

July 2016

The Flame



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

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this Month

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The History of the
Chalice

The First U Ukuleles during Flower Communion on June 5th. Photo by Nathan Kramer



Sunday Services — All are welcome

July 3 — One Service at 10:30am
Not Talking About the Tao
Geoff Erickson

Taoism is the way of the indescribable Tao and emphasizes action over talk. Together we will explore some of the ways that Taoism might be put into practice to enrich the Unitarian Universalist faith.

July 10 — One Service at 10:30am
Minds by Truth Made Free:
Religion, Science and Truth
Rev. Ron Knapp

This will be the first of a series of two sermons that Ron will present on the relationship between religion and science. The second sermon, on August 7, will be titled "A Rebirth of Wonder: Religion, Science and Wonder."

July 17 — One Service at 10:30am
The Ultimate Act of Creativity
Rev. Sheila Mee

Many people do not consider themselves to be creative. The reality is that we all are creative throughout our lives.

July 24 — One Service at 10:30am
Fuzzy Thoughts
Rev. Sarah Voss

Reflections on an article Sarah wrote which is appearing online right about now (July, 2016) in the biannual *Journal of Humanistic Mathematics*. The article began life many years ago as a sermon, recently morphed into an essay on moral math in the health care setting, and now reappears as a second-generation sermon. Watch out! Sarah cautions that the experience may be a little fuzzy.

July 31 — One Service at 10:30am
"Reclaiming Values"
Rev. Frank Rivas

The recent shooting in Orlando was the most destructive in a pattern of mass shootings. These shootings are not only the work of deranged individuals, but also a shared American problem. What happened to the core values of respect, tolerance, and reason? Of settling disagreements without violence? Of caring for the commonweal instead of focusing on how much the gun lobby can contribute to a campaign?

Share the Plate This Month: OTOC

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 July we share the plate with OTOC (Omaha Together One Community), a local interfaith organization of which First Unitarian is a member. We encourage you to learn more about OTOC by visiting their website www.otoc.org.



OTOC and Institute for Public Leadership will hold workshops this summer to help Omaha leaders prepare for “Leadership in an Election Year.” All sessions will be from 7pm to 8:30pm at Augustana Lutheran (3647 Lafayette Ave.).

Remaining Dates:

Monday, July 11--Sharing our narratives and agenda for change with voters; how to organize successful non-partisan voter education campaigns

Monday, August 8--holding a large accountability session with candidates for office; how to make our agenda the candidate and successfully win their commitment to support it.

OTOC Team Meeting Schedule:

Thursday, July 7th, 7 p.m., First United Methodist Church, 7020 Cass Street, Room 112.

Thursday, August 4th, 7 p.m., First United Methodist Church, 7020 Cass Street, Room 112.

Thursday, September 1st, 7 p.m., First United Methodist Church, 7020 Cass Street, Room 112.

Thursday, October 6th, 7 p.m., First United Methodist Church, 7020 Cass Street, Room 112.

Thursday, November 3rd, 7 p.m., First United Methodist Church, 7020 Cass Street, Room 112.

Thursday, December 1st, 7 p.m., First United Methodist Church, 7020 Cass Street, Room 112.

Church Events

CommUnity Night

We will not meet in July.

Shakespeare on the Green

Sunday, July 3, offsite. Each year we have volunteers who help out at a play at UNO. Contact Anne Rodriguez for more information at torimuse@gmail.com or see our Facebook event here: <https://www.facebook.com/events/101397270287347>.

People's Film Festival

We will not meet the first Monday of the month due to the holiday.

POPS (Parents of Preschoolers)

Friday, July 8 at 5:30 at Stinson Park in the Aksarben area. POPS will be combined with Second Unitarian Church this month. We invite you to bring your own picnic supper. There are fountains for the kids to splash in. No childcare provided this month. Questions? Contact Jan at dre@firstuomaha.org.

Sunday Social Gathering (Second Sunday of every month)

Sunday, July 10 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.

Friday Fun Night

Friday, July 15 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!

UU&You Introductory Class next offered on Sunday, July 17

The Unitarian Universalism & You 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. Childcare is available by prior arrangement. RSVP (recommended) or questions can be addressed to uuclass@firstuomaha.org or call Jaime Alexander 402-657-9386.

Arts and Crafts Night

Sunday, July 17 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 or (402) 880-1327 for details.

People's Film Festival

Monday, July 18 at 7pm in the Common Room. We will show "Where to Invade Next" by Michael Moore. Just in time for election season, America's favorite political provocateur, Michael Moore, is back with his new film, *Where to Invade Next*. Honored by festivals and critics groups alike, this film is an expansive, hilarious, and subversive comedy in which the Academy Award-winning director confronts the most pressing issues facing America today and finds solutions in the most unlikely places.

Y.E.S. Meal

Tuesday, July 19 at 9am in the kitchen. Volunteer to help cook or bring supplies. Kim Callaghan is heading up this volunteer effort and she needs four helpers for this next prep. In July we will have a chef salad 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. Thank you!

The Women's Religious Study Covenant Group

Thursday, July 21 at 1pm in the Merritt Lounge. This group meets on the third Thursday of each month. We are reading *Listening Hearts* by Christine Roberson and Alicia Hawkins. If you would like to join the Covenant Group, please contact Harriet Major at 402-391-0248 or hmajor323@cox.com.

Young Adult Discussion Group

Sunday, July 24 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.

Book Club

Monday, July 25 at 7pm. We will discuss [Five Easy Theses: Commonsense Solutions to America's Greatest Economic Challenges](#) by James Stone. For more information, contact Dave at richardson.david@westside66.net.

Church Events Continued...

Omaha Polyamory Discussion Group

Monday, July 25 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.

Exploring Humanistic Perspectives in Literature: Where Justice Hangs in the Balance

Tuesday, July 26 at 7pm in the Common Room. Set 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. Reading sources for this exploration of "justice" include, among others, Norman Cousins, Fannie Lou Hamer, Albert Camus, William O. Douglas, Lillian Smith, Bonaro Overstreet, Rabindranath Tagore, and Robert Weston.

RE Council Meeting

Sunday, July 31 at 9:30am in Jan's office. All parents, grandparents and those interested in religious education are invited to attend. Please join us! Questions? Contact Jan at dre@firsttuomaha.org.

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. This group explores a wide range of religious beliefs through reading, study, and discussion. New members welcome. We will be starting a new book on Native American spirituality by Joseph Bruchac, "Our Stories Remember: American History, Culture, and Values Through Story Telling." For more information, please contact Neva Cozine at 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, 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.

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.

Save the Date

Welcome Home Service & 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. We will have the Ice Cream Social instead of the Welcome Home Picnic. Please join us!



Church Leadership Retreat Saturday, August 6



All are invited to attend our retreat which begins at 10:30am at the Joslyn Art Museum (2200 Dodge Street) on Saturday, August 6th. Cy Wakeman, a nationally known author and thought-provoking speaker on leadership, will give a talk followed by other presentations. Our focus will be:

Deepening Our Connections with Respect for Our Differences

Growing Our Membership

Expanding Our Presence in Our Communities

Come for the speakers and stay for the free lunch!

Please RSVP to admin@firstuomaha.org to reserve your spot by July 31st. When you RSVP, please let us know if you need a vegetarian dish and if you have other dietary needs.

All members who are or have been or want to be leaders or who are simply interested in good ideas for the church are invited to attend.

ADULT RELIGIOUS EDUCATION CLASSES



Classes for Visitors

First Steps

Beginning in September

Dates: 9/25, 10/23, 11/20, 12/18 — Session begins at 11am

Gather by the visitors' table. We will meet in the Whitney Young Classroom.

You are invited to join us as we gather together to get acquainted with the basics of Unitarian Universalism and our vibrant community. There are many ways to connect with the church, and we look forward to discussing the unique opportunities offered by First Unitarian Church of Omaha.

Pathways

Beginning in October

Dates to be announced.

This class explores who we are and what we believe and provides opportunities for members of our congregation to share with newcomers what it means to be a Unitarian Universalist.

Pathways gives newcomers a chance to examine their own personal stories in light of our Unitarian Universalist tradition and heritage. Whether you are new to the church, or have been coming for a while, this is a great opportunity to learn more about this community.

Questions? Want to RSVP? Contact Carrie at coordinator@firstuomaha.org.

Ways to Help and Get Involved!

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. 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>

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. No experience required!

Shakespeare on the Green

Volunteers are needed for our Shakespeare on the Green Team on Sunday, July 3. Contact Anne Rodriguez for more information at torimuse@gmail.com or see our Facebook event here: <https://www.facebook.com/events/101397270287347>.

Caring Team

Can you spare a couple of hours a month to visit, with a church partner, one of our six shut-ins? Some of them are connected to a church member or two, but it would be nice if they had visitors just representing the congregation in general. Just a short chat to let them know they are remembered. Rev. Frank has particularly asked for this support during his sabbatical this summer. If you can help, please call Louise Jeffrey (402-980-2068) or e-mail louisekjeffrey@hotmail.com.

World Music Drumming

Come and experience west African drumming with teacher Judi Torneten. Judi has recently completed her second level of teacher training under master drummer, Sowah Mensah, of Ghana. Classes will be held at her home July 5, 6, 7, and 8, from 3-4:30. Final rehearsal will be at First U on July 9, 3-4:30 in the sanctuary. We will share our music at the July 10 service. If interested, please contact Judi at jktorneten@gmail.com or call 402-880-4072. Drums and other percussion provided. Up to 15 slots available.

Brush Up Nebraska Paint-a-thon on Saturday, August 20th

Brush Up Nebraska utilizes volunteers to paint houses of low-income elderly and disabled homeowners. Last year, First Unitarian's team divided up to help paint and prep three houses.

Last year's volunteers were: Curtis Bryant, Dean Christensen, Barb Henney, Erin Higgins, Vickie Hawks Love, Lois Norris, Catherine Plumlee, Daniele Reichert, Tom and Caitlin Seguin, Alan Vovolka, Robin Vovolka, Ben Wallace.

In 2016 we are partnering with Countryside Community Church and will share responsibility for one house from start to finish on August 20. This year's team is now forming. Volunteers should be 16 or older. Please contact Alan Vovolka (402) 344-3988 to sign up or if you have questions.

Friday Office Volunteers

Have you ever wondered, if even for a moment, who replaces the pink attendance sheets on the clipboards in the pews, or changes the batteries in the hearing assist devices? Those are just two of the tasks that most people don't give a thought to, unless it's not done.

The Friday Office Volunteer Team are looking for a few good people! If you can spare an hour or so on a Friday afternoon, or an hour on a Wednesday morning once a month, WE NEED YOU!

Please contact Kim Callaghan at kjcallaghan@hotmail.com or by phone at 402-292-5018.

Our Next Y.E.S. Meal

Tuesday, July 19 at 9am in the kitchen

Kim Callaghan is heading up this volunteer effort and she needs four helpers for this next prep. In July we will have a chef salad 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. Thank you! See page 13 for more information.

Last Chance: Lost & Found

The Lost & Found items will be on display on a table in the Common Room Sundays, July 3 and July 10. After July 10, the things on the table will be donated. Many of these Items have been in the Lost & Found for months. Please retrieve your items your items before July 10th. Thank you!
—The Chalice Guild



State of Our Church Conversations!

I have started random conversations with some of you about the state of our church, and I hope to speak to all of you if I live that long. These are 10 minute conversations that generally cover the following issues:

On a scale of 1-10, how satisfied are you in our church?

What do you see as the positives?

What do you think needs work?

Do you believe we deal with conflict or differences directly and respectfully?

Do you feel appreciated for what you do for our church?

What do you think is important for our future?

Please feel free to approach me if you would like to have this conversation or e-mail or phone your responses if you would like. This is very informal, very anonymous and very interesting. If I don't approach you, it is because you look busy, or rushed, or I am on my way somewhere. I plan to give a brief summary of what I have heard at our Leadership Retreat on August 6th at Joslyn Museum.

Jackie Anderegg, President

janderegg@cox.net

402-397-7221

Team Leaders — Leadership Manuals: The Bonfire

The new leadership manuals were handed out at our Teams Meeting on June 4. If you were not at the meeting, please contact the office to arrange pick-up of your manual. This binder has important forms, information and documents. Email admin@firstuomaha.org today.

A Note from Jan, Director of Religious Education

Our RE event of the summer has just ended. Camp Art-a-Lot was a celebration of everything Medieval. We made a drawbridge, penned a manuscript with a real quill pen, engaged in friendly shield and sword exercises, and created our own reliquary boxes.

We experienced Medieval music in three ways. Debbie Greenblatt, an area musician, taught us the basics of playing the recorder, while demonstrating her extensive collection of recorders ranging from tiny to enormous. She demonstrated the nickelharpa, the hammered dulcimer, and the Irish drums. We enjoyed the country in Avoca, NE, the location of her home and studio. Jennifer Forbes Bailey hosted our group at First Central Congregational for an experience with Medieval folk dancing. Later that day, we walked the labyrinth at First Central. This pilgrimage was the preparation for our folk dance for the queen of First Unitarian, our own majesty, Catharine Dixon. The kids created a fancy throne for the bejeweled monarch. She was escorted by the Medieval secret service for our final banquet in her honor.

We will have many fond memories of our encounter with the real Falconer at Fontenelle Forest and her magnificent birds. Lastly, who knows how to juggle? We were taught and entertained by the juggle lady herself, Renee Jizba. We learned first with scarves and advanced to bean bags. Everyone loved the peacock feather balancing.

Great thanks to the volunteers who helped make everything so successful. Jody Petrow, Harold Sanchez, Adam Sagert, Alan Vovolka, John Hruska all did a great job of engaging with the campers and the activities.

We look forward to our Harry Potter theme camp next summer.

If you have questions or ideas, please contact me at 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@firstuomaha.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

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.

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!

Our Next Y.E.S. Meal

Tuesday, July 19 at 9am in the kitchen

Kim Callaghan is heading up this volunteer effort, and she needs four helpers for this next prep. In July we will have a chef salad 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. Thank you!

Y.E.S. Meals

By Kim Callaghan

Many people in the church probably don't know what they are donating to when I ask for donations to the Y.E.S. meal or for the street outreach program.

Y.E.S. (Youth Emergency Services) is a "safety net" for the homeless or at-risk youth, aged 12 through 21, who are in the Omaha area. At last count, there are approximately 300 youth in Omaha every night who are without a safe place to sleep, to get a meal or a shower or clean clothes! These KIDS, because that's what they are, are not runaways, more like throwaways. No one is looking for them. They are trying to survive in a world that is less than welcoming to them unlike the kids in our YRUU program who seem privileged in comparison.

The meal that we gather to prepare for the Youth Emergency Services Street Outreach once a month appears, (if you're just looking at the picture that Catharine posts on Facebook or in this newsletter), like two or three people helped with the entire meal and THAT'S JUST NOT THE WHOLE STORY! Many people are involved! Since we've started providing meals to Y.E.S., various people have been involved. It varies from month to month because the day of the week changes and not everyone's schedule is flexible enough to

accommodate that. In the past, Sharon Conlon, Louise Jeffrey, Kay Lynn Goldner, Rae Barry, Linda Hruska, Gale Callaghan (and at least two others that I cannot remember their names) should be in those pictures! People have baked and purchased food and paper goods towards the meal and we have received donations of various personal products. The response has been tremendous! One of these times, we should skip the picture of the volunteers and take a picture of the donations!

It truly is a group effort, and I would like to thank everyone who has helped—whether it's with labor or donation. Please know how much Y.E.S. and I appreciate it.



Pictured above: Linda Hruska, Kim Callaghan, and Rae Barry. Photo by Catharine Dixon.



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LET'S GIVE TOGETHER

Thank you for supporting First Unitarian Church!



Hand Off: "Shadow" co-chairs Needed for October Auction

By Donna Neff

Sadly, this fall will be the last year I chair or co-chair the Heart & Hand Auction. **This is a call for one or (even better) two volunteers to learn the ropes this year and then head the 2017 Heart & Hand Auction.** Yes, it is a big job, but I think it is as much fun as it is work. It is also a very satisfying project with a major positive impact on our church budget and our church community. I love the Auction, and am only stepping down because Walt will be newly retired in fall 2017 and our next adventures are uncertain. Likely I will continue to be available to consult as needed, and join the Auction worker bees.

For those unfamiliar with the Auction, it is our major annual FUNdraiser for the church operating budget, with profits of around \$17,000 currently. Held near Halloween, it is called "heart and hand" because it features social events, concerts and sharing our interests and skills. It has also become a major engine for social events and community building in our church.

Whether the new Auction folks chair/co-chair the FUNdraising Team itself is a separate question (because the Auction is the major project of that team). My goal is only to get the next Auction chairs in place, so they can learn how the Auction currently runs. Future Auctions may well change things, but Kathi Oliver and I have the current approach pretty well structured. Access to a computer and learning to use the Auction software is one important training component.

I urge you to get in touch with me even if only vaguely interested or curious about what is involved to get more information. The Auction this year is Friday, October 28th. Preparation begins soon. Peak activity is mid-September through November.

Donna's email: neffd@cox.net



The History of the Chalice

A pamphlet by Dan Hotchkiss

At the opening of Unitarian Universalist worship services, many congregations light a flame inside a chalice. This flaming chalice has become a well-known symbol of our denomination. It unites our members in worship and symbolizes the spirit of our work.

The flaming chalice combines two archetypes—a drinking vessel and a flame—and as a religious symbol has different meanings to different beholders.

Chalices, cups, and flagons can be found worldwide on ancient manuscripts and altars. The chalice used by Jesus at his last Passover seder became the Holy Grail sought by the knights of Wales and England. Jan Hus, Czech priest and forerunner of the Reformation, was burned at the stake for proposing, among other things, that the communion chalice be shared with the laity. More recently, feminist writer Riane Eisler has used the chalice as a symbol of the "partnership way" of being in community. Sharing, generosity, sustenance, and love are some of the meanings symbolized by a chalice.

As a sacrificial fire, flame has been a central symbol for the world's oldest scriptures, the Vedic hymns of India. Today, lights shine on Christmas and Hanukkah, eternal flames stand watch at monuments and tombs, and candles flicker in cathedrals, temples, mosques, and meeting houses. A flame can symbolize witness, sacrifice, testing, courage, and illumination.

The chalice and the flame were brought together as a Unitarian symbol by an Austrian artist, Hans Deutsch, in 1941. Living in Paris during the 1930s, Deutsch drew critical cartoons of Adolf Hitler. When the Nazis invaded Paris in 1940, he

abandoned all he had and fled to the South of France, then to Spain, and finally, with an altered passport, into Portugal.

There, he met the Reverend Charles Joy, executive director of the Unitarian Service Committee (USC). The Service Committee was new, founded in Boston to assist Eastern Europeans, among them Unitarians as well as Jews, who needed to escape Nazi persecution. From his Lisbon headquarters, Joy oversaw a secret network of couriers and agents.

Deutsch was most impressed and soon was working for the USC. He later wrote to Joy: There is something that urges me to tell you... how much I admire your utter self denial [and] readiness to serve, to sacrifice all, your time, your health, your well being, to help, help, help. I am not what you may actually call a believer. But if your kind of life is the profession of your faith—as it is, I feel sure—then religion, ceasing to be magic and mysticism, becomes confession to practical philosophy and—what is more—to active, really useful social work. And this religion—with or without a heading—is one to which even a 'godless' fellow like myself can say wholeheartedly, Yes!

The USC was an unknown organization in 1941. This was a special handicap in the cloak-and-dagger world, where establishing trust quickly across barriers of language, nationality, and faith could mean life instead of death. Disguises, signs and countersigns, and midnight runs across guarded borders were the means of freedom in those days. Joy asked Deutsch to create a symbol for their papers "to make them look official, to give dignity and importance to them, and at the same time to symbolize the spirit of our work.... When a document may keep a man out of jail, give him standing with governments and police, it is important that it look important."

Thus, Hans Deutsch made his lasting contribution to the USC and, as it turned out, to Unitarian Universalism. With pencil and ink he drew a chalice with a flame. It was, Joy wrote his board in Boston, a chalice with a flame, the kind of chalice which the Greeks and Romans put on their altars. The holy oil burning in it is a symbol of helpfulness and sacrifice.... This was in the mind of the artist. The fact, however, that it remotely suggests a cross was not in his mind, but to me this also has its merit. We do not limit our work to Christians. Indeed, at the present moment, our work is nine-tenths for the Jews, yet we do stem from the Christian tradition, and the cross does symbolize Christianity and its central theme of sacrificial love.

A flame can symbolize witness, sacrifice, testing, courage, and illumination.

The flaming chalice design was made into a seal for papers and a badge for agents moving refugees to freedom. In time it became a symbol of Unitarian Universalism all around the world. The story of Hans Deutsch reminds us that the symbol of a flaming chalice stood in the beginning for a life of service. When Deutsch designed the flaming chalice, he had never seen a Unitarian or Universalist church or heard a sermon. What he had seen was faith in action—people who were willing to risk all for others in a time of urgent need.

Today, the flaming chalice is the official symbol of the Unitarian Universalist Service Committee and the Unitarian Universalist Association. Officially or unofficially, it functions as a logo for hundreds of congregations. Perhaps most importantly, it has become a focal point for worship. No one meaning or interpretation is official. The flaming chalice, like our faith, stands open to receive new truths that pass the tests of reason, justice, and compassion.



Minister

Frank Rivas

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Jan Wilson

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Carrie Helmberger

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Catharine Dixon

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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@firstuomaha.org.

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Debbie Hunsberger,
Linda Hruska, Kim Callaghan,
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First Unitarian Churchwww.firstuomaha.org

402-345-3039

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@firstuomaha.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@firstuomaha.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 & Nellie Chenoweth

Finance - Walt Jesteadt

Fundraising - Donna Neff

Hope in Action - Kim Dunovan

Hospitality Teams - Carolyn McNamara

House and Grounds - Pierce Carpenter

Membership - Caitlin & 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 - Adam Sagert

Church Events

Private Wedding

Saturday, July 2 at 6pm

Private Wedding

Sunday, July 3 at 4pm

POPS: Parents of Preschoolers

Friday, July 8 —offsite this month

See page 4 for information.

Private Wedding

Friday, July 8 at 4pm

Sunday Social Gathering

Sunday, July 10 at 7pm

See page 4 for information.

Board Meeting

Tuesday, July 12 at 7pm in the

Common Room

Flame Deadline

Submit your newsletter articles to

admin@firstuuomaha.org by

July 15 at noon.

Friday Fun Night

Friday, July 15 at 7pm in the

Whitney Young Classroom

See page 4 for information.

Private Wedding

Saturday, July 16 at 11:30am

UU & You Class

Sunday, July 17 at 11:45am in the

Whitney Young Classroom

See page 4 for details.

Private Recital

Sunday, July 17 at 2pm

Arts & Crafts Night

Sunday, July 17 at 7pm in the

Common Room

See page 4 for information.

People's Film Festival

Monday, July 18 at 7pm in the

Common Room

See page 4 for information.

Y.E.S. Meal Prep

Tuesday, July 19 at 9am in the

kitchen

See page 13 for details.

The Women's Religious Study Covenant Group

Thursday, July 21 at 1pm in the

Merritt Lounge

See page 4.

Private Wedding

Saturday, July 23 at 1pm

Young Adult Discussion Group

Sunday, July 24 at 11:30am in the

Whitney Young Room

See page 4 for details.

Book Club

Monday, July 25 at 7pm in the Merritt

Lounge

See page 4 details.

Polyamory Discussion Group

Monday, July 25 at 7pm in the

Common Room

See page 5 for details.

Exploring Humanist Perspectives

Tuesday, July 26 at 7pm in the

Common Room.

See page 5 for details.

RE Council Meeting

Sunday, July 31 at 9:30am in Jan's

office

See page 5 for information.

Recurring...

Meditation

Every Tuesday at 8am in the

sanctuary. See page 5.

Women's Religious Studies Group

Meets most Thursdays at 1pm in the

Merritt Lounge. See page 5 for

information.

Dungeons & Dragons Group

Meets the 1st and 3rd Sunday of each

month. See page 5.

Bridge Group

Meets the 2nd and 4th Sundays of each

month. See page 5.

Upcoming Church Events Beyond July

Leadership Retreat

Saturday, August 6

See page 6

Welcome Home

Intergenerational Service at 10:30am

Sunday, September 11

See page 5

Welcome Home Ice Cream

Social at 11:30am

Sunday, September 11

See page 5

First Steps & Pathways —

Classes for Visitors

Begins in September

See page 7



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**