

THE FLAME

May 2014



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

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Events in May

Meet Our Leaders

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Nominating Committee

Mary Bort, Abby Cape, Nadine Keith, Lois Norris, Jack Round, Joe Schaaf

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.

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Partner Church - Janet West

Religious Education - Sheri Conner & Donna Neff

Religious Services - Megan Gustafson

Women's Alliance - Mary Bort

Young Adult Group - Maria Wallace

Youth Group - Ben Wallace & Shawne Coonfare

Sunday, April 20 we had fun and games for the Sunday School kids



Join us for Sunday services at First Unitarian Church

May 4—May the Fourth Be with You—9:30am and 11:15am

This service is presented by the Young Adult Group, led by Molly Dewell, and is thanks to the Heart & Hand Auction item offered by Rev. Frank. Prepare for an out of this world, magical worship experience.

Beginning of the Summer Schedule! One Service Sundays

May 11—Annual Youth Service—10:30am

Come enjoy the Annual Youth Led Service! It's always a wonderful opportunity to see our youth, and find out more about how they see the world and what is important to them. Following the service Mother's Day Brunch will be held. See page 7 for details.

May 18—Choir & EMR Concert—10:30am

The Annual Choir and EMR service will feature folk songs, musical theatre numbers and songs of social comment. Come and support our wonderful musicians, then stay for the annual meeting.

May 25—Flower Communion—Ensemble— 10:30am

Norbert Čapek, founder of the Unitarian Church in Prague, performed the first flower communion in 1923. "The most dry and rationalistic members were moved, and many an eye brightened through tear," he wrote afterwards. "I never experienced anything like it."

Summer Schedule to Begin

Starting Sunday, May 11, we begin our summer schedule with only one service at 10:30am followed by a coffee hour down in the Common Room.

Rev. Elations

Monthly Column from our Minister, Rev. Frank Rivas

I had planned to end my spring preaching schedule with an introduction to summer, a reminder that leisure and nature do indeed renew the soul, but scheduling conflicts got in the way. I missed three weeks in March and the young adult experimental service was delayed.

Not everyone, of course, has time or resources for a vacation, but each of us can claim a moment to walk the dog or to sit beside a lake or to stand upon a hill and overlook the sensuous folds of our planet.

In such moments of reverie and emptiness our lives come into clear focus. My call to the ministry happened at such a time, while I was backpacking alone on Brown's Pass. This summer Anne and I plan to spend a week in a cabin outside of Ouray, Colorado. We love to hike in the mountains, but the point of our hiking is to find the right place, to sit there, and simply to be. It is from such places that direction and creativity emerge.

My prayer for each of us... Yes, I know that you're not all comfortable with the word "prayer." And, yes, I admit that I'm not always comfortable with the word either. So let me begin again.

The hope deep in my soul is that each of us will find moments of connection, moments of silence, moments of unutterable joy this summer and that from those moments will emerge a renewed sense of our place in the world.

I will be available most of the summer; so please feel free to call. I will be out of town only three weeks—to attend General Assembly, to clean up my mother's estate, and to hike with Anne. I will attend Sunday services when I can; in fact, I will lead a couple of services. I will also be sitting, eyes and mind not clearly focused, in a place yet unknown; I trust that I too will find a renewed sense of place in the world.

Blessing and love to each of you,
Frank

HEARTLAND PRIDE

JUNE 26-28, 2014

FREE TO BE ME

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 after the parade at Stinson Park (Aksarben) in Omaha

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.

Covenant Group

Thursday, May 15

Our Covenant Group meets in the Merritt Lounge from 1 to 2:30pm every third Thursday of the month. Our May facilitator will be Neva Cozine, and the topic will be Success and Failure, based on that chapter from the book *Heart to Heart*. All women are welcome to attend. If interested, please contact Harriet Major at 402-391-0248 or hmajor323@cox.net.

Spirit Circle

Sunday, May 4

After the first service this Sunday, we will be hosting a short may-pole dance with music. We are inviting kids from RE to attend. That evening we will gather at Francis McCoy's house for a drum circle and a potluck around a fire. Please contact Anne Wilder or Ryan Cook for directions.

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@firstuuumaha.org or call Jaime Alexander, 402-657-9386.

It Takes a Village (and a Bank Account)

by Tony Host, Board President

As I write my last President's letter, it looks like we will reach our pledge drive goal which is a record amount. The current financials presented to the Board for the current church year are also looking good. We went into the 2013-14 year with a \$17,000 deficit. We have made all of our obligations to UUA, MidAmerican UU Region, staff and committees and have balanced our budget. The Board listened to the Congregation at the last several annual meetings and took concrete plans to address financial and structural issues.

We have been making a conscious effort to educate the membership on what it takes to support the church both in volunteer activities and financial support. We need to continue efforts to be transparent and informative. Having worked with the Board, church staff and key leaders in the church for the last two years, I can tell you that there are excellent, committed people making positive things happen here and that they need help. I have always found UU churches to be places where I could do things I couldn't do in my professional life, like being a youth adviser, being a staff member of a leadership training school, or facilitating a retreat. It can be a creative outlet and a means to stretch yourself. I have always found that I have gotten far more out of my volunteer work than what I have put in. And I have gotten to know so many new people in a manner you never do at work or in your neighborhood. Please consider stretching yourself by joining a team or trying something new at church. It's fun!

On a financial note, I would like to challenge each and everyone of you. All of us eat out or go out for entertainment. All of us buy gifts or shop. All of us buy groceries. With a slight change in behavior, you can contribute 3%-15% of what you spend to the church. The church can order scrip cards (gift cards) to over 100+ retailers and restaurants. By using these same-as-cash gift cards to make your normal purchases, you do not need to spend extra money, and First Unitarian Church earns a percentage from each card sold (3%-15% depending on the vendor).

Kathi Oliver was our Unsung UU this year. She and Donna Neff have worked very hard on the Scrip Program to come up with a wonderful list of participating vendors. If you shop online at Amazon.com, you can do a double contribution by logging on through the church's website and using gift cards from the program.

So my challenge to you is to pick a monthly amount that you normally spend at the scrip vendors and make that small behavioral change. See Kathi or Donna on Sunday and buy the gift cards. Going to the movies? AMC Theatres, 6%. Shopping on Amazon.com? 3%. Albertsons? 4%. Barnes & Noble? 9%. BP Gasoline/Exxon/Chevron/Mobil? 1%. Denny's? 7%. Great Harvest Bread Company? 6%. Home Depot? 3%. JC Penney? 5%. Lowe's? 4%. Marshall's/TJ Maxx? 7%. Office Max? 4%. The list goes on. It can be found on the church's website under engage/shopping.

So can you do this? If every member committed to using \$300 of scrip a month we could generate around \$31,000 a year. **THIS IS FREE MONEY!** It doesn't cost you anything but planning ahead—a slight behavioral change. So, can you do it? It would make a huge difference for what we could do at the church for the community and ourselves. See page 17 for more information about scrip.

In faith,
Tony

Mother's Day Brunch

Sunday, May 11 in the Common Room following the 10:30am Service

Come and enjoy a relaxing Mother's Day Brunch served by the Youth Group Members of First and Second Unitarian churches as they fundraise towards their Youth Trip to Colorado this Summer. Brunch will include breakfast food, beverages, and a little something special for those mothers out there! The UUnique Boutique will also be available in case you need a last-minute gift for your mother, or want to buy a little something for yourself. Proceeds from the brunch and some boutique items will go towards defraying the cost of the Youth Trip for those attending. The brunch has a suggested goodwill donation of \$5 per person or \$20 per family. Childcare will be available for those who need it.

YRUU Youth Trip Planned for This Summer! (and how you can help)

Approximately 13 YRUU youth and their adult chaperones from First and Second Unitarian churches will be traveling to Colorado this summer to learn about service, teamwork, leadership, spirituality, and themselves! The trip will be June 15-21, 2014 and will include a service project in the Loveland, CO area as well as time in Estes Park at the YMCA of the Rockies. Youth trips are an important component of the youth community and a celebration of the blessed community that we create throughout the year in YRUU. In order to make the trip affordable for those attending, there will be a set of fundraising events throughout the next few months including a Book/Rummage Sale on May 3rd, Mother's Day Brunch on May 11th, and an Election Day Bake sale on May 13. If you are interested in helping out with any of these events or simply want to donate to the group to help keep the costs affordable for those attending, please contact the YRUU Youth Group at OmahaYRUU@gmail.com or call Ben Wallace at [402-680-6226](tel:402-680-6226). Thank you as always for the amazing support received from First and Second Unitarian Church members, friends, and parents. Your support is investing in the ongoing existence of this blessed community for our youth!

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.

Religious Education

by Jan Wilson, Director of R.E.

As summer approaches, I look forward to the opportunity to attend my first General Assembly in Providence, Rhode Island. My daughter, Ellen, will accompany me. Raised as a UU in this church, Ellen was thrilled to have the opportunity to reconnect with her Unitarian roots. Rev. Frank will be attending ministerial meetings, seeing old friends, and learning about new initiatives. It will be a pleasure to sift through our experiences, and apply new energies to our mission at First Unitarian.

On another note, teams are forming for our intergenerational marble run project. Marble runs are toys, where a marble is dropped into a slot, where it rolls through a series of shoots, grooves, tubes or whatever, to fall into a cup at the bottom. I thought it would be fun to have a little friendly competition where intergenerational teams would build a marble run from recycled materials, and demonstrate their creations at our welcome home service. I will have flyers to pass out if you are interested. See the column to the right for more information. The children, needless to say, are bouncing with ideas.

The children's garden will be flourishing, when the weather permits. Our thanks to Donna Neff and Nicole Giron, for their green thumbs.

Thanks to everyone who has written in our children's Sharing Books. Please see me if you wish to write in a child's book, and share a little of yourself in this special way. On Saturday, July 12 RE will host a picnic where the kids can meet up with the people who wrote in their books. See page 7 for details.

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@firstuuomaha.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 Education

Thursday nights in May

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.

Each documentary film is one hour with one hour for discussion afterward. There will be a Study Guide provided to facilitate discussions.

May 1: A New Adam—The first hour explores the origins of America's unique religious landscape—how the New World challenged and changed the faiths the first European settlers brought with them.

May 8: A New Eden—Hour two considers the origins of America's experiment in religious liberty, examining how the unlikely alliance between evangelicals and enlightenment figures forges a new concept of religious freedom.

May 15: A Nation Reborn—Hour three explores how religion suffused the Civil War.

May 22: A New Light—During the 19th century, the forces of modernity challenged traditional faith and drove a wedge between liberal and conservative believers.

May 29: Soul of a Nation—Hour five explores the post-World War II era, when rising evangelist Billy Graham tried to inspire a religious revival that fused faith with patriotism in a Cold War battle with "Godless Communism."

We will skip June 5 because of the TADG Meeting.

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, like abortion and gay marriage.

New Format: There will be 2 sessions on Thursdays. One session will start at 4pm and end at 6pm. There will be a break for the brown-bag dinner starting at 6pm. The second 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.

The Women's Religious Studies Group

The Women's Religious Studies Group meets from 1 to 2:30pm on Thursdays. We have finished our reading and discussion of Reza Aslan's very interesting book *Zealot* and in late May will begin David Parke's *Epic of Unitarianism*. For the remainder of April, our lively group has a variety of activities scheduled. Please contact Rae Barry at raeb1@hotmail.com or 402-422-1404 for more information. All self-identified women are welcome!

Religious Education Visioning Session Sunday, May 4th at 12:30pm in the Common Room

We will discuss our priorities for our children's religious education from birth to age 18. Please bring your lunch or potluck dish to share. We encourage every interested person to attend. We love ideas! Childcare will be provided.



Women's Alliance — May 12

Women from First and Second Unitarian churches are invited to attend the Women's Alliance (WA) monthly get-together on the evening of Monday, May 12.

Details pertaining to the meal and program will be announced in future church Orders of Service, and in weekly enews and Facebook posts.

We ask for \$12 to cover the cost of dinner and our education fund. If this will be your first time attending a WA get-together, please let us know and be our guest

Please RSVP to Janet West no later than Friday, May 9 at jmasonwest77@yahoo.com or 402-553-3162. Please indicate if you want a vegetarian entrée. RSVPs are necessary so we can order the correct number of entrées from the caterer.

We hope to see you on May 12!

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 tllynnmunchkin@cox.net. For more info, go to the team website: <http://namiwalks.nami.org/firstunitarianchurchofomaha>.

Church Events Coming Up

Adult Religious Education

Thursday evenings

See page 9 for details.

Garage & Book Sale

Saturday, May 3

Hours: 8am to 4pm

See page 15 for details.

Religious Education Visioning Session

Sunday, May 4 at 12:30pm in the Common Room

See page 10 for details.

Spirit Circle

Sunday, May 4

See page 5 for details.

CommUUnity Night

Friday, May 9 at 5:30pm in the Common Room

This family-friendly event is a pot-luck with the main dish provided by RE. Enjoy a relaxed atmosphere.

Storytelling & Music: A Variety Show with Kabin & Mary

Saturday, May 10 at 6pm in the Common Room and Sanctuary.

YRUU Mother's Day Brunch

Sunday, May 11 after the 10:30am service in the Common Room

See page 7 for details.

Women's Alliance

Monday, May 12 at 6:30pm in the Common Room

All women invited to this event. See page 10 for more information.

Young Adult Game Night

Friday, May 23 at 7pm in the Common Room

If you identify yourself as a young adult, then you can attend.

Questions? Contact

youngadults@firstuuomaha.org.

RE Council Meeting

Sunday, May 25 at 12:30pm in Jan's office

Everyone interested in church religious education is invited to attend. A light lunch will be served.

Across the Prairie: Poetry Reading

Friday, May 30 at 6:30pm in the Common Room

Join Sarah Voss, Rose Foster and Cat Dixon for a poetry reading. Activities for families and kids will be provided. Cake and refreshments.

UU & You Class

Sunday, June 1 at 11:45am in the Whitney Young Room

See page 5 for details.

UU Summer Kids Camp

June 2-6 during the day at church.

Contact dre@firstuuomaha.org for more information.

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



On Sunday, April 20 we had relay races for the kids outside

Recurring...

Women's Religious Studies Group

Meets every Thursday at 1pm in the Merritt Lounge

See page 9 for information.

YRUU

Meets every Wednesday. Our last meeting for this session is May 14.

UU teens are welcome to join us. Contact omahayruu@gmail.com for more information.

Choir Rehearsal

Meets every Wednesday in the sanctuary at 7pm. Our last meeting for this session is May 14.

Looking ahead...

NAMI Walk Team

Offsite on Saturday, June 14

See page 10 for details.

Heartland Pride Parade

Offsite during the weekend of June 26-28

See page 5 for details.

Summer Picnic

Offsite on Saturday, July 12 at 5:30pm.

See page 7 for details.

Like Father, Like Son (Part 3 of 3) *By Dave Richardson*

In the two previous installments of this series, we looked at the role the elder McDonald played in helping to shape the architectural face of Omaha in the early decades of the 20th Century. We also examined the early life of John's son, Alan, and his addition to the firm in 1916. In this final installment we will take a look at Alan's first major work in Omaha, the design and construction of the First Unitarian Church, as well as some of the other contributions he and his father made to Omaha including the Joslyn Memorial. Finally, we will look at Alan's very active role in church and community leadership.

As mentioned earlier, Alan spent his first year as an associate in his father's firm, designing structures in smaller Nebraska towns. The firm received commissions to design and construct Carnegie libraries in the Nebraska towns of Lexington, Spencer and Franklin. Alan was assigned these projects and the results brought him the admiration and approval of his father. Alan's name was soon added to the title of the firm. Over the next 30 years the design and construction of many of the firm's commissions were cooperative ventures of both father and son. However, the vision that created the First Unitarian Church at 31st and Harney was almost exclusively that of the younger McDonald.

While earning a BA and an MA in Architecture at Harvard, Alan became enamored with the Colonial and Georgian revival styles so prominent in New England during the 19th and early 20th Centuries. When he began planning the

church, he used his keen esthetic sense to implement the Neo-classical Georgian Revival style. This style honored the New England roots of Unitarianism as well as providing a gemstone among the burgeoning number of churches in the neighborhood. Joni Fogarty in her book *Building Omaha; The Architectural Legacy of John and Alan McDonald* says of our church "every detail of its design is perfect in scale, balance and symmetry."

Longtime church member, Bob Perin has studied McDonald's blueprints in great detail. In his 2009 Henry Lemon Sermon, Bob presented some interesting findings about the alterations and accommodations McDonald made as the project unfolded. The result was, of course, a masterpiece.

Perhaps the most significant achievement of the collaborative efforts of the elder and younger McDonald was the Joslyn Memorial. Mrs. Joslyn started planning the Memorial not long after the death of her husband George in 1916. She immediately turned to her old friend John McDonald for design help. The planning of the Memorial went through many stages. The plans were finalized by the mid 1920's and the team of McDonald *pere' et fils*, hired Peter Kiewit as the main contractor for this ambitious project and work was begun in 1928. The final design was a harmonious blend of Art Deco, *Moderne* and Beaux Arts styles with a touch of Egyptian influence. This structure is world-renowned for its elegance and beauty.

Alan shared Sarah Joslyn's sense of *noblesse oblige*. As we noted in a previous installment, Sarah's philanthropic efforts were not merely limited to writing checks. The same can be said of Alan's role in the community. His leadership and achievements especially in the area of the arts were many. They include the founding of The Omaha Community Playhouse. Alan not only designed the original OCP structure on 40th Street across from the Joslyn Castle, but he also served as the first Chairman of its Board of Directors and continued to serve on the board until his death in 1947.

Alan was very active in church leadership, serving as President of the Board of Trustees for several years. Board minutes from the era show that he demonstrated the same vision and vigor in his work with the church as he did in his architectural efforts. Alan's legacy is preserved in the plaque in the church foyer which reads:

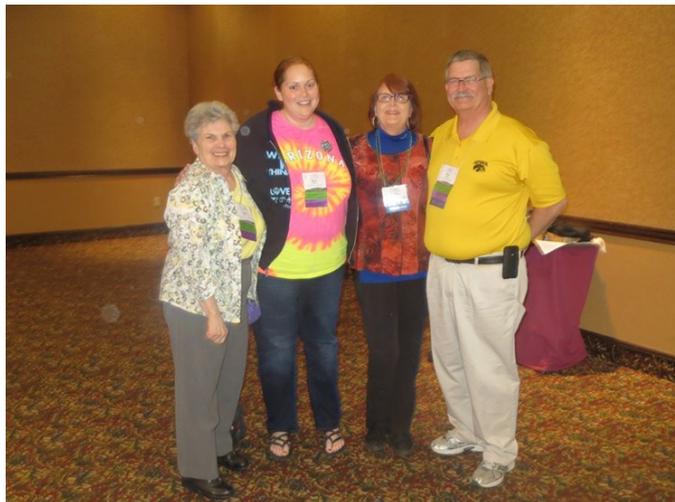
"Alan McDonald
Architect and loyal member
of this church
1891-1947"



Pictured to the right: Alan McDonald confers with Sarah Joslyn on the construction of The Joslyn Memorial.

Mid-American Assembly in Topeka April 11-13, 2014

Five members of First Unitarian Church attended the Mid-American Assembly in Topeka. The theme of the Assembly was “Hungry for Justice.” Whether it was a workshop at the school featured in the Brown v. the Board of Education that was led by First Unitarian Church member and UU minister, Shawna Foster or the Sunday service at which First Unitarian member, Maria Wallace, sang in the Assembly choir or Tony Host who was representing First Unitarian Church at the Business Meeting or First Unitarian member, Janet West, in conjunction with members of the Quad Unitarian Church (IA) presented a session on the Partner Churches in Transylvania or First Unitarian member, Sandy Host, who attended a number of sessions to bring back ideas to our church, the Assembly offered opportunities for all of the attendees to experience and feel what it means to “Hunger for Justice.” Pictured below: Janet West, Maria Wallace, Sandy Host, and Tony Host at the Mid-American Assembly.



General Assembly: Love Reaches Out

What is GA? The National UU Conference held each year is called General Assembly (GA). This year it will be held in Providence, Rhode Island from June 25 to June 29. For GA information, go to www.uua.org/ga.

Why should I go? GA provides a rich opportunity to attend many great, informative workshops and to network with UUs from all over the country as well as providing the opportunity to attend as a delegate.

What if I have questions? Contact Tony Host (president@firstuomaha.org) if you are interested in being a delegate. Jan Wilson, DRE, and Rev. Frank Rivas will be attending this year.

Nominating Committee Announces 2014 Nominees



President-elect, Jack Round

My family and I first attended and joined First Unitarian Church in 2001. I have served on the Board of Trustees, been Treasurer, and served on the Ministerial Search Committee. I work at Food Bank for the Heartland, and also enjoy helping with a number of sustainability initiatives in Omaha: Transition Omaha, the Omaha Time Exchange, Slow Money Omaha Investment Club, and a co-housing (intentional community) development. I am also the Treasurer for the Board of the first Montessori High School in Omaha.

Board of Trustees



Sheri Conner

Replacing Lana Hammel (Sheri's term will go to May 2017)

My seven-year-old grandson, Seth, and I have been attending First UU for over three years. I finally became a member on January 19th of this year. I am married, but my husband does not attend church with us at this time. I work at

Eppley Airfield as a weather observer which is my main line of work, but I also hold a degree in education. I put that to work here in the church by involving myself with the RE Council and teaching preschoolers. At the beginning of the year, I stepped into the position of RE Council chair. I believe that this experience with RE will enable me to better serve the church as a board member.



Cy Leise

Replacing John Wagner (Cy's term will go to May 2017)

Marcia and I have been Unitarian-Universalists for over 30 years and were active in the RE program at First Unitarian in the 1980s when our daughters Tanya and Carisa were involved. I am retired from a career as a psychology educator at Bellevue University with special interest in helping students learn to apply knowledge in their own lives. I rely on the seven principles of UU as a guide for personal and spiritual growth. As a board member, my interests would be to support the programs at First Unitarian and to be a part of the collaborative creativity needed to meet the needs of our church community.



Jack Heidel

Replacing Stephen Meister (Jack's term will go to 2016)

Jack has been a member of First Unitarian Church since 1985. He is a Professor of Mathematics at UNO, and was elected member of the Learning Coordinating Council (District 3). He blogs at <http://itdoesnotaddup.com>.

Capital Trust

Steve Hutchinson has agreed to continue on, and his term will continue until May 2017.

Nominating Committee

Kim Callaghan is replacing Lois Norris (Committee Member until May 2017). Nadine Keith has agreed to continue on (Committee Member until May 2017). Dave Olsen is replacing Jack Round (Committee Member until May 2015).

Omaha YRUU Book and Rummage Sale



May 3, 2014 8am - 4pm

**First Unitarian Church of Omaha
Common Room (Downstairs)**

**All Proceeds Benefit the YRUU Youth Trip to Colorado
this Summer!**

Have items to donate?

Drop off your Book/Rummage Sale items
April 28th-May 2nd during regular Church Office hours
or on Wednesday April 30th between 7pm and 8:30pm

If you have any questions,
email Shawne and Ben at omahayruu@gmail.com

A Firtomatos, Romania – Summer, 2006 - “One Visitor’s Memory”

Submitted by Evy Boonyawiroj

Arriving at our Partner Church’s village, my first impression was of quiet: a carless dirt main road, a step back in time. After being welcomed, we learned a funeral was to be held that afternoon. We were invited to attend, so I did.

Villagers were gathered in a courtyard area behind the (I assumed) home of the deceased, a 57-year old man with a heart condition. (The village elementary school teacher kindly took me under her wing cueing me with helpful nonverbal procedural information.) Solemn mourners sat or stood; I stood.

Rev. Katalin presided over the service which included several hymns the attendees knew from memory. Some quiet tears were shed among the mourners including one tear of mine which slid down my cheek as I thought of how the impact of the death of one person in this village would be a great loss. Toward the end of the service, the grieving widow was more prominent. Four men carried the body laid out on a door to the cemetery. Those who were physically able negotiated the rough, hilly terrain. Decorated triangular-shaped evergreen bough “wreaths” (no source of fresh flower bouquets) were laid around and over the deceased’s body before it was lowered to the ground. Rev. Katalin offered some final words as the ceremony of loss and parting ending.

I then tagged along with the teacher and three other women who

gathered in one of their kitchens. After carefully wiping any possible dust (from the main road) from small cups, tea was offered. We, again, stood (although chairs were available); they visited as death had provided an opportunity to suspend usual duties allowing them to come together.



Scrip Cards

What is scrip?

It is a simple way for First Unitarian to earn money without taking extra money out of your pocket.

What ways can YOU support First Unitarian?

1. Purchase gift cards for your regular shopping habits or gift-giving needs. Over 100 to choose from available for immediate purchase or special order. We receive 2%-14% from every gift card purchased.
2. Purchase Baker's and Kwik Shop scrip cards. We receive 5% back from every purchase. Cards are available in \$10 and \$50 denominations.
3. Purchase an Amazon gift card, in \$25 increments, and use the Amazon link on our website to purchase items you normally purchase from Amazon. Use the gift card instead of your debit or credit card and help out twice!!



Where can I purchase Scrip cards?

The FUNdraising team currently sells scrip cards at both coffee hours. Look for the trifold board!

Volunteers wanted!

We are in need of a few volunteers to help sell scrip when Kathi Oliver and Donna Neff are not available. If interested, please see the scrip table during coffee hours.

Thank you to all that have already purchased and have made this new endeavor a success!

Share the Plate—PFLAG

Founded in 1972 with the simple act of a mother publicly supporting her gay son, PFLAG is the nation's largest family and ally organization. Made up of parents, families, friends, and straight allies united with people who are lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT), PFLAG is committed to advancing equality and societal acceptance of LGBT people through its threefold mission of support, education and advocacy. PFLAG now has over 350 chapters and 200,000 members and supporters crossing multiple generations of American families in major urban centers, small cities and rural areas in all 50 states.

This vast grassroots network is cultivated, resourced, and serviced by PFLAG National, located in Washington, D.C., the National Board of Directors and 13 Regional Directors.

For more information contact info@pflag-omaha.org.

Church Annual Meeting Notice

The 145th annual congregational meeting of First Unitarian Church of Omaha will take place at the Church on Sunday, May 18 at 12:15pm. Eligible voting members* of the church will adopt an operating budget for the 2014-2015 church year and elect a President-elect, members of the Board of Trustees, a Trustee of the Capital Trust Fund, and Nominating Committee members; hear select reports from church leaders; consider amendments to update the Bylaws; and reveal our UU of the Year!

Childcare will be provided. Your Board of Trustees will host coffee hour following the 10:30am service and provide food and drink to help tide you over during the meeting. We encourage all members to attend this important church event

*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, 2013 and April 19, 2014.

The Board has reviewed the By-Laws and recommended amendments to correct grammatical and typographical issues, clarify and update governance matters (such as clarifying the Board's right to delegate, clarifying the Treasurer's role, and clarifying the annual review of the church's financial structure), permit the use of electronic media for Board meetings (e.g., a conference call-in), and clarify provisions relating to the role of the minister (including reducing the minimum Search Committee membership to seven and restructuring membership of the Committee on Ministry to reflect recommendations from the present Committee on Ministry and the Minister).

Summer Schedule

Beginning Sunday, May 11, we will go to one-service Sundays. That one service happens at 10:30am every Sunday and is followed by a coffee hour in the Common Room. Please join us!

We will return to two services on Sunday, September 14.



YRUU Bake Sale Recap

The Youth Bake Sale on Sunday, April 20 was a success! Thank you to all who donated goodies and purchased baked goods. The Youth Group earned \$734 for their trip.

For more details about the trip and their plans both for a garage sale and a brunch in May, please see page 7.



**Flower Communion happens on
Sunday, May 25
at our 10:30am service.
Please bring a flower or plant to
share.**

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