one of the most powerful religious and

political forces in the world. He feels that the entire world should understand and engage in dialogue with it. Ron believes that as Unitarians, we should deal with this religion as we deal with any other religion; we should be rational and critical, but also honest, and fair. All welcome! Please join us for an evening that promises intriguing thought and conversation.

### POPS (Parents of Preschoolers)

*Friday, June 10 at 5:30pm in the Common Room.* Join us for fun and potluck plus pizza. We will have childcare available. We gather together for fellowship and fun, and we always have a good time.

### Sunday Social Gathering (Second Sunday of every month)

*Sunday, June 12 at 7pm in the Common Room.* This month's movie has not been announced yet. The movie will be announced in the enews closer to the date. Bring some snacks to share if you like. Questions? Call Royal at 402-999-1379.

### The Women's Religious Study Covenant Group

*Thursday, June 16 at 1pm in the Merritt Lounge.* This group meets on the third Thursday of each month. We are reading *Listening Hearts* by Christine Robinson and Alicia Hawkins. If you would like to join the Covenant Group, please contact Linda Parker at 402-319-0642 or [lparkerlib@gmail.com](mailto:lparkerlib@gmail.com).



## Church Events Continued...

### Friday Fun Night

Friday, June 17 at 7pm in the Whitney Young Room. Join the young adults for some fun and games. No need to RSVP. Just show up for some festive Friday fun!

### Y.E.S. Meal

Friday, June 17 at 9am in the kitchen. Volunteer to help cook or bring supplies. See page 14 for details.

### NAMI Walk -- Team DyNAMite

June 18 at Elmwood Park. Registration at 9am. Walk at 10am. The NAMI (National Alliance on Mental Issues) Walk gives us an opportunity to show our support through walking to raise awareness and donations for the local efforts by our NAMI Omaha chapter to further the resources, programs and support to empower those who live with mental health disorders every day and their friend and family networks. Please join our team by logging in to the [namicaresnebraska.org](http://namicaresnebraska.org) website and register as an event walker on the First Unitarian Church of Omaha team.

If you have any questions please reach out to Terri Lynn Brewer ([qujod18@outlook.com](mailto:qujod18@outlook.com)) or Lori at [lhefeli@gmail.com](mailto:lhefeli@gmail.com) and we will be happy to answer questions or help you sign up. Thank you for supporting this effort! More information about NAMI is on page 15.

### Arts and Crafts Night

Sunday, June 19 at 7pm in the Common Room. Bring your current project and supplies and join us for some artistic fellowship! We will meet from 7-9 pm on the third Sunday of the month in the

Common Room. Contact

Kate Godfrey at [coachkate@cox.net](mailto:coachkate@cox.net) or (402) 880-1327 for details.

### People's Film Festival

Monday, June 20 at 7pm in the Common Room. We will show *Plutocracy: Divide et Impera Part I*. *Plutocracy* is the first documentary to comprehensively examine early American history through the lens of class. A multi-part series by filmmaker Scott Noble, Part I focuses on the ways in which the American people have historically been divided on the basis of race, ethnicity, sex and skill level. This film ought to be seen by all who think "The Rule of Law" has been our guiding principle throughout our history especially those who point to times of supposed general application of that concept to all or even most of our citizens.

### General Assembly 2016

June 22-26, Columbus, OH

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. Please go to: <http://www.uua.org/ga> for more information.

### Young Adult Discussion Group

Sunday, June 26 at 11:30am in Common Room. Calling all people aged 18-35! We have a once-a-month young adult discussion group aimed for people within this age range. We'll be covering any topic that we think is relevant to who we are and our lives.

### Pride Parade & Festival —

#### Transforming the Heartland

Saturday, June 25 at downtown Council Bluffs Iowa (step off 10 am—set up begins at 9 am). Festival is at Stinson Park in Aksarben Village 67th & Center 11am-10pm. Please join us in supporting the 2016 PRIDE Parade and Festival. We will again be joining forces with Second Unitarian to march strong together in the parade. We will also have several people participating in our festival booth handing out brochures and answering questions as needed.

We would like a strong parade showing. Please come walk with us if you can!! Wear your "Standing on the Side of Love" t-shirt if you have one or brightly-colored or fun garb! We will set a meeting spot and possibly carpool for those interested since parking at the parade start can be difficult. We are also looking for four volunteers to work in the festival booth. We will be handing out literature about our church, discussing our programs and answering questions about Unitarianism. Two volunteers are needed from 10:30am-2:30pm and two volunteers from 2:30pm-6pm. If you work the booth, you also get free admission to the festival. Please reach out to Lori Hefeli-Schaaf if you are interested in participating in the Parade, Festival or both! Phone: (402) 800-8528. Email: [lhefeli@gmail.com](mailto:lhefeli@gmail.com) Thank you! We are looking forward to another fun event!! See the link for more details: <http://heartlandpride.org/>.

*More events on the next page...*

## Church Events and Activities Continued...

### Omaha Polyamory Discussion Group

*Monday, June 27 at 7pm in the Common Room.* We meet every fourth Monday from 7pm-9pm. We invite any in Omaha and surrounding areas who embrace and support ethical non-monogamy-based loving relationships. We strive to offer a safe place to meet and discuss topics, issues and hardships we face as polyamorous individuals and families. If you have any questions, please contact Susan at [iamdosh@msn.com](mailto:iamdosh@msn.com).

### Exploring Humanistic Perspectives in Literature: Nothing Gold Can Stay:

#### The Poetry of Robert Frost

*Tuesday, June 28 at 7pm in the Common Room.* In an atmosphere that attempts to combine elements of a coffee house and a readers theater, we seek to bring together humanists and others interested in literature to listen to readings and to take part in the conversation.

"My poems – I suppose everybody's poems – are set to trip the reader foremost into the boundless," Robert Frost said, "Ever since infancy I have had the habit of leaving my blocks, carts, chairs, and such like ordinaries where people would be pretty sure to fall over them in the dark. Forward, you understand, and in the dark."

### Recurring Events

#### Women's Religious Studies Group

This group meets every Thursday, except not the 3rd week of the month, at 1 pm in the Merritt Lounge. We discuss a wide variety of books that deepen our understanding of religious beliefs. New members welcome. June is a good time to join, as we are begin a new book on Native American spirituality, titled "Our Stories Remember: American History, Culture, and Values Through Story Telling" by Joseph Bruchac. For more information, please contact Neva Cozine at [hansen.cozine@gmail.com](mailto:hansen.cozine@gmail.com).

#### Dungeons and Dragons Group Meeting

*Meets the 1st and 3rd Sunday of each month in the Whitney Young Room at 11:30am.* All D&D role players are invited. If you have questions, contact Roman at [rmnoriegal@cox.net](mailto:rmnoriegal@cox.net), 402-769-4260.

#### Bridge Group

*Meets the 2nd and 4th Sunday of each month in the Common Room after the service.* If you've played before, come for some entertainment and time at the game table. Novices welcome too. Contact Scott at [scott.kemper@gmail.com](mailto:scott.kemper@gmail.com).

#### Meditation

Tuesdays at 8am in the sanctuary. Please join us for meditation and mindfulness practice. This informal group meets every Tuesday and everyone is welcome to attend. Come to relax, breathe, or just enjoy some peace and quiet in our beautiful sanctuary.

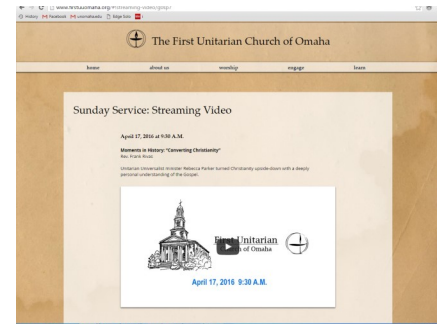
### Special Event



Sid Wilson, a long-time church member, is turning 100! Church members and friends are invited to help celebrate with this family: Wednesday, June 1, 5-7pm, Max & Joe's (3578 Farnam St.) inside the Crescent Moon. The folks at Infusion have created a micro brew in Sid's honor called Sid's Second Century.

## Streaming Services

Can't make it to church? Missed a Sunday and really wanted to hear the sermon? Sermon videos are now online for you to view. Just go to [www.firstuomaha.org](http://www.firstuomaha.org). Hover your mouse over the word "worship" and go down to "streaming video." There you will find last Sunday's service.



The direct link is: <http://www.firstuomaha.org/#!/streaming-video/g0sp7>

Special thanks to Troy Jensen and others who have been involved with this project to make this feature a reality for our church.

We are looking for volunteers who are able to help us record and stream Sunday services during the summer. Could that be you? If so, please contact Troy Jensen at [troy@evermake.com](mailto:troy@evermake.com). No experience required!

## Ways to Get Involved at Church

These teams do not currently have leaders or members. If you would like more information, please contact the church office. These teams have been inactive, but if you would like to get involved, there may be places for you to fit in here at First U!

**Library**— Help us organize and keep track of our library which is downstairs in the Common Room.

**Governance**— This team helps make sure that we are following the governance structure we adopted and informs the congregation of bylaws changes and other issues.

Jan Wilson is looking for a **Religious Education volunteer** who could help on a regular basis. This person could help with bulletin boards, getting materials ready for Sunday School, and having fun! Please contact Jan if you are interested at [dre@firstuomaha.org](mailto:dre@firstuomaha.org).

Kim Callaghan is looking for a couple more **Friday volunteers**. These helpers fold the orders of service, help organize the pew racks and make sure the church is ready for Sunday morning. You can commit to one Friday a month or be an on-call volunteer for emergencies. For more information, please contact Kim at [kjcallaghan@hotmail.com](mailto:kjcallaghan@hotmail.com).

Join a **Hospitality Team** and help welcome people to First U on Sunday mornings. The commitment is only six times a year and you choose which team suits you best based on your schedule. Jobs include greeters, coffee makers, and ambassadors. For details please contact Carolyn at [cayl-amc@cox.net](mailto:cayl-amc@cox.net) today!

*Put these events on your calendar!*

## **Our Church Leadership Forum Featuring Keynote Presentation by Cy Wakeman!**

First Unitarian Church Board is having a Leadership Forum on Saturday, August 6 beginning at 10:30am at Joslyn Museum thanks to Jack and Nancy Round. All members who are or have been or want to be leaders or who are simply interested in good ideas for us are invited! We are extremely fortunate to have Cy Wakeman give a presentation. She is a nationally known author and thought-provoking speaker on leadership. She has been featured on the TODAY Show, in the *New York Times*, *Wall Street Journal* and a host of other publications. Her New York Times bestselling book is Reality-Based Rules of the Workplace. She has been named one of the "Top 100 Leadership Experts to Follow" on twitter. She and her husband have been coming to our church, they really enjoy First Unitarian, and she is donating her time with us. This is an extraordinary gift.

She will do a 90-minute presentation, we will serve you lunch at Joslyn, discuss her ideas, and then break into presentations by church members in the afternoon using a Ted Talk format with 20-minute presentations and discussion following each presentation. Please volunteer to share what you know about leadership in our church or any other topic you think might be important to us and contact [janderegg@cox.net](mailto:janderegg@cox.net) to get on the agenda. This should be fun and interesting! Do mark your calendars.

—Jackie Anderegg, President

## **Welcome Home Service and Ice Cream Social**

Our Welcome Home Service is scheduled for Sunday, September 11. This intergenerational service celebrates all of us coming back to the church after summer. We will have one service at 10:30am followed by an ice cream social given by our Fellowship Team in the Common Room. The following Sunday, September 18, we return to two services at 9:30am and 11:15am.

## **Outside Opportunity—Concert**

Master Singers present "Rock-A-Pella" concert on Sunday, June 19, 2016 at 6 p.m. at the First Central Congregational Church, 421 South 36th St. and Harney, Omaha. The program features some of the greatest hits of rock and roll with an a cappella twist. Rock classics by such bands as Queen, Kansas, U2, The Eagles, Chicago, and more. Tickets are on sale at the door and are \$15.00 for adults and \$12.00 for students/seniors. Children 12 years and under are free. For more information, please check out this website: [www.mastersingersomaha.com](http://www.mastersingersomaha.com).



## Our New Church Year

It is my privilege to greet all of you as your president of the Board of Trustees of First Unitarian Church. This is a good news beginning with our financial health and the overall happiness index of the church, which is palpable every Sunday and every social and educational event we have here. Our volunteer participation is competent and energetic, organized by the Ministry Team Council with Diane Withem, Nellie Chenoweth and Alan Vovolka, our incoming President-Elect, with Catharine Dixon, our church administrator and Rev. Frank as non-voting members. Catharine is creative and spot on with organizing the activity of our whole community. Rev. Frank continues to be a gift for all of us and a model for respect and compassion in our relationships with each other.

We have almost finished the lovely, outstanding entry remodeling with Marie Sedlacek and Dean Christensen, with help from other donors. We have re-organized our system of dealing with sensitive public stands on social issues under the leadership of Jack Round, our President of the Board, and Kim Dunovan and the team she organized to insure a clear and respectful process for dealing with passionate positions on social justice positions. We have emerged stronger, more honest, and better connected.

The Black Lives Matter Banner reflects a racial justice position in this church championed by a group led by René Harper who is heading an effort to increase our awareness and involvement with racial justice, and we will depend on the recommendations of that group prior to making any changes to our banner or other public positions on racial issues.

We hired a wildly popular Membership Coordinator in Carrie Helmberger who needed to take a hiatus because of a family illness, but she will be back in August to continue her work.

The Board of Trustees will sponsor a Leadership Retreat on Saturday, August 6th at 10:30am at the Joslyn Museum. Lunch will be served and all members are welcome to participate. We are extraordinarily fortunate to have Cy Wakeman, a nationally known author and speaker on leadership donating her time to do a keynote for us. The afternoon will be spent with members giving presentations, using a 20-minute Ted Talk format with discussion after each presentation. Please contact [janderegg@cox.net](mailto:janderegg@cox.net) to volunteer your time, talent and ideas.

We look forward to a creative year.

Onward,  
Jacqueline Anderegg, President

## Annual Awards

Annually, the Nominating Committee solicits congregational input to award and recognize volunteers and to select the Unitarian of the Year. In the past, this was done for awards given on the regional level. This year, the MidAmerican Region did not give awards, but the committee selected the following individuals to be honored for their contributions to First Unitarian Church of Omaha, with awards at the local level. Congratulations to everyone who was nominated and to our award winners!

Thank you to everyone who helped in this process with nominations and preparation of materials.

**The following awards were presented during the Annual Meeting on May 15, 2016:**

*Heritage Award*—Significant contributions to preserving, understanding, and celebrating our Unitarian Universalist history: **Linda Parker**

*Religious Education Award*—For outstanding achievement and excellence in religious growth and learning: **Sheri Conner**

*Keeping the Faith Award*—For keeping the UU faith alive in the community and touching the lives of congregation and community members in a positive way: **Shelton Hendricks**

*Social Justice Award*—For witnessing to the ideals of social justice and responsibility so important to our UU heritage: **Rene Harper**

*Social Justice Award Youth*: **Noah Giron**

*Unsung Unitarian Universalist Award*—For a lifetime of actions that inspire, support and express Unitarian Universalism: **Walt Jesteadt**

*Unitarian of the Year Award*—

Given in recognition of her many years of service to the church and to UU principles:

**Marie Sedlacek**. The award was presented by Jack Round for Marie's 31 years as a member in many roles and especially for the architectural work on our beautiful remodeled foyer.

## Elected Members

The Nominating Committee selects nominees for positions on the church board and Trustees of the Capital Trust. Here are the results of the Annual Meeting held on May 15: Alan Vovolka, President-Elect; Joe Schaaf and Floyd Prine will serve on the Board of Trustees; Ben Wallace and Carol Ramsey will serve on the Nominating Committee. Dean Christensen will serve a term as a Trustee of the Capital Trust.

# My Last Exhortation

*By Dixie Lemon*

Many of you have become familiar through the years with my pleas to leave a bequest to the church and thus become a member of the Sarah Joslyn Society. Well, I have decided to hang up my bull horn and leave SJS in the hands of a new generation. I am very pleased that Deb Duggan has agreed to take on the job. So it is time for those procrastinators among you, those have made the decision to leave a bequest, but have not yet taken action, to take the last step and get it done. Then all you have to do is call either me at 402-393-2882 or make Deb feel good by calling her at 402-553-5477.

If you haven't yet made a decision and need more information, give either one of us a call but I can't pass up the opportunity for one last harangue:

Sarah Joslyn Society blah, blah, blah, historic building, blah, blah, blah, your responsibility to the church community, blah, blah, blah, no pockets in shrouds, blah, blah, blah, think of the grandchildren, blah, blah, blah, you'll never miss it, blah, blah, blah, future generations, blah, blah, blah, plant a tree so that others may enjoy the shade, blah, blah, blah, the Capital Trust Fund needs you, blah, blah, blah.

(With apologies and thanks to Macalester College recruitment brochure)



The Early Morning Risers at the Annual Concert on May 15th.  
Photo by Scott Kemper.



## Going to General Assembly?

You are invited to Shawna Foster's ordination. For more details, see the Facebook event here: <https://www.facebook.com/events/487560278099255>. Shawna Foster is a former member of First U and was in charge of our Social Justice Team for a long time.

See the invitation below:



Chicken Sunday! See next page for details.





## A Note from Jan, Director of Religious Education

We honor the contributions of Ben Wallace and Shawne Coonfare with the great work they have done with our youth. They are stepping down after a decade of devotion to these students. We saw in the youth worship service that these are fine young people who deserve the best. Congratulations to Ben and Shawne.

The search for new advisors has developed into a two-church transition team which has rewritten our YRUU policies. We are proud of this document and grateful to the team who labored to make it happen. This team has selected Carolyn Miller from Second Unitarian and Adam Sagert from First Unitarian as the new advisors. We will be planning this summer for a great YRUU year in the fall. Cheers to Adam and Carolyn for embarking on this adventure.

The summer Sunday school curriculum is partly experiencing the cycles of nature in the children's vegetable garden. The children have already weeded, cultivated, added compost and planted vegetable and flower seeds. They uncovered grubs which Jody Petrow took home to feed her chickens. The grateful chickens responded by laying eggs, which Jody scrambled for all the kids. Our wish was to thank the chickens in person, so they visited my office for a mini-petting zoo on Sunday, May 22. We affectionately called it "Chicken Sunday." See photo on previous page.

The wonders of nature are often hidden in plain sight. This summer our lessons will include amazing facts about the creatures and the natural world they inhabit. We will discover the connection with Fibonacci and the mathematical patterns of plants, flowers, shells, and so much more.

Our UU Kid Summer Campers will be transported to the Middle Ages during the week of June 6-10. Activities include juggling, playing recorders, meeting raptors, creating the Magna Carta with real quill pens, manuscript illuminations, medieval dance, and a pilgrimage. Our final banquet in the Great Hall (Common Room) will be featured on the last day and available for the POPS group that evening at 5:30pm.

If you have questions or ideas, please contact me at [dre@firstuuomaha.org](mailto:dre@firstuuomaha.org).

### Overview of Sunday School and Activities

Birth-Kindergarten — 10am—noon. Nursery open. Parent/guardian sign in and out.

Kindergarten-Grade 5 — \*10:30-11:30 am. Class Time. Formal curriculum and teachers. K-2nd grade meets north classroom (Jan's office). 3rd-5th meets middle classroom of RE wing.

Grades 6-12 — \*10:30-11:30 am. Class Time at Spielbound. Game choice and discussion with teachers. Youth at church walk over with Ryan Cook meeting at west RE door. Otherwise, parent responsible for drop-off.

## 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](mailto:hopeinaction@firstuuomaha.org) or use the Hope in Action link on the church website. You may call the church office and press ext. 105 to leave a telephone message for Hope in Action. Or, you may simply complete a Caring Card located in the church pews and place it in the box in the church foyer.

### 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.

## Community Meals & Y.E.S.

Every Saturday churches in our area join together to cook a meal, serve their neighbors and bring a sense of community to our neighborhood at First Baptist Church. Our church has committed to the following Saturdays for Community Meals in 2016:

October 1

November 13

December 24

Please mark your calendar. We will need people to help with desserts, cooking, serving and cleaning up. Thank you to everyone who has already helped with meals earlier this year.

### Our Next Y.E.S. Meal Friday, June 17 at 9am in the kitchen

Thank you to everyone who helped us make our May meal a success! Kim Callaghan is heading up this volunteer effort and she needs four helpers for this next prep. In June we will have a taco bar! We also need paper plates, plastic eating utensils, napkins. Kim requests donations of feminine products and deodorant—it would be very helpful! Want to volunteer? Want to donate? Contact Kim: [kjcallaghan@hotmail.com](mailto:kjcallaghan@hotmail.com). Thank you!

## 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 blessings 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 This Month:

### NAMI

Each month one-half of the loose currency



collected in the offering plate is donated to a cause that advances important principles of Unitarianism. In the month of June we share the plate with [NAMI Nebraska](http://NAMI Nebraska). See below for more information.

## A Note from Terri Lynn Brewer

As some of you know I live with a mental illness. Had I not challenged myself to walk into this building back in 2007, I would not have found the community of people like there is here at First UU. I found people who not only see me for me, but I found a community of people who see all people just as the persons they are—coming together here at First UU for “the inherent worth and dignity of every person.” Furthermore by coming to First UU, I am learning to trust, believe in myself, have hope and again give myself the right to dream. Building our dreams happens before we know what they are and our dreams bring us to a place within ourselves that affect our entire future. For those of us living with a mental health disorder even the mere thought of a future in our society can come to an abrupt end.

In the majority of cases a mental health disorder diagnosis is biologically based chemical disruption in the brain affecting thoughts, behavior, and emotions. Being diagnosed with mental health disorder is one of the most misunderstood, stigmatized disorders in our culture today. June is the month we share the plate with NAMI, the National Alliance on Mental Illness. The funds go to programs such as peer-to-peer support, family to family support groups and wellness though recovery in our Omaha area.

Please join the First UU NAMI walk team on June 18, 2016 at Elmwood Park as NAMI walks for “Steps to Success 2016.” For more information on the NAMI walk go to [namicaresnebraska.org](http://namicaresnebraska.org). Please see page 5 for more information and I hope you say YES.





**“WHAT? You shop AMAZON and don’t support First Unitarian?”**

Visit [www.smile.amazon.com](http://www.smile.amazon.com) and update **CHARITY** information to **FIRST UNITARIAN OF OMAHA.**

Support First Unitarian Church with EVERY purchase you make!!

Amazon donates 0.5% of the price of eligible AmazonSmile purchases to First Unitarian Church.

## MidAmerica Regional Assembly

**Report on the MidAmerica Regional Assembly in St. Paul Minnesota, April 29 – May 1**

*By Janet West*

The MidAmerica Region UU Association includes UU churches from 12 mid-west and plains states. The assembly became a time when UUs from distant states could meet and interact. Three members of First Unitarian Church of Omaha attended: Maria Wallace, Ben Wallace, and Janet West. Also in attendance were members of the Second Unitarian Church of Omaha and members of the Lincoln Unitarian Church. The assembly theme was: “Living In a Right Relationship” May we: Use welcoming, inclusive language; Serve as allies; speak up in the moment; Focus on the impact rather than the original intention; Be open to learning (receive criticism gracefully); Speak from curiosity, compassion & respect for others’ worth and dignity.

Rather than having the traditional keynote speaker, there was a panel of three keynote speakers: Rev. Elizabeth Nguyen, the leader of a development association for youth and young adults of color at the UU Association in Boston, whose mother is of Irish heritage and father is Vietnamese; Rev. Jeremy Nickel, minister of Mission Park UU Congregation in Fremont, CA, who is white and has spent much of his professional life focusing on human rights; and Kenny White, *UUWorld*, senior editor, and director of faith formation at the Prairie UU church in Parker, CO, who is black and a life-time UU from Texas. The focus of the presentation was a discussion of four questions: Who do we want to be in our faith community in the coming years? Who will we UUs need to be to be relevant? How will we get there? Who will be joining us on this journey?



The emphasis of the keynote discussion was how UU congregations can be more welcoming to people of different ethnic and racial backgrounds. The theme of one of the workshops I attended was also inclusion but the focus was inclusion across income, levels of formal education, and class lines. We broke into small discussion groups of four or five people. Only one person in my group said that his/her congregation had a balance of congregants from different occupations, educational levels, and income levels.

**Below is the MidAmerica Regional Assembly Resolution on Muslim Solidarity :**

WHEREAS the Unitarian Universalist Association's Principles call us as member congregations to affirm and promote "The inherent worth and dignity of every person" and, "The goal of world community with peace, liberty, and justice for all";

WHEREAS our living tradition draws from many sources, including "Wisdom from the world's religions which inspires us in our ethical and spiritual life" and "Jewish and Christian teachings which call us to respond to God's love by loving our neighbors as ourselves";

WHEREAS the United States Constitution is founded in part on the freedom of religious belief and practice;

WHEREAS the histories of Unitarianism, Universalism, and Unitarian Universalism affirm the importance and centrality of freedom of religious belief and practice in this country;

WHEREAS Muslims in the United States have faced increased levels of discrimination and hate crimes since 9/11;

WHEREAS an additional layer of fear, prejudice; and xenophobia have arisen following the Paris and San Bernardino terrorist attacks in 2015; and the refugee crisis in Syria has become a target of this fear, prejudice, and xenophobia;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED: The 2016 MidAmerica Regional Assembly expresses its love and support for Muslims in our communities and encourages congregations in the MidAmerica Region to

- ◎ build bridges of partnership with Muslim neighbors in our local areas;
- ◎ increase understanding of Islam within and beyond our local congregations;
- ◎ learn more about the realities of religious discrimination and the Syrian refugee crisis;
- and
- ◎ work to foster greater inclusion of all peoples, regardless of their religious, ethnic, national, or racial identity(s).

# Notes from the Church Office

By Catharine Dixon, Church Admin

Many of us take for granted that everything we know is also known by others, but new friends and members are sometimes unsure. I have decided to write an article about a few of those issues in this month's newsletter in hopes that we are welcoming and easy to understand. Please contact the church office at [admin@firstuuomaha.org](mailto:admin@firstuuomaha.org) or 402-345-3039 ext. 101 if you have any questions. I would be happy to help!

## 1. Visiting the Church

When you visit the church during the week day, you will most likely find all the doors locked. This is done so that our staff is safe. We ask members and friends to be sure that all the church doors are locked after an event and sometimes after an event has started to make sure that everyone inside the church is safe. If you find the side door (the handicap accessible door closest to the parking lot) locked just buzz the doorbell to the left of the door. It's the light gray button on the left hand speaker box. See below. If someone is in the office, he or she will speak to you over the speaker. Please identify yourself. Then you will be buzzed in. Sometimes a staff member or another church member in the building will hear the door and just go open it for you. The door bell can be heard in most parts of the building. If you are hosting an event or need to get into the building when no one is here, please contact the church office to receive a fob so you can enter the locked building. The fob temporarily unlocks the door allowing you to enter the side door. If you need to have the door remain unlocked for a meeting or event, please contact the office.



## 2. Sunday Contributions

All the cash that is placed into the Sunday collection plate is divided—half goes to the church and other half goes to our Share the Plate recipient. See page 15 for information about this month's recipient. The Ministry Team Council (MTC) decides the designations in December of each year. If you are interested in proposing a nonprofit to receive funds from our church, please contact the office. There is a simple form that should be filled out.

Envelopes with blue inserts are placed in the pew holders for you to use if you would like your donation to be recorded. See above. Please be sure to write your name legibly. Sometimes the office receives cash in a closed envelope, but the contributor forgot to write his or her name or the name is not legible. I do my best to try to find out where the donation came from, but it would help greatly if contributions could be marked clearly please. If you do not designate where you would like your cash or check to go, it will be applied to your pledge (if you have one on record). You also have the option of choosing a non-pledge contribution—you may write in that you want the donation to go to the Share the Plate recipient, our Partner Church, our religious education program, Neighborhood Ministry, Preserve our Building, Community Meals, or something else. If you do not mark a preference and you do not have a pledge on file, your donation will go to non-pledge donations. If you have not made a pledge and would like to do so, you can contact the office for the pledge form or download the form by clicking [here](#). Please send your completed form to the office so your pledge can be recorded. Thank you!

### 3. Church Directory

Our church directory is online under the “Directory” button on the homepage of our website: [www.firstuuomaha.org](http://www.firstuuomaha.org). Members, frequent visitors, pledging friends, and others are included in the directory. We list home addresses, phone numbers and email addresses. The directory is password-protected and members and pledging friends will be given this password by contacting the church office. If you do not have your photo in the directory, and would like to have it in the book, please send a .jpeg of yourself by email to the office: [admin@firstuuomaha.org](mailto:admin@firstuuomaha.org). If you need assistance with sending in your photo, just let me know and I will help you. If you would like a printed copy of the directory mailed to you, just request one by phone or email and I will send one out to you. The online directory is updated once a month. There is a printed directory next to the phone in the conference room. This can be used when you are at the church and need to call someone from our congregation. Please do not take the printed directory out of the conference room. The church directory should only be used for church work and connections—not for solicitations. If you do NOT want to be listed in the directory, please contact the church office. When you move, change email addresses, change phone numbers, etc. please contact the church office so we can make sure that we have updated information.

### 4. Events and Activities—Keeping in Touch

Sometimes, after the newsletter has been sent out, event plans and activities change. Our website has an events page that will list any updates. See here: <http://www.firstuuomaha.org/#!/events/c228d>. If an event or Sunday service is cancelled due to weather, we will send out an email to our enews list. Please be sure that you receive the church weekly enews. If you do not, please contact the church office today. The absolute best way to stay informed is by joining our Facebook group. Go here: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/77808136080/>. Ask to join the group. This Facebook group is where event reminders and updates are posted and it’s a great way to stay in touch with other church members and friends. We create Facebook events for Sunday services, special events and other activities.



**Catharine Dixon**  
**Church Administrator**

In August, I will celebrate seven 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 yous 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 wanted to clarify a few things, and third, 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 assist you or answer your question or find someone who can. Thank you and I look forward to more church adventures!



## The Choir says Goodbye to Keith Hart

First Unitarian Church has been very fortunate to have Keith Hart as the choir accompanist for the past two years. He has made rehearsals and performances enjoyable and very musical. We regret that Keith must leave us to pursue other choices in his life. We wish him success in all his endeavors and thank him for bringing artistry into our lives.



## Welcome Our New Members

Diana and David Byrd joined on 2/28/2016



Andrea & Martin Hayes joined on 3/13/2016



## New Members Continued

Kendall Anderson joined on 3/13/2016 — no photo available

Michael McCaughan joined on 3/13/2016



Kathy Alexander joined on 3/27/2016

Susan Traudt joined on 5/3/2016 — no photo available

**Please welcome all our new members!**

**Minister**

Frank Rivas

[minister@firstuuomaha.org](mailto:minister@firstuuomaha.org)**Director of Religious Education**

Jan Wilson

[dre@firstuuomaha.org](mailto:dre@firstuuomaha.org)**Church Administrator**

Catharine Dixon

[admin@firstuuomaha.org](mailto:admin@firstuuomaha.org)**Organist**

Pat Will

**Choir Director**

Bob McMeen

**Early Service Pianist**

Stan Harper

**Minister Emeritus**

Ronald Knapp

**Nursery Coordinator**

Jenny Hastings

**Custodian**

Bobby Medrano

**Nominating Committee**

Mary Thomas, Kim Callaghan,  
Molly Dewell, Nadine Keith,  
Dave Olson, Carol Ramsey,  
Ben Wallace

**THE FLAME**

Deadlines are the 15th of each month. Word limit: 200. Send your submissions to

[admin@firstuuomaha.org](mailto:admin@firstuuomaha.org).Editor/Designer: Cat Dixon

Proofers: Lana Hammel,  
Scott Kemper, Lois Norris,  
Debbie Hunsberger

Flame Mailing Team:

Debbie Hunsberger,  
Linda Hruska, Kim Callaghan,  
Lisa Calhoun, Shelton Hendricks

# Meet Our Leaders

**Board Members**

Jackie Anderegg (President), Alan Vovolka (President-Elect), Sheri Conner, Cy Leise (Secretary), Linda Parker, Kabin Thomas, Floyd Prine, Joe Schaaf  
[board@firstuuomaha.org](mailto:board@firstuuomaha.org)

**Trustees of the Capital Trust**

Steve Hutchinson (2017), Evelyn Whitehill (2018), Dean Christensen (2019)

**Committee on Ministry**

Skip Ciulla, Sandy Host, Marie Sedlacek

**Ministry Team Council**

Rev. Frank Rivas, Nellie Chenoweth, Alan Vovolka, Diane Withem,  
[mtc@firstuuomaha.org](mailto:mtc@firstuuomaha.org)

**Ministry Teams and Team Leaders**

Archives - Dave Richardson

Black Lives Matter- Rene Harper

Caring - Louise Jeffrey

Chalice Guild - Kay Lynn Goldner

Community Meals - Diane Withem

Fellowship - Judith Wright, Nadine Keith &amp; Nellie Chenoweth

Finance - Walt Jesteadt

Fundraising - Donna Neff

Hope in Action - Kim Dunovan

Hospitality Teams - Carolyn McNamara

House and Grounds - Pierce Carpenter

Membership - Caitlin &amp; Tom Seguin

Neighborhood Ministry - Royal Carleton

Office - Carolyn McNamara

Omaha Together One Community -Laurie Gift

Partner Church - Janet West

Religious Education - Sheri Conner

Social Justice- Lori Schaaf

Women's Alliance - Nellie Chenoweth

Worship Arts Team - Megan Gustafson

Young Adult Group - Anne Rodriguez

YRUU - Ben Wallace &amp; Shawne Coonfare

First Unitarian Church

[www.firstuuomaha.org](http://www.firstuuomaha.org)

402-345-3039

## Church Events

### Personal Finance Class

Thursdays, June 2 and 16 at 7pm in the Common Room

See page 4 for more information.

### CommUnity Night

Friday, June 3 at 5:30pm

See page 4 for details.

### Teams Meeting

Saturday, June 4 at 2pm in the Common Room

See page 4 for information.

### Private Wedding

Saturday, June 4 at 4pm

### Private Recital

Sunday, June 5 at 3pm

### UU Summer Camp for Kids

June 6-June 10

### Book Club

Monday, June 6 at 7pm in the Merritt Lounge

See page 4 for details.

### People's Film Festival

Monday, June 6 at 7pm in the Common Room.

See page 4 for information.

### The Tolerant Atheist Group

Thursday, June 9 at 7pm in the Common Room

See page 4 for information.

### POPS: Parents of Preschoolers

Friday, June 10 at 5:30pm in the Common Room

See page 4 for information.

### Private Wedding

Saturday, June 11 at 4pm

### Sunday Social Gathering

Sunday, June 12 at 7pm

See page 4 for information.

### Board Meeting

Tuesday, June 14 at 7pm in the Common Room

### Flame Deadline

Submit your newsletter articles to [admin@firstuuomaha.org](mailto:admin@firstuuomaha.org) by

June 15 at noon.

### Y.E.S. Meal Prep

Friday, June 17 at 9am in the kitchen

See page 14 for details.

### People's Film Festival

Monday, June 20 at 7pm in the Common Room

See page 5 for information.

### The Women's Religious Study Covenant Group

Thursday, June 16 at 1pm in the Merritt Lounge

See page 5.

### Friday Fun Night

Friday, June 17 at 7pm in the Common Room.

See page 5 for information.

### Arts & Crafts Night

Sunday, June 19 at 7pm in the Common Room

See page 5 for details.

### Private Wedding

Saturday, June 25 at 4pm

### Young Adult Discussion Group

Sunday, June 26 at 11:30am in the Whitney Young Room

See page 5 for details.

### Polyamory Discussion Group

Monday, June 27 at 7pm in the Common Room

See page 5 for details.

### Exploring Humanist Perspectives

Tuesday, June 28 at 7pm in the Common Room.

See page 6 for details.

### Recurring...

#### Meditation

Every Tuesday at 8am in the sanctuary. See page 6.

#### Women's Religious Studies Group

Meets most Thursdays at 1pm in the Merritt Lounge. See page 6 for information.

#### Dungeons & Dragons Group

Meets the 1st and 3rd Sunday of each month. See page 6.

#### Bridge Group

Meets the 2nd and 4th Sundays of each month. See page 6.

### Upcoming Church Events Beyond June — See page 8

#### Leadership Retreat

Saturday, August 6

#### Welcome Home

Intergenerational Service  
at 10:30am

Sunday, September 11

#### Welcome Home Ice Cream

Social at 11:30am

Sunday, September 11



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**