

June 2019

# The Flame



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

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## Sunday Services

**Sunday, June 2 at 10:30am**

### Annual Choir Concert

The Sanctuary Singers, under the direction of William Miller, invite you to attend our 2019 annual concert as we celebrate another successful choral year. The program will showcase a variety of choral works. The prelude and postlude will be offered by organist, Pat Will and the choir is accompanied by J Gawf. We are excited to share our gifts with you and look forward to seeing you at the concert.

**Sunday, June 9 at 10:30am**

### Flower Communion & Antique Quilt Display

Please join us for this multi-generational celebration of a traditional Unitarian ritual. And remember to bring a flower or two to share! The 1898 quilt will be on display this Sunday. See page 7 for quilt details.

**Sunday, June 16 at 10:30am**

### Playing the Grateful Game

#### Kabin Thomas

Recognizing those miracles that surround us every second of every hour of every day.

**Sunday, June 23 at 10:30am**

### Secret Kindness Agents

#### Ferial Pearson, Ph.D.

Moved by the Sandy Hook Elementary School tragedy, Ferial Pearson wondered if a simple act of kindness could change a life. She thought of the school where she taught and the students she guided every day and wondered, what would happen if we started secretly carrying out small acts of kindness in school? Could a modest act of compassion really change the course of a life? She posed the question to her students. They didn't have the answers but they were willing to find out. So they became the Secret Kindness Agents. They not only changed the lives of those they met, they changed their own. Their hope, their hearts, and their hunger for happiness will inspire you to change your small corner of the world, in your own way, for the better.

**Sunday, June 30 at 10:30am**

### PRIDE "Postlude"

As PRIDE festivities come to a close, some of our members who participated reflect on what PRIDE means to them.

**After the service:** please join us for fellowship time with Clair Memorial members in the Common Room. See page 8 for details.

## Sunday Forum

**"What Does It Mean to be a People of Beauty"**  
**Sunday, June 2 at 9:30am in the Common Room**  
**Led by Michael McAtee**

*"Where do you look for beauty?"*

*There is universal agreement that we all must make time to visit museums and sit before stunning sunsets. But seeking beauty there is not enough. Every religion agrees: The secret to encountering spiritual beauty is to visit and observe the unlikely places. Indeed, one could argue that this is the job of religion. It exists to teach us and to help us observe beauty in the less noticed places."*

### Excerpt from June's Soul Matters Small Group

**Packet:** Come join us for a taste of the Soul Matters small group experience as we explore this month's topic via thought-provoking and soul-searching questions such as: When were you first healed by beauty? When was beauty a doorway to the divine? What makes a beautiful soul? What do you do to beautify your own soul?

This will be our last Sunday Forum until September.

## 1898 Antique Quilt Open House & Public Viewing First Unitarian Church of Omaha Saturday, June 8, 2019 2:00 – 4:00 p.m.

Take a step back in time and join us for this special open house. Both the historic 1898 quilt and the new quilt featuring current members' names will be on display. For more information, see the flyer on page 7 in this newsletter.

The quilt Facebook event is here:

[www.facebook.com/events/320722168612347/](http://www.facebook.com/events/320722168612347/)



## Ministerial Musings from the Interim Minister

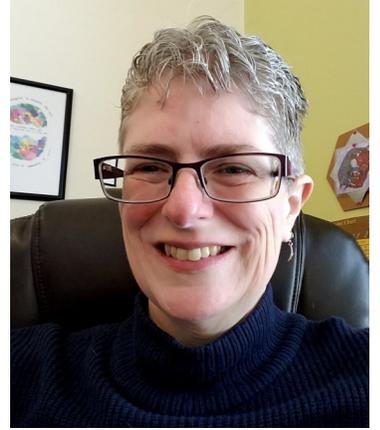
*By Rev. Michelle LaGrave*

I would like to officially welcome Christina Strong as the new Lifespan Director of Religious Education! Although we conducted a nation-wide search, we were lucky to find Christina locally. She lives in Lincoln and has worked for the Lincoln UU church for the past several years. She has previous experience teaching UU Religious Education classes and leading UU summer camps for kids. Most importantly, Christina's dream job is to be a UU DRE!

Christina is already bringing all sorts of energy and enthusiasm to the position and is full of great, creative ideas. She loves working with young children and hopes to bring some more structured programming into the nursery for the preschoolers. She also loves to work with youth and has begun thinking about ways to better develop the relationships between the youth and the rest of the congregation. She also loves working with adults and hopes to teach an adult RE class in addition to coordinating the program. Christina has a truly multigenerational approach to religious education and I believe she will be a wonderful addition to the staff at First Unitarian Church of Omaha.

Of course, all of these hopes and dreams will take time to implement, but you can help bring them to fruition by sharing your gifts, talents, great ideas, and time volunteering with the RE program. When you see Christina around the church, please introduce yourself and welcome her personally. Welcome Christina!

In Lifelong Faith,  
Rev. Michelle



## Introducing Christina Strong, Lifespan Director of Religious Education

Christina started at First Unitarian Church on May 15th. Christina Strong has been a Unitarian Universalist since 2008 and was employed in various positions at the Unitarian Church of Lincoln from 2009-2019. She received a B.A. degree in Psychology from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, and nearly completed an M.A. in Sociology (emphases in Social Inequality and Education), before switching directions to open Strong Family Child Care in Lincoln in 2012. She is excited to begin what she hopes will be a lifelong career in Religious Education, and plans to pursue the Religious Education Credentialing Program through the UUA. Christina lives in Lincoln with her husband, Paul, and their four children, Tiana (20), Keijuan (15), Tina (13), and Pele (8). She enjoys traveling, audiobooks, cardio kickboxing, cake decorating, and deep conversations with friends. She is looking forward to getting to know the Omaha UU community!



Christina's email address is [DRE@firstuomaha.org](mailto:DRE@firstuomaha.org) and her office number is 402-345-3039, ext. 103.

## Church Events

### “White Fragility” Book Discussion Group

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

### New Member Celebration

*Sunday, June 2 during coffee hour.* At least once a year, we celebrate all of our new members with cake and fellowship. Come join us on June 2nd! Interested in becoming a member? Have questions? Contact Carrie at [coordinator@firstuomaha.org](mailto:coordinator@firstuomaha.org).

### Baby Shower for the Emans

*Sunday, June 2 at 12:30pm in the Common Room.* Help us celebrate the new addition to Jessica & Taylor's home. Go here for the Facebook event: [www.facebook.com/events/2168166883271211/](https://www.facebook.com/events/2168166883271211/).

### People's Film Festival

*Monday, June 3 at 7pm in the Common Room.* We will watch *Symbiotic Earth* which explores the life and ideas of scientific rebel Lynn Margulis who challenged entrenched theories of male-dominated science. As a young scientist in the 1960s, Margulis was ridiculed when she first proposed that symbiosis was a key driver of evolution, but she persisted.

### Book Club

*Monday, June 3 at 7pm in the Merritt Lounge.* Our book selection is *The Kings of Broken Things* by Ted Wheeler. The author will join us at this event. See the Facebook event here: [www.facebook.com/events/464656677607303/](https://www.facebook.com/events/464656677607303/). Questions? Contact Dave at [drrichardson821@gmail.com](mailto:drrichardson821@gmail.com).

### Breaking Bread for Believers

*Tuesday, June 4 at 6:30pm in the Merritt Lounge.* Are you a Believer or a Christian in any form? This group is to share/express Christian beliefs. As Unitarians, ALL religious and spiritual paths should be

considered equally valid and therefore need to be represented within our community. This group will give you a sanctuary to hold those spiritual beliefs close to your heart. We're discussing *Understanding the Bible: An Introduction for Skeptics, Seekers, and Religious Liberals* by John Buehrens. This book is available at the UU Bookstore, Amazon, and on Kindle. If you need a copy or if you have questions, please contact Ben at [bmwallace@gmail.com](mailto:bmwallace@gmail.com). Childcare is available.

### Compassionate Communication Group

*Meets the 1st & 3rd Tuesday of each month at 7pm in the Common Room.* Using Compassionate Communication developed by Marshall Rosenberg, PhD, we learn to connect with ourselves and others with empathy and to act in greater harmony with our values. Learning to communicate more compassionately, like speaking a new language, takes practice. Contact Suzanne: [nvcsuz@gmail.com](mailto:nvcsuz@gmail.com) for details.

### CommUnity Night Picnic Offsite

*Friday, June 7 at 6pm at Halleck Park Picnic Pavilion in Papillion.* Join us at Halleck Park for a picnic! Everyone is invited. Bring food. Questions? Contact Sheri at [ksvortex@msn.com](mailto:ksvortex@msn.com). See the Facebook event here: [www.facebook.com/events/2378304209081016/](https://www.facebook.com/events/2378304209081016/)

### 1898 Antique Quilt Open House & Public Viewing

*Saturday, June 8, 2-4pm.* See page 7 for more information. See the Facebook event here: [www.facebook.com/events/320722168612347/](https://www.facebook.com/events/320722168612347/).

### The 3F Book Bonanza Group

*Wednesday, June 12 at 7pm in the Merritt Lounge.* Our June book is *Hunger* by Knut Hamsun. There will be no meeting in July. Our August book is *Hanta Yo* by Ruth Bebe Hill. Folks should be sure the copy they use has the Lakota glossary in the back of the book. Please contact Sheri with questions: [ksvortex@msn.com](mailto:ksvortex@msn.com).

### The Flame Newsletter Deadline

*June 15 at noon.* Please send articles

to the church office: [admin@firstuomaha.org](mailto:admin@firstuomaha.org).

### Paint & Sip: Pride Parade Prep

*Saturday, June 15 at 4pm in the Common Room.* This is a painting/ decorating t-shirt party. Bring your favorite white t-shirt to decorate & wear in the Heartland Pride Parade. Good-will white t-shirts available for those who don't bring one. We're planning a coordinated look as a group. 2nd UU is invited to participate in the fun!

### Leadership Talk Back

*Sunday, June 16 at 11:30am in the Common Room.* The MTC and the Church Board want to hear from you. Have questions? Suggestions? Please join your church leaders at a table in the Common Room during coffee hour.

### WAYS TO HELP:

#### YES Meal Prep

*Monday, June 17 at 9am in the Kitchen.* See page 13.

### People's Film Festival

*Monday, June 17 at 7pm in the Common Room.* We will watch *Flash of Genius*. Greg Kinnear stars in this inspiring true story about an ordinary man and his extraordinary fight against one of the most powerful corporations in the country.

### Women's Religious Studies Covenant Group

*Thursday, June 20 at 1pm in the lounge.* This group meets the 3rd Thursday of each month. Our book is *On the Brink of Everything: Grace, Gravity, and Getting Old* by Parker J Palmer. We welcome all self-identified women. If you're interested, please contact Rae: [raeb1@hotmail.com](mailto:raeb1@hotmail.com).

**Young Adult Discussion Group & YA Game Night:** *The YA Group will not meet in the summer.*

### Women's Alliance

*This group will not meet in the summer.*

*More events on next page...*

# Church Events

## CUUPS Event:

### Midsummer Labyrinth Journey

*Sunday, June 23 at 6:15pm.* Meet in the parking lot. We will walk/drive to First Central Congregational Church. The labyrinth is on their patio. After, we will gather in the Common Room for a pot-luck meal and fellowship. All are welcome. Questions? Contact Kate Godfrey at [coachkate@cox.net](mailto:coachkate@cox.net). We hope to see you there!

**The 2019 Pride Parade & Festival** is scheduled for *Saturday, June 29* this year. Please go to "[2019 Pride Parade & Festival](#)" on Facebook for more information. The parade will be held in Omaha this year and not Council Bluffs. We would like everyone who wishes to participate in the parade be able to do so this year. Please email [sjconnect@firstuomaha.org](mailto:sjconnect@firstuomaha.org). See previous page about our Pride Prep event happening on June 15th.

## Fellowship with Clair Memorial, Our Sister Church

*Sunday, June 30 at noon in the Common Room.* Now it's our turn to host our Sister Church! Please join us for a time of Fellowship with Clair Memorial Church members at First Unitarian on Sunday, June 30th at 12pm—after the Sunday service. This is a potluck so please bring goodies. See page 8 for details.

## First Steps Class

*Sunday, June 30 at 11:45am in the Whitney Young Classroom.* Join us for an introduction to First Unitarian Church and Unitarian Universalism. This session is run by Carrie, our membership coordinator. All are welcome to attend. See page 17 for more information.

## Bill, Margaret, & Friends: An Afternoon of Music

*Sunday, June 30 at 2pm in the Sanctuary.* See page 14 for details.

**[See page 13 Ways You Can Help and Get Involved at Church!](#)**

## Recurring Events

### Women's Religious Studies Group

*This group meets every Thursday, except for the 3rd week of the month at 1pm in the Merritt Lounge.* Our book is *Kings of Broken Things* by Theodore Wheeler. This is a novel based on the 1919 lynching which took place in Omaha. If you're interested, please contact Rae: [raeb1@hotmail.com](mailto:raeb1@hotmail.com).

### Dharma Chautauqua

*Every Thursday, 6pm to 7:30pm, in the Whitney Young Classroom.* More info can be found online: [dharma.chautauqua.drycreekhost.net/](http://dharma.chautauqua.drycreekhost.net/).

### Bridge Group

*Meets the 2nd and 4th Sunday of each month in the Conference Room at 11:30am.* Contact Scott Kemper at [scott.kemper@gmail.com](mailto:scott.kemper@gmail.com).

### YRUU (Youth Group)

*Meets every Wednesday at 7pm in the Common Room from September to May.* For more information, contact [DRE@firstuomaha.org](mailto:DRE@firstuomaha.org).

### Choir Rehearsals

*Every Wednesday at 7pm in the Sanctuary from September to the first week of June.* For more info, email: [choirdirector@firstuomaha.org](mailto:choirdirector@firstuomaha.org).

### Soul Matters Small Groups

Various meeting dates. See here: [www.firstuomaha.org/soulmatters](http://www.firstuomaha.org/soulmatters)  
We will take July and August off.

### Parent's Choice Listening Circle

*We will not meet in the summer.*

### AHA Listening Circle

*Meets the 3rd Sunday of the month at 11:45am in the Merritt Lounge.* In this group we will deepen our understanding of our personal Atheist, Humanist, and Agnostic values through readings, listening and discussion which will help to enhance the Unitarian Universalist experience for those who attend. Please contact [AHA@firstuomaha.org](mailto:AHA@firstuomaha.org) with questions.

## Future Events

### Memorial Service for Lee Fetting

*Saturday, July 6 at 11am.*

### NAMI WALK

*Saturday, July 20 at Elmwood Park Pavilion.* Join us in forming a walking team to participate as we have in past NAMI WALKS and represent First Unitarian in our continued support of stigma-free mental health. We will come together to name our team and decide on a logo, etc. For more info, email Terri Lynn at [quburr77@outlook.com](mailto:quburr77@outlook.com).

### Heritage Event: Revival of Newton Mann Superstar Musical

*Saturday, August 24 at 6pm.* Save the date! This event will feature UU actors and musicians. Help us celebrate the 150th anniversary of our congregation and enjoy the show! More info to come next month.

## Heart & Hand Auction Event with Open Seats

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

## Upcoming Event:

### Tea and Tarot

*Sunday, June 23 at 2pm in the Common Room.* Cost: \$30/person. Join Megan Gustafson for a whimsical tea party of Dessert and Divination. The hostess will conduct individual Tarot readings for each guest. Practitioners of Tarot are welcome to bring their own cards to show, or share their talents. Cos-Play or Fancy Dress encouraged, never required.

## June Greetings from Your New Board President, Joe Schaaf

Hello everyone! I am writing to you for the first time in my capacity as your President and I have to say, it truly is my honor and I will work very hard to fulfill the trust you have placed in me with this role. As most of you already know, I sincerely feel a love for our community that is rooted in gratitude, amazement, and a deep feeling of joy. With these mutual feelings of respect and kindness, I believe that we will accomplish much this year to fulfill our spiritual needs while also placing solid footsteps forward towards a new settled minister for the 2020/21 church year!

By the time you read this article, we will have selected (as a community) the seven faithful servants who will help us accomplish the very important task of choosing our next settled minister. It is my hope and wish that we help them in their task by providing them with honest and candid feedback when requested, patience and understanding when they ask us to provide them with some breathing room, and of most importance—we support their final decision as our very own. Remember: we selected them to represent us, but not to think exactly like us when they are making their decisions.

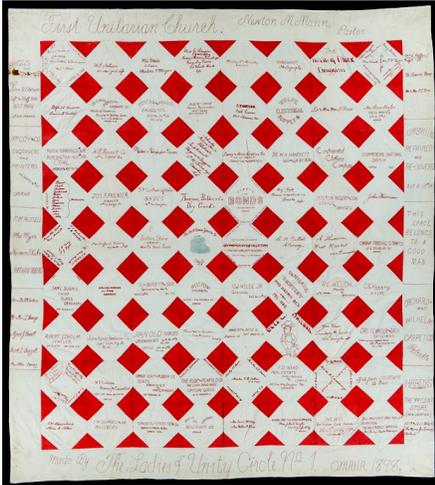
Another very important request of mine would be to give our new minister plenty of time to settle in and get to know us (as well as us getting to know them) before we start forming judgements about their ultimate “fit” for our community. Please remember that no matter who our chosen team selects as our new settled minister, this minister will be human like the rest of us (unless the selection team takes an unusual and unforeseen trip into the universe using technology that is still unknown!) and that no human possesses superpowers of unquestionable wisdom, unfailing foresight, and supreme judgement. Those types of ministers just don’t exist! So please embrace the differences and accept the weaknesses of our new minister. This truly is what makes them unique and will allow them to flourish with and for us.

Finally, I would like to extend my/our most sincere wishes of gratitude and best wishes to Michelle and Micah in whatever the future holds for them after this coming interim year. Michelle has done yeoman’s work in helping us to transition from Frank to our new settled minister through the interim ministry process, including: helping us to process the grief of losing Frank (and of course now our beloved Jan); do the work needed to help us transition into a healthier congregation and prepare us to receive our next settled minister; help prepare our leadership, governance, and staff for the operational needs that we have to have in place to be a successful church; and of course minister to our individual and congregational needs in the kind and loving way that she is so eminently capable of providing.

Saying “Thank You” will probably feel severely insufficient to express our gratitude at the end of this interim period, but I know that many strong relationships will continue long past her time with us and those are the best blessings we can share with Michelle and Micah to carry into their future together.

One additional Thank You that I would like to start the year off with is to my wife, Lori Hefeli Schaaf. She has been patient throughout *most* of the last year while I attended to the needs of our church in my capacity as President-Elect and interim House & Grounds leader. I know that the next year will provide its own set of challenges and time commitments, but having her by my side allows me to become the person that we all need to lead our church at this unique moment in time. So to her and all of the spouses who support us in our volunteer work for our community (most of whom also volunteer in many important ways) I would like us all to say in both retrospect and in advance: Thank You from the bottom of my/our hearts! It takes teamwork to make the dream work, and Lori is both my rock and team leader!

So with that, let’s start this year long path together on the highest of notes and please allow me to say that I aspire to achieve the most humble of servant-leadership roles as your 2019/20 President. Please come up and give me a hug (I have long been known as a big “Hugger” in our community) along with your thoughts on how we can succeed in the upcoming year together. We face both known and unknown challenges in the upcoming year, but by working together I have complete confidence that we will be up to the task in each and every case. Once again, I am so honored to be your President over the next year!



## 1898 Antique Quilt Open House & Public Viewing First Unitarian Church of Omaha Saturday, June 8, 2019 2:00 – 4:00 p.m.

In 1898 the ladies of Unity Circle No. 1 at First Unitarian Church of Omaha made a quilt as a fundraiser. For a few dollars a business could get its name stitched into a block on the Redwork signature quilt. (Redwork quilts became popular between 1885 and 1925 and are currently enjoying a revival at the turn of the 21st century. They consisted of outline-embroidered images, usually square, and were stitched with colorfast Turkey red cotton floss onto muslin squares or household linens.)

Included on the quilt were names of more than 70 businesses and individuals, including a creamery, a dress-maker, a manufacturer of wagons and buggies, two ice companies, and a "school for the cure of stammering." There's also an "S.H. Buffett and Son, Groceries and Fruits" block, harking back to one of Omaha's more famous families.

When the quilt was completed, it was celebrated and no doubt displayed for a while, and then it was put away in storage. It was brought out for special occasions over the years, according to church lore. But then at some point it became lost, and it remained lost for many years.

And then in 2013 it was found, tucked into a bag in the church archives. When it was discovered, only the top remained. The bulky backing had been removed in some long ago effort to preserve the antique quilt. The quilt was removed from storage, professionally conserved and returned to quilt condition. In 2013, the church made a gift of the quilt to the permanent collection of the International Quilt Study Center & Museum at the University of Nebraska Lincoln.

The quilt provides a tangible connection not only with an earlier generation of members, but also it reinforces the congregation's connections with the larger community. Prominent at the top of the quilt is the name of the Rev. Newton M. Mann, the congregation's minister at the time. The church has not been able to determine how much money the quilt brought in for the church in 1898, but we do know from church records that the church was unable to pay Rev. Mann's salary, \$1,400 in arrears. One could speculate that the newly recovered quilt was one of the projects that ultimately helped pay off the delinquencies in his salary.

On, Saturday, June 8, the quilt will hang in the sanctuary of First Unitarian Church from 2:00-4:00 p.m. for public viewing. A reception and slide show in the church common room will provide a closer look at the names on the quilt. It will be joined by a recently constructed 2019 quilt which is a contemporary replica featuring squares signed by current members.



## Finance Matters

*By Walt Jesteadt, Treasurer*

The results of this year's stewardship campaign were far less than we need for a balanced budget for the year starting May 1. Is this because our budget is higher than it should be, or are our pledges too low on average or do we expect too much of our budget to come from pledges? Or is it some other factor? I have tried in the past to answer such questions by looking at data from other congregations, but have found the data hard to come by. I have just discovered the mother lode of data from more than 985 UUA congregations online at <https://dyn.uua.org/congregation/certlist.php>. There are some problems in the data for individual congregations, but averaging across all of them reduces the impact of any errors.

The data indicate that congregations on average obtain 75% of their total budgets from pledges. The 985 congregations report a total of 148,418 members, with an additional 72,252 friends. If we ignore pledges by friends and assume that all pledges come from members, the mean pledge for the 148,418 members is \$1,785. The mean is not the best number because it puts too much weight on large pledges, but it is all we have available from these data. The data include the number of pledge units per congregation. Pledge units can be single members or families and can include friends, but if we just compare the number of pledge units to the number of members, we find that for every 100 members, we have 65 pledge units, on average. It is also possible to look at the relation between congregation size and budget. Budgets go up, on average, by \$1,510 per member.

How do our numbers compare? Our new budget assumes 74% income from pledges, including a fictitious pledge from Dick Holland of \$25,000. Pledges from the rest of us, if we had reached our stewardship goal, would account for only 67% of our budget. As I write this, we have 119 recorded pledges totaling \$200,140. Our mean pledge, excluding Dick Holland, is \$1,682, about 6% below the national average. The big difference between our data and the data for 985 congregations is in the ratio of pledge units to members. For every 100 members, we should have 65 pledge units and we only have 51. Our overall budget is less than predicted for a congregation our size. The formula relating budgets to number of members predicts a budget of more than \$375,000. Our budget is \$359,500.

We can never have perfect data, but it looks like part of our problem is an unusual number of people who are not pledging. Given the shortfall we have in total pledges, we will have to ask everyone who can increase their pledge to do so, but we should not be shy about asking all members to pledge something.

### **Fellowship Potluck with Clair Memorial Church to take place on Sunday, June 30th at First Unitarian!**

On April 28th, many First Unitarian members and friends attended a potluck at Clair Memorial Church after the Sunday service. Now it's our turn to host! Please join us for a time of Fellowship with Clair at First Unitarian on Sunday, June 30th at 12pm—after the Sunday service. This is a potluck so please bring goodies. After the fellowship time, we will invite Clair and First U guests upstairs to enjoy an afternoon of music with church member Bill Tull and friends at 2pm in the Sanctuary. See the flyer on page 14.

## Annual Awards Given Out at First Unitarian

By the Nominating Committee

**The Unitarian of the Year Award** is presented to a person who goes above and beyond, who does things behind the scenes and gets things done, and who treats every person they come across with respect and a welcoming smile. Our recipient this year, **Denise Allain**, has done so much for First U. Her involvement has included being a member of the Worship Arts Team as well as being the leader of the team this past year. She has been involved in our Soul Matters groups, Sunday forums, and Women's Alliance, and she's been a mentor in the Coming of Age program. Denise took on many big commitments with some of these teams and went above and beyond her "duty" behind the scenes. When the church needed a wedding event host, Denise stepped up and offered her services, as well as countless other parties, dinners, and auction events. Not only does Denise go above and beyond volunteer duties, she also provides friendship, respect and a warm smile every time you see her. Typically the Nominating Committee would've waited to present this award at the Annual Meeting, but Denise moved out of state mid-May. It was an honor to present the Unitarian of the Year award to Denise during the service on May 12th.



**Lily McEvoy, Youth of the Year Award winner**, has been an active member in YRUU since she became eligible to participate in 7<sup>th</sup> grade. Activism and social justice have been a consistent part of Lily's community involvement including participating in local rallies and protests supporting important issues such as Women's Rights and Immigration Reform. When Lily was at Beveridge Magnet School for Global Studies and the Arts, she was involved in helping to start a Gay/Straight Alliance (GSA) student organization. Currently a sophomore at Central High School, Lily has been involved in Central's Slam Poetry team and served as one of the team's Co-Captain's last year. She is an award-winning artist, winning Scholastic Art Awards for the past four years including a Gold Key award last year. Here at First Unitarian, Lily continues to be involved in the leadership of the YRUU Youth Group and is a great example of the future of Unitarian Universalism! Congratulations, Lily!



**Tom Seguin** is our recipient this year for the **Young Adult of the Year** award. Tom has been actively involved in the board and was a liaison for the Right Relations Committee. He once co-led the membership team before becoming a member himself, to help guide current patrons through the process of membership. He's consistently involved with the Young Adult Group and a youth group advisor to YRUU. In addition to his work in the church, he has been selected as one of only three new staff members for Midwest Leadership School. He attended MWLS last summer and was recognized for his outstanding leadership by his selection. For all he has done and continues to do, we recognize Tom Seguin with the Young Adult of the Year Award. Congratulations, Tom!



More awards on the next page!

**Dave Richardson, Heritage Award recipient**, took over the duties of Church archivist from Dave Nicklin. Dave works with volunteers that organize and maintain this varied collection of documents, some dating from the founding of the church in 1869. He has been instrumental in starting the Heritage Task Force. The Task Force recorded the stories of longtime members, held a special celebration on 9/30/2018 which commemorated the 100th anniversary of the building, published the anniversary book and created the “Heritage Minutes”—fascinating time capsule tidbits shared each Sunday. Dave is now at work on two more heritage events: a quilt celebration to happen June 8-9 (along with the Women’s Alliance) and the play in August (along with Kate Wiig). Not only has Dave been working on the book and the heritage events and activities, he has been helping with daily operations of the church as a member of the Ministry Team Council. Thank you for all your dedicated work, Dave!



*The next three award recipients were not present at the meeting so we do not have photos of them receiving their awards.*

**Our Religious Education Award recipient this year is Jody Petrow.** Among many behind the scene activities, Jody has helped with summer camp and Sunday school. Jody takes time for others and spends quality time with the children who attend First U. Several members described Jody as a joyful, consistent wonderful presence in RE. Kate Wiig described Jody as, “An amazing and energetic teacher who brings life to all the lessons. She loves to laugh and lights up when she gets excited about something the kids are learning. She’s also a wonderful adult to work with and bounce ideas off of.” Jody also brings insight to the 3F Book Bonanza group. “Her kids seem to like her. That’s saying something for teenagers!”

**Barb Dewell, recipient of the Keeping the Faith Award**, has been instrumental with the monumental task of creating the quilt celebrating First Unitarian Church’s 150-year anniversary. However, this is only the latest in Barb’s long list of efforts she has been a part of when it comes to helping her UU congregation! Barb helped design and create the Holiday Quilt back in 2005, including personally hand-dyeing some of the fabrics used. Barb has been involved in many ways since she and her family joined in 2002, including being active in Women’s Alliance, singing in the Church Choir, and cooking and supporting a countless number of church social and fundraising events. An interesting UU fact about Barb is that she is the last living person who helped to stitch the pulpit chairs at All Souls UU Church in Tulsa, Oklahoma, where she and her family were members before moving to Omaha.

**Nancy Scott, recipient of the Keeping the Faith Award**, has been an active member on the Garden and Partner Church Teams and involved with social justice causes, including the Green Sanctuary Team. She is known for her Heart & Hand Auction landscaping donation. It’s a treat to visit her amazing master garden. But this is not the first time that Nancy has worked on a church quilt. In 2005, Vicki Dudley proposed the idea of a seasonal banner for the winter holiday season. Barb Dewell developed the design and Nancy was part of the crew that put it together. The Women’s Alliance Holiday banner quilt called “Signs of the Season,” a participatory church project, is hung every December.

Nancy and Barb teamed up again this past year, as members of the Women’s Alliance, to create a contemporary replica of our historic 1898 quilt. The new quilt is made of fabric squares signed by members and friends of First Unitarian. Barb and Nancy patiently acquired signatures and stitched the quilt together. See page 7 for information about the June quilt event.

Thank you for continuing to Keep the UU Faith vibrant here at First Unitarian Church, Barb and Nancy!

More awards on the next page!

**Mark Loscutt, Social Justice Award recipient**, has long been involved in supporting environmental issues. As a member of OTOC he was involved in founding OTOC's Environmental Sustainability Action Team and has contributed to several of OTOC's accountability sessions with political candidates. He has testified before the Omaha City Council and the Nebraska Unicameral regarding environmental issues. Mark has volunteered at Wakonda Elementary School since the inception of First Unitarian's relationship with them in 2015. The volunteers work with second graders from very diverse backgrounds, including immigrants from many cultural backgrounds. Mark has a calm and gentle manner and is beloved by the teachers and students. He became the coordinator of First Unitarian volunteers in 2017, serving as liaison with the Wakonda administration in conjunction with Pastor Portia from our sister church, Clair Memorial United Methodist. He maintains an ongoing connection with Clair and has participated in events, services and celebrations. Mark recruits, advises, and assists the volunteers with security clearances, scheduling and various school activities. In 2018 Mark was appointed as a member of the First Unitarian Interim Right Relations Committee, and was active in its work to develop a Right Relations Covenant and a process for integrating right relations into church life. Mark is compassionate, caring and thoughtful and truly seeks out the other person's perspective. Congratulations, Mark!



**Vanessa Timberlake is a recipient of the Unsung UU of the Year.**

When Vanessa volunteers for a job, her word is golden. Her reliability and commitment to a job done well have made her an invaluable office volunteer. Almost every Monday for the past twelve years, Vanessa has come to the church office to enter Sunday attendance in the database. Vanessa also prepares welcome letters to send to new visitors and helps our membership coordinator, Carrie Helmberger, connect with returning visitors, as well as members we haven't seen for awhile. She maintains the visitor name tags. When Vanessa is in the office, she always has time for a friendly chat, or to lend an ear if you need one. Vanessa is an active member, and has provided significant leadership in Women's Alliance over the years, helping to rewrite the Women's Alliance Bylaws and serving as President, President-elect and Past-President. Vanessa has helped with memorial service receptions for several years. Her kindness and understanding are deeply appreciated by our families who have lost a loved one. Vanessa's calm, pragmatic and fair-minded disposition has also made her a valuable member of the Hope in Action team since its inception in 2014. Congratulations, Vanessa!



The late Dean Christensen was fond of saying, "At this church we have good people to go to." **Bill Ross** is the epitome of that "go to person" and he is a recipient of the **Unsung UU of the Year**. Bill's contributions are too long to list. His skills and willingness to serve have helped many areas of the church. He's been heavily involved with streaming services on Sunday, maintaining the church computers and network, and installing new equipment. Bill has also taken on financial tasks to assist the office and the treasurer, and in the past he has served as Board President and worked with the Governance Team. His smile lights up a room and his spoken words light up our lives. The congregation is grateful for all of Bill's contributions. With a great beard comes great responsibility. Thank you, Bill!



The above list of recipients were recognized on Sunday, May 19 at the 150th annual meeting at First Unitarian Church (with the exception of Denise Allain who received her award the week before). Awards were presented by the Nominating Committee. These recipients were chosen by fellow members of First Unitarian Church for their volunteer efforts and devotion to the congregation. Photos by Kate Wiig.

The Nominating Committee: Alan Vovolka, convener, Kate Godfrey, Kathi Oliver, Carol Ramsey, Marie Sedlacek, and Ben Wallace.

## 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. Or, you may simply complete a Caring

Card, located in the church pews and place it in the offering plate.

### WHO DECIDES WHAT SUPPORT WILL BE OFFERED?

Hope in Action will use a team approach, so at least three members of Hope in Action must participate in determining the nature of the response.

## CHANGE FOR CHANGE

Each week generous people put change in the collection plate. This change goes to the Sunday School kids who decide what to do with the money. In the past they have helped Community Meals and International Bridges for Justice. The kids are now donating this change to the **Neighborhood Ministry Team**, which purchases bus tickets and food cards and gives out blessing bags to people who come to the church door from our area. Your change makes a difference! Thank you for your generosity!

## SHARE THE PLATE

Each month one-half of the loose currency collected in the offering plate is donated to a local cause that advances important principles of Unitarianism.

Our Share the Plate recipient for June is **NAMI (National Alliance on Mental Illness)**. From the NAMI website: NAMI Nebraska is a nonprofit, grassroots organization dedicated to education, support and advocacy with anyone whose life has been touched by mental illness. NAMI Nebraska provides the support for individuals and families on their journey. For more information, please visit: [naminebraska.org](http://naminebraska.org).

## SISTER CHURCH EVENTS

As many of you know, we're working to reconnect with our Omaha Sister Church, Clair Memorial United Methodist Church. These events below will take place at Clair Memorial Church. The address is 5544 Ames Ave., Omaha, NE 68104.

**First Friday Fish Fry:** Happens the 1st Friday of each month. Times: 11am to 2pm and 4-7pm. Cost: \$12 donation includes

fried catfish, homemade lemon cake and your choice of sides. For more information, call Brenda at 402-571-5234.

**Lot-to-Know Party:** Saturday, June 8 from 10am to 2pm in the parking lot. Local vendors, community organizations, the Omaha Fire & Police Departments will have booths and tables for you to visit. Join Clair Memorial members and explore the different vendors and groups that will be showcased. The new permanent basketball hoop will be dedicated as well. Gently used items will be given away at this event. Donated items can be dropped off at Clair Memorial on Wednesday and Thursday, June 5th & 6th from 3pm to 7pm. Clair appreciates donations, but they really want to see YOU that Saturday at their Lot Party. Come hang out at Clair!

**Monthly Food Pantry:** Happens the 3rd Saturday of each month from 10am to 2pm. Drop-off pantry donations on Thursday, June 13 from 3pm to 7pm or on Saturday, June 15 from 8am to noon.

Contact the Clair Memorial Church office with any questions about these events: 402-451-8322.

**See page 8 for information about the Fellowship event with Clair at First Unitarian on Sunday, June 30th.**

## CHURCH PARKING

Parking is directly west of the church in the surface parking lot or on the street. We want to save the surface lot for those who need to park closer. You may park in the Midtown Crossing Parking Garage to the west of the church lot. The entrance to the parking garage is on Farnam Street. Have your ticket validated downstairs in the Common Room. Please have your ticket validated for free parking—with validation you receive FREE PARKING for the ENTIRE day. Questions? Email the church office at [admin@firstuuomaha.org](mailto:admin@firstuuomaha.org). See more info at our website here: [www.firstuuomaha.org/directions](http://www.firstuuomaha.org/directions).

## Ways You Can Get Involved

### **YES Meal Prep: Volunteers**

*Monday, June 17 at 9am in the Kitchen.*

We will serve breakfast casserole. We won't be collecting anything this month. Every month Kim and her team prepare a meal for Youth Emergency Services (YES). See this website for more info: [www.yesomaha.org](http://www.yesomaha.org). Want to help Kim? Email [kjcallaghan@hotmail.com](mailto:kjcallaghan@hotmail.com).

### **Planning for June 30th PRIDE Service**

Please join us on Sunday, June 9 at noon in the Merritt Lounge to plan for the June 30th PRIDE Sunday service. Questions?

Email Mary at [KMBB18@yahoo.com](mailto:KMBB18@yahoo.com).

**The 2019 Pride Parade & Festival** is scheduled for *Saturday, June 29* this year. Please go to "[2019 Pride Parade & Festival](#)" on Facebook for more information. The parade will be held in Omaha this year and not Council Bluffs. We'd like everyone who wishes to participate in the parade be able to do so this year. Interested? Please email [sjconnect@firstuomaha.org](mailto:sjconnect@firstuomaha.org). See page 4 for info about a prep event on June 15th.

### **NAMI Walking Team**

See page 5 for information about the NAMI Walk happening on Saturday, July 20, offsite. The First Unitarian team is forming now!

### **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, let us know! Please contact Kim at [kjcallaghan@hotmail.com](mailto:kjcallaghan@hotmail.com) or call the church office: 402-345-3039, ext. 101.

### **Call for Photos!**

Like to take pictures? If you capture a great photo at church, please send your photo to the church office at [admin@firstuomaha.org](mailto:admin@firstuomaha.org). We are always looking for new photos we can share in our newsletter, on the church website and social media. Thank you!

## **Transition Team Focus Meetings**

*Submitted by Marcia and Cy Leise*

The Transition Team gathered responses from 56 members during 8 Focus Meetings about their impressions of the church and why they continue to be active members. Most expressed appreciation for the many strengths of our present church community, including our traditions, principles, music, the beauty of our historical building, RE, and diverse groups and activities. Friendships and an intellectually stimulating atmosphere are supported by a respectful, nonjudgmental community.

For the future, many hoped for a highly engaged and energetic settled minister who will directly interact with all the subgroups to support their integration within the church community on the basis of UU principles and traditions. There were many commonalities within the responses but also many intriguing ideas that may become important in the future. Many expressed enthusiasm for creative improvement of adult RE programming as well as strengthening of child and youth programming. They suggested ways to connect our Sunday services, social justice activities, and uses of our building and facilities to needs beyond our doors.

A full report is available for church members and leaders, including those on the Ministerial Search Committee who will help us select a settled minister in 2020.

[Click here to view the full report.](#)

## **Ministerial Search Committee elected at the Annual Meeting:**

Diana Byrd, Kim Dunovan, Jessica Eman, Kate Godfrey, Mark Loscutt, Lita Magisana, Dave Richardson, Klyde Warren

## **From the Church Office**

**Church Directory:** The office can update the Church Directory any time. If you have moved or changed your email address or phone number, please email [admin@firstuomaha.org](mailto:admin@firstuomaha.org) and let us know. Thank you for helping us keep the directory up-to-date. Would you like to receive a copy of the church directory (either via regular mail or by email as a PDF document)? Email the church office your request. The directory is also available on our church website. If you need assistance finding it on the website, contact the church office. Thank you!

### **Special Thanks**

A very special thank you goes out to Carolyn McNamara for her help in the office, especially in the month of May. Carolyn helped Cat run errands, proofread and prepare the Annual Meeting booklet, organize office shelves, and so much more. Thank you, Carolyn!

# Bill, Margaret, & Friends: An Afternoon of Music

**Sunday, June 30 at 2pm in the Sanctuary**

Join us for an afternoon concert featuring the music of composers Duke Ellington, William Grant Still, and American spirituals and folksongs. Freewill donations will be accepted. All are welcome!



**Before the music, join us for a Fellowship Potluck with Clair Memorial Church to take place on Sunday, June 30th at First Unitarian Church!**

On April 28th, many First Unitarian members and friends attended a potluck at Clair Memorial Church after the Sunday service. Now it's our turn to host! Please join us for a time for Fellowship with Clair at First Unitarian on Sunday, June 30th at 12pm—after the Sunday service. This is a potluck so please bring goodies. After the fellowship time, we will invite Clair and First U guests upstairs to enjoy a concert by Bill Tull at 2pm in the Sanctuary. See above.

## The Library Lady

By Linda Parker



UUUs love to read! The First Unitarian Church library is moving into the digital age! We are now the proud owners of a Kindle paper white e-reader. Our library collection will be updated with books from Unitarian Universalist presses, as well as other sources, to reflect and support our mission, vision, and the religious journeys of our members and friends. Our first purchase will be *Revisiting the Empowerment Controversy: Black Power and Unitarian Universalism*. This title supports the discussion group studying *White Fragility*. The book discussion group begins May 30 (see page 4 in this newsletter for more information about the group). *Revisiting the Empowerment Controversy* is not available in the Omaha Public Library. It is available from Amazon.com and the UUA bookstore, [www.uuabookstore.org](http://www.uuabookstore.org). Here is a description of the book from the Amazon listing:

Mark D. Morrison-Reed, the preeminent scholar of black Unitarian Universalist history, presents this long-awaited chronicle and analysis of the events of the Empowerment Controversy, which rocked Unitarian Universalism in the late sixties and continues to reverberate. It was a time of revolution, of the Civil Rights and Black Power movements. Like the country, the young Unitarian Universalist Association was forced to reckon with demands for change and found itself fractured by conflict about the implications of a commitment to racial justice. Morrison-Reed synthesizes decades of research and extensive interviews to present a nuanced and suspense-filled drama about Unitarian Universalism's great crisis of faith. As he writes, "Perhaps wisdom can be gleaned from the pain and upheaval of those years, a wisdom that will be of use today in a new era."

Beginning June 2, the Library Lady, aka Linda Parker, will be available in the Common Room following Sunday service. To check out our Kindle, please contact Cat Dixon, Church Administrator, Monday – Friday during church office hours — note: the church admin will be out of the office May 31 to June 11.

*She is too fond of books, and it has turned her brain.* —Louisa May Alcott, Transcendentalist

**JUNE 15**

**HOLLAND CENTER**



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## The Preciousness of the Mundane

by Donna Tubach-Davis

As the years go by, I have become increasingly aware of the importance of the mundane, the simple everyday tasks that have become a brightly covered tapestry wrapped around me—the emptying of the dishwasher is almost fun as I place the shining clear plates and cups back on the shelf, folding freshly laundered clothes with their sweet smell and softness almost brings tears to my eyes, even emptying the cat box becomes a meaningful experience, a telephone call from my brother, or lunch with friends, is like a bright light shining on my day, this nonsensical banter with my beloved almost breaks my heart, and his sweetness and love encompass my soul. The mundane—a most precious gift.

## Email Scam Alert

The UUA urges church staff and members to be cautious about email scams. **Please know that the church staff and the minister will never email you to ask for credit card information or for you to purchase gift cards.** When in doubt, call and speak to the person directly!

Several UU congregations have reported that their members are receiving scam emails that are requesting gift card donations for a charitable cause. At least one person has lost money to these scams. Religious groups and congregations are becoming easy targets for these types of scams. The UUA recommends that congregations inform their members about this scam. The UUA has seen an increase in “phishing” attempts of all kinds. Phishing is a form of “social engineering,” whereby a hacker with bad intentions sends an email (or text or phone call) pretending to be someone the recipient trusts and asks the recipient to take an action which can have adverse effects. Sometimes, they request money. Other times, they invite the recipient to click a link or open an attachment that can trigger malicious code. A good rule of thumb with emails you’re not expecting is to: (1) reach out to the sender through another channel (call, text, visit website) and (2) not click on a link (or send money, gift cards, etc.) without clarifying from the trusted source directly. For more on this particular gift card scam, follow this link below:

<https://www.christianpost.com/news/scammers-posing-as-pastors-churches-nationwide-issue-urgent-warning.html?fbclid=IwAR0aJjajFa8ZJRiwBGjl-t3OhGhZQCa8TpHbI2osQ7qhlx6ezW2SFdvTqhA>

## Church Bike Rack

As the weather improves, people are riding their bikes to church. You may not realize it, but we have a bike rack in the back of the church building—on the north side by the back door. It’s been there for a few years. The good news is that our security camera has a view of the backdoor and the bike rack. Last summer, our church installed an A/C unit for the nursery and downstairs classroom. The A/C unit was placed in between the rack bars. You can still lock your bike there, but it will have to be on the outside of the bars. There is also that stairwell railing next to the rack which one could use. The Ministry Team Council has discussed other locations for a bike rack. We will keep you informed! If you have any questions or ideas, please contact the MTC at [MTC@firstuomaha.org](mailto:MTC@firstuomaha.org).



## First Steps: A Class for Visitors

This group meets at 11:45am in the Whitney Young Classroom (downstairs classroom) on Sunday, June 30. Gather by the visitors' table in the Common Room or just come to the room. You are invited to join us as we gather together to get acquainted with the basics of Unitarian Universalism and our vibrant community. There are many ways to connect with the church and we look forward to discussing the unique opportunities offered by First Unitarian Church of Omaha. This is a one-time class. Have questions about the church? Contact Carrie Helmberger, Membership Coordinator at [coordinator@firstuomaha.org](mailto:coordinator@firstuomaha.org).



## Rev. Dr. Sarah Voss Named Affiliated Community Minister of First Unitarian Church of Omaha

Rev. Sarah is a Unitarian Universalist minister, author, and lecturer who currently is a contract chaplain at Methodist Hospital and a state ODR (Office of Dispute Resolution) family mediator affiliated with Concord mediation center in Omaha. Over the years, she has published extensively about religion and math, including articles on matheology and moral math in publications as varied as *Parabola*, *Journal of Religious Humanism*, *Journal of Humanistic Mathematics*, *Still Point Arts Quarterly*, and *Theology and Science*. She came to First Unitarian, Omaha, when she was still teaching mathematics, a career which ended not long after she found herself telling her College of St. Mary calculus students how God might be like the definite integral of calculus. She knew then that something was definitely moving her in a new direction. She took math with her into Meadville-Lombard School of Theology in Chicago, and, eventually, the thesis she wrote for her Doctor of Ministry degree became her first published book, *What Number Is God?* (SUNY, 1995). She now identifies herself as a math mystic.



Sarah's very first UU experience was with First Unitarian Church of Omaha. She remembers how a friend invited her to come on a visitors' Sunday in the 1980s when Rev. Ron Knapp was preaching about the poetry of May Sarton. At the time Sarah was an atheist and Ron's sermon hit just the perfect note with her. She came back the next Sunday and heard him blasting away as he processed in full black robe down the aisle to the pulpit; he spoke about hell, fire, and damnation, and Sarah thought "Oh, no, I've made a horrid mistake." It was Sunday, April 1st and when Ron reached the front of the sanctuary, he smiled and said "April Fool" and then talked about freedom of religion and our faith tradition. Sarah has been a UU ever since, first as a friend, then as a member, then as a minister, and now as a retired but active community minister. Last year she gave the twenty-five-year class comments at Meadville's annual GA meeting. Today she feels honored and empowered to be formally connected to First Unitarian Church as their first affiliated community minister. The Board of Trustees voted to name Rev. Sarah our community minister at its April 2019 board meeting.

## Omaha Gives 2019

Thank you to everyone who donated to First Unitarian's Midtown Helping Hands project during Omaha Gives on May 22nd. We raised \$845! Thank you for helping us help others in our community. With the funds raised, we will be able to create more blessing bags and begin work on a little free pantry at the church. The Midtown Helping Hands Team assists those who come to the church looking for help. Along with blessing bags, we give out bus passes, gas cards, and other necessities to those in our neighborhood. Thank you!

THANK YOU!

OMAHA GIVES!  
powered by the Omaha Community Foundation

**Interim Minister**

Rev. Michelle LaGrave  
[minister@firstuomaha.org](mailto:minister@firstuomaha.org)

**Lifespan Director  
of Religious Education**

Christina Strong  
[dre@firstuomaha.org](mailto:dre@firstuomaha.org)

**Membership Coordinator**

Carrie Helmberger  
[coordinator@firstuomaha.org](mailto:coordinator@firstuomaha.org)

**Church Administrator**

Catharine Dixon  
[admin@firstuomaha.org](mailto:admin@firstuomaha.org)

**Sanctuary Singers Director**

William Miller  
[choirdirector@firstuomaha.org](mailto:choirdirector@firstuomaha.org)

**Organist**

Pat Will

**Sanctuary Singers Accompanist**

J. Gawf

**EMR Director**

Stan Harper

**Minister Emeriti**

Ronald Knapp  
 Frank Rivas

**Affiliated Community Minister**

Rev. Dr. Sarah Voss

**Nursery Coordinator**

Andrea Laudi  
[childcare@firstuomaha.org](mailto:childcare@firstuomaha.org)

**Custodian**

Bobby Medrano

**THE FLAME**

Deadlines are the 15th of each month. Word limit: 200.  
 Send submissions to  
[admin@firstuomaha.org](mailto:admin@firstuomaha.org).

Editor/Designer: Cat Dixon

**Proofers:**

Brian Callaghan, Scott Kemper,  
 Lois Norris

**Flame Mailing Team:**

Debbie Hunsberger, Lois Norris,  
 Linda Hruska, Kim Callaghan

# Meet Our Leaders

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Joe Schaaf (President), Sharon Pehler (President-Elect), Catherine Plumlee (Secretary), Sarah Copeland, Harold Cruz-Sanchez, Peg Pidgeon, Bill Tull, Donna Tubach Davis  
 Email: [board@firstuomaha.org](mailto:board@firstuomaha.org)

**Trustees of the Capital Trust**

Daniel Byrd (2020), Bob Hess (2021), Christopher Schmidt (2022)

**Ministry Team Council**

Dave Richardson, Joe Schaaf, Amy Lucas, Rev. Michelle LaGrave  
 Email: [mtc@firstuomaha.org](mailto:mtc@firstuomaha.org)

**Nominating Committee:** Nellie Chenoweth, Kate Godfrey, Mike McAtee, Carolyn McNamara, Kathi Oliver

**Right Relations Committee:** Della Bynum, Carol Cronin, Mark Loscutoff, Sarah Voss

**Transition Team:** Kathy Alexander, Skip Ciulla, Carol Cronin, Kay Lynn Goldner, John Hruska, Marcia Leise, Klyde Warren

**Ministerial Search Committee:** Diana Byrd, Kim Dunovan, Jessica Eman, Kate Godfrey, Mark Loscutoff, Lita Magisana, Dave Richardson, Klyde Warren

**Ministry Teams and Team Leaders**

AHA—Sheri Conner  
 Archives/Library—Linda Parker  
 Baby Welcoming Team—Katrina Schmidt, & Sara Switzer  
 Black Lives Matter—Rene Harper  
 Caring—Louise Jeffrey  
 Chalice Guild—Kay Lynn Goldner  
 CUUPS—Steve Switzer  
 Early Morning Risers—Mary Kay Peters & Lloyd Olson  
 Fellowship Team—Nadine Keith & Nellie Chenoweth  
 Finance Team—Walt Jesteadt  
 Garden—Sharon Conlon  
 Governance—open  
 Fundraising Team—Donna Neff & Katrina Schmidt  
 Hope in Action—open  
 Hospitality Teams—Carolyn McNamara  
 House and Grounds Team—open  
 Listening Circles—Katrina Schmidt  
 Membership Team—Mike McAtee  
 Midtown Helping Hands—open  
 Office Team—Carolyn McNamara  
 Omaha Together One Community—Laurie Gift  
 Partner Church Team—Dave Olson  
 Recycling Coordinators—Dave & Evy Rosser  
 Right Relations—Nadine Keith  
 Social Justice Coordinator—open  
 Soul Matters—Michael McAtee  
 Stewardship Team—Mary Kay Peters & Peg Pidgeon  
 Wayside Pulpit—Kim Dunovan  
 Women's Alliance—Catherine Plumlee  
 Worship Arts Team—Mary Thomas  
 Young Adult Group—open  
 YRUU—Carol Cronin & Tom Seguin

**First Unitarian Church of Omaha**

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

402-345-3039

## Church Events

**“White Fragility” Book Discussion Group Led by Rev. Michelle**  
Thursdays, May 30, June 6, and June 13 at 7pm in the Common Room.  
See page 4.

**Church Admin Out of Office**  
Friday, May 31 to June 10.

**Private Wedding**  
Saturday, June 1 at 5pm.

**New Member Celebration**  
Sunday, June 2 during coffee hour.  
See page 4.

**Baby Shower for the Emans**  
Sunday, June 2 at 12:30pm in the Common Room. See page 4.

**Young Adult Discussion Group**  
This group doesn't meet in the summer.

**People's Film Festival**  
Monday, June 3 at 7pm in the Common Room. See page 4.

**Book Club**  
Monday, June 3 at 7pm in the Merritt Lounge. See page 4.

**Breaking Bread for Believers**  
Tuesday, June 4 at 6:30pm in the Merritt Lounge. See page 4.

**Compassionate Communication Group**  
Tuesdays, June 4 & June 18 at 7pm in the Common Room. See page 4.

**MTC Meeting**  
Wednesday, June 5 at 5:30pm in the Merritt Lounge.

**CommUnity Night Picnic Offsite**  
Friday, June 7 at Halleck Park Picnic Pavilion in Papillion. See page 4.

**1898 Antique Quilt Open House & Public Viewing**  
Saturday, June 8, 2-4pm. See page 7.

**Board Meeting**  
Tuesday, June 11 at 6pm in the Common Room.

**3F Book Bonanza Group**  
Wednesday, June 12 at 7pm in the Merritt Lounge. See page 4.

**The Flame Newsletter Deadline**  
June 15 at noon. Send articles to the church office:  
[admin@firstuomaha.org](mailto:admin@firstuomaha.org).

**Paint & Sip: Pride Parade Prep**  
Saturday, June 15 at 4pm in the Common Room. See page 4.

**Leadership Talk Back**  
Sunday, June 16 at 11:30am in the Common Room. See page 4.

**WAYS TO HELP: Yes Meal Prep**  
Monday, June 17 at 9:30am in the kitchen. See page 13.

**People's Film Festival**  
Monday, June 17 at 7pm in the Common Room. See page 4.

**Women's Religious Studies Covenant Group**  
Thursday, June 20 at 1pm in the Merritt Lounge. See page 4.

**CUUPS: Midsummer Labyrinth**  
Sunday, June 23 at 6:15pm—meet in parking lot. See page 5.

**2019 Pride Parade & Festival**  
Saturday, June 29, offsite. See page 5.

**Private Wedding**  
Saturday, June 29 at 3pm.

**Fellowship with Clair Memorial at Our Church**  
Sunday, June 30 during Coffee Hour in the Common Room.  
See pages 3 and 14.

**First Steps Class**  
Sunday, June 30 at 11:45am in the Whitney Young Room. See page 17.

**Bill, Margaret, & Friends: An Afternoon of Music**  
Sunday, June 30 at 2pm in the Sanctuary. See page 14.

**H&H Auction Events**  
See page 5 for more information.

**Sister Church Events**  
Many events happen at our Sister Church, Clair Memorial. See a list of upcoming events on page 12.

### Recurring...

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

**Parent's Choice Listening Circle**  
This group will not meet in the summer.

**AHA Listening Circle**  
Meets the 3rd Sunday of the month.  
See page 5.

**YRUU (Youth Group) Meetings**  
Wednesdays at 7pm in the Common Room. September to May.

**Choir Rehearsals**  
Wednesdays at 7pm in the Sanctuary.  
September to the first week of June.

**Women's Religious Studies Group**  
Meets most Thursdays at 1pm in the Merritt Lounge. See page 5.

**Dharma Chautauqua**  
Every Thursday, 6pm to 7:30pm in the Whitney Young Classroom. See page 5.

**Soul Matters Small Groups**  
Various meeting dates. See here:  
[www.firstuomaha.org/soulmatters](http://www.firstuomaha.org/soulmatters)  
We will take July and August off.

### Future Events...

**Memorial Service for Lee Fettig**  
Saturday, July 6 at 11am.

**NAMI WALK**  
Saturday, July 20 at Elmwood Park Pavilion. See page 5.

**Heritage Event: Revival of Newton Mann Superstar Musical**  
Saturday, August 24 at 6pm.  
See page 5.

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**Social Media & First U**  
Find our public Facebook page here:  
[www.facebook.com/firstuomaha/](http://www.facebook.com/firstuomaha/)

Find us on Twitter here:  
[@FirstUUOmaha](https://twitter.com/FirstUUOmaha)

Be sure to like the church and follow us!

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**1898 Antique Quilt  
Open House & Public Viewing  
First Unitarian Church of Omaha  
Saturday, June 8, 2019  
2:00 – 4:00 p.m.**



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

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