

August 2017

The Flame



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Hospitality Teams:
Thank you!

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

Sunday Services — All Are Welcome

Sunday, August 6 at 10:30am

Please join with our Covenant of UU Pagans to celebrate Lughnasadh: the beginning of the summer harvest season with music and dancing. Our examination of both the first source and the sixth source leads us to an acknowledgement of miracles and magic in the everyday world around us.

Sunday, August 13 at 10:30am

"What About Jesus"

Rev. Ed Kelly Jr.

Since I migrated out of the Fundamentalist camp of Evangelical Christianity in 2009, I have been asked numerous times, "yes, Ed, but what about Jesus?" "Where does Jesus fit in your new faith?" In this lecture I will answer that question by a historical look at the Jewish roots of Jesus.

Sunday, August 20 at 10:30am

Early Morning Risers (EMR)

"The true beauty of music is that it connects people. It carries a message, and we, the musicians, are the messengers," Roy Ayers said. The message will be music as sung and played by EMR, a ragtag group of merry musicians and swingin' singers.

Sunday, August 27 at 10:30am

"Loess Is More"

Rev. Frank Rivas

The contemplative life calls us to live our reality, complete with Loess Hills. It is from this experience of abundance that we act most effectively in the world.

Note on Forums:

There are no forums in the month of August. If you have a topic you would like to share, please contact the Forum Coordinators, Denise and Bebe, at forum@firstuomaha.org.

Rev. Elations

Monthly Column from our Minister, Rev. Frank Rivas

Anne and I drove (drove!) all the way to the Bay Area and back. (Our dog is old, and we never went on vacation without her when she was young.) We saw the bay, the ocean, the hills, the Sierras, the Rockies, the desert, and the salt flats. We ate memorable meals, experienced a blinding snow storm while driving through the mountains in June, witnessed our aging dog run like a puppy in the redwoods, engaged with dear friends whom we have missed, stayed at a breathtaking airbnb in the Oakland hills, and had a vision of the America we've always dreamed about.

The vision took place in Liberty Park, Salt Lake City, on the day of the Pride Parade. The park is beautiful, well maintained, and abundant with swimming pool, tennis courts, water park, playgrounds, flower conservatory, aviary...and that's just the part that we walked through. What impressed us most, however, were the people—gay people, straight people, people of every size, every color, and every nation, all happily sharing this time and this place together. Who would expect such a thing in Salt Lake City? And why do we not experience it everywhere in this nation?

On the way home, Anne drove the last leg of the trip, through much of Nebraska. I slept, but awakened just before we hit Lincoln. What I saw, much to my surprise, was beauty—green, green hills and plains as far as the eye could see. In responding to the beauty of mountain, desert, and ocean, I had forgotten the beauty that is ours.

I know that I'm not the first to say it, but it's true: one of the blessings of travel is returning to see our home as if for the first time. Yes, there are many Edens, and we live in one of them. Welcome home.

Blessings and love,
Frank

Photo by Catherine Plumlee



Church Events

CommUnity Night

Friday, August 4 at 5:30pm in the Common Room. This casual potluck is open to everyone. Games, conversation and hanging out! Join us!

Teams Meeting

Saturday, August 5 at 2pm in the Common Room. Team leaders, volunteers and anyone else interested in how the church runs are invited to attend.

First UU Young Adults

Sunday, August 6 after the service, meet in the Common Room and we'll head to Delice. First Unitarian Young Adults welcomes everyone ages 18-35 from all over the Omaha Metro.

Mystic Sojourn CUUPS

Sunday, August 6 at 6:30pm in the Common Room. Please join us in our Lammas Ritual to Celebrate the first harvest of the season, held halfway between the Summer Solstice and the Fall Equinox. Stephanie Rodriguez Lewis and Denise Allain are coordinating the Ritual which begins promptly at 6:30. Please arrive no earlier than 6 or later than 6:15 for discussion prior to the Ritual. A potluck will be held afterwards. Please bring something to share. Childcare will be provided.

People's Film Festival

Monday, August 7 at 7pm in the Common Room. We'll watch the 2nd of the series on Plutocracy called *Plutocracy II Solidarity Now and Forever*. Synopsis: Income inequality may be a hot topic during the current American election season, but it's also a stark reality that has plagued the country for hundreds of years. That sad history foreshadows what many are still grappling with today. The feature-length documentary *Plutocracy II* is a studious and well-produced portrayal of America's long-standing clashes between the working-class and the industrial beast.

Hiroshima/Nagasaki Never Again Event

Saturday, August 12 at 6pm in the Common Room. The event is to commemorate the deaths of hundreds of thousands of Japanese civilians when the USA dropped the first atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki. We will also educate participants about the horrors of those attacks and

about our government's plan to spend \$1 trillion to update our nuclear arsenal. Nebraskans for Peace will sponsor this event.

The Women's Religious Study Covenant Group

Thursday, August 17 at 1pm in the Merritt Lounge. Linda Parker will be our facilitator for the Sixth Step Action in Karen Armstrong's *Twelve Steps to a Compassionate Life*. We welcome all self-identified women. If you are interested, please contact Harriet Major at hmajor323@cox.net or call 402-391-0248.

First UU Young Adults Game Night

Friday, August 18 at 6pm in the Common Room. This game night is open to the whole church. We'll have a potluck and have fun playing games! Join us. No RSVP required.

Listening Circle Facilitators Workshop

Saturday, August 19 at 8:30am in the Common Room. We will train people on how to run a Listening Circle. If you are interested, contact Katrina at Katrina.schmidt@gmail.com or at 402-916-9741. Please leave a message if we are not home.

Brush Up Nebraska: Paint-A-Thon

Saturday, August 19, offsite
This is a volunteer opportunity. For details see page 6.

First Steps: A Class for Visitors

Sunday, August 20 at 11:45am in the Whitney Young Classroom. New to First U? All are welcome to attend this session. See page 17 for details.

CUUPS Book Study Group: 12 Wild Swans

Sunday, August 20 at 11:30am in the Merritt Lounge. CUUPS will lead a book study on *The 12 Wild Swans: A Journey to the Realm of Magic, Healing and Action*. In this book, renowned leaders in the Wicca movement use a fairy tale to teach about the "reclaiming" model of witchcraft that blends magic and personal growth.

Examined Life Group

Tuesday, August 22 at 7pm in the Merritt Lounge. This is a group determined to become democratic with

each participant presenting a topic related to how we assess ourselves personally and as members of society. In August we'll only meet once. Interested? Contact Jack at jackheidel@yahoo.com.

Taoism Discussion Group

Tuesday, August 22 at 6:30pm in the Common Room. Join us to discuss anything and everything related to Taoism! As Taoism is best understood through practice rather than theory, the goal of this group is to provide a participatory space to explore how Taoism is applied in daily life, with an emphasis on experience. With our direct experiences as a reference point, we can then delve into the main texts of Taoism. This group will be led by Geoff Erikson. Contact him at: gerickson03@yahoo.com.

Board Talk Back

Sunday, August 27 at 11:30am in the Common Room. The church board wants to hear from you and will have a table set up in the Common Room to discuss issues that are important to you and the congregation.

People's Film Festival

Monday, August 28 at 7pm in the Common Room. Dr. Donald Frey will speak to the group. He is a Professor of Medicine at Creighton University, and specializes in Family Medicine and Geriatric Medicine, so his areas of expertise are relevant to us all. Bring your questions about healthcare. This is a timely conversation.

Note:

The Arts & Crafts Night has been cancelled until further notice.

Church Events Continued...

Recurring Events

NAMI Connections

Meets every Wednesday at 1pm in the Whitney Young Room. This is a peer-run group for persons living with mental health challenges. This group will meet every Wednesday at 1pm. If you have questions, please email Terri Lynn at guburr77@outlook.com.

Women's Religious Studies Group

This group meets every Thursday, except for the 3rd week of the month at 1pm in the Merritt Lounge. This group explores a wide range of religious beliefs through reading, study, and discussion. New members welcome. Beginning July 27, we will be reading *The Essence of Shinto: Japan's Spiritual Heart* by Motohisa Yamakage. The leader will be Neva Cozine. Contact her 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 12:30pm. All D&D role players are invited. Questions? Contact Roman at RobertmNoriega@gmail.com, 402-769-4260.

Bridge Group

Meets the 2nd and 4th Sunday of each month in the Conference Room at noon. If you've played before, come for some entertainment and time at the game table. Novices welcome too. Contact Scott Kemper at scott.kemper@gmail.com.

Tai Chi Class

Tuesdays at 5pm in the Common Room. Tai chi and Qi gong are centuries-old, related, mind and body practices that originated in China. They involve certain postures and gentle movements with mental focus, breathing, and relaxation. The instructor is Linda Gabriel, PhD, OTR/L, an occupational therapist. Her teaching is based on training with Peter Wayne, PhD, author of the book, *The Harvard Medical School Guide to Tai Chi*, and on the Moving for Better Balance curriculum. Your first class is free and then for UU members and friends the charge is \$5 /class. Nonmembers are

welcome and the charge is \$10. No need to enroll, just come! For more information:

www.TailoredTaiChi.com or contact Linda at taichiomaha@gmail.com.

Ways You Can Get Involved

Looking for Listening Circle Facilitators and Hosts!

We are looking for Listening Circle facilitators and those willing to host in their homes once a month October-May. The set format for Listening Circles makes guiding easy. Facilitators do as much or as little as they would like. Minimally, just bring the topic of the day. For a more personal approach, you may want to come up with your own original theme to discuss. Before your first meeting, you will receive a quick 5-10 minute one-on-one orientation, a manual with suggestions and topics, become a part of an on-line facilitator's community on Facebook if you desire, and be invited to a small groups workshop to be held on Saturday, August 19. We also ask that you attend a forum and fair on September 10th where you may introduce yourself as a facilitator. If interested please contact Katrina at Katrina.schmidt@gmail.com or at 402-916-9741. Please leave a message if we are not home.

Wayside Pulpit Sign Master

Interested in changing the sign outside our church? We tend to change the quote on the wayside pulpit outside about twice a month. We are looking for someone who can commit to this job. Is that you? Contact the office for details: admin@firstuomaha.org.

Join a Hospitality Team

See page 10 for information.

For more ways to help or get involved, go to:

<http://www.firstuomaha.org/help>

Future Events

POPs (Parents of Preschoolers)

We will take a break in August. Our next meeting is on September 9. Questions go to Sarah Eades Hamilton. Email: seades.hamilton@gmail.com or call/text: 402-306-6339).

Sign-Up Fair for Small Groups

Sunday, Sept. 10 during coffee hour. Learn about the many discussion groups and Listening Circles happening in our church. Find the right group for you! Group leaders will be available during coffee hour to introduce you to what they are all about. A few groups that will be featured: Listening Circles, Women's Religious Studies Group and Covenant Group, The Book Club, and the Examined Life Group, plus many more! Need info? Want to participate? Contact Katrina at Katrina.Schmidt@gmail.com.

100th Anniversary Celebration Kickoff

Save the date on Saturday, September 16 from 4-8pm for an exciting kickoff to the 100th Anniversary of the laying of the building cornerstone at First Unitarian Church by President Taft. We'll start off a special year-long celebration with a potluck picnic at the Pavilion at Elmwood Park. See page 15.

Spielbound Teens Fundraiser: Talent Show

Sunday, Sept. 17 at 12pm in the Sanctuary. We will also have a raffle. All the money raised will go to area food banks. More details next month!

Tryouts for the Talent Show:

First date: Sunday, August 27 at 12pm in the Common Room.
Second date: Sunday, Sept. 10 at 12pm in the Sanctuary.

From the President

By Alan Vovolka, Church President

First Unitarian will participate in the Brush Up Nebraska Paint-A-Thon on Saturday, August 19.

Brush Up Nebraska Paint-A-Thon is a community-based volunteer program that paints the outside of homes for qualified low-income elderly and low-income permanently disabled homeowners in the Omaha Metropolitan Area, so that homeowners may maintain their property and beautify the community. The project began in 1989. All homes are painted on the 3rd Saturday of August each year. It is in the spirit of an old-fashioned “Barn Raising” that people come together to help others and brighten lives and homes within our community.

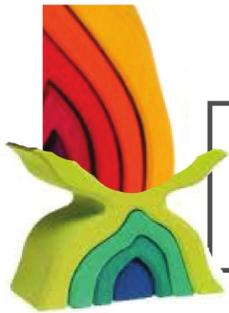
First Unitarian is partnering with Countryside Community Church and Second Unitarian. Our assigned house is a one-story at 2032 N. 66th St. The house has a “no maintenance” masonry finish so we won’t be painting the walls. Most of the work will be the fascia (near the roof) gutters and downspouts; these will be white. The garage door and basement windows will be blue (and maybe the front door too). Cy Wakeman has scheduled her family reunion for paint day weekend because they had such fun last year. This will add people in the 20s and 30s age range who bring ladders and know how to use them. We plan to scrape, prime and paint all in the same day and Cy’s family plans to be somewhere else by noon, so we will need a couple of people for ladder work in the afternoon.

Children 16 and under will need a signed permission slip and a designated adult on-site to keep an eye on them.

If you are unavailable on August 19th, there will be a “prep” day the Saturday before to power-wash the masonry. Please contact Alan Vovolka (402) 344-3988 to sign up or to lend us ladders, brushes, scrapers, or especially, a power-washer (otherwise we may have to rent one).

At the Social Justice Fair on Sunday, July 16th the following people signed up:

Kate Kennedy
 Mary Fieber
 Jeri Thurber
 Laura Thomas
 Douglas McIntosh
 Francis Joy
 Rae Berry
 Lindsey Williams



FLICKER

a little something from Jan's desk

RE
News

July, 2017

Special Edition: Fall Curriculum Preview

In 2015, our Religious Education Council created a curriculum guide to plan a rotating three year cycle built upon three main areas.

- Year 1. Unitarian Universalist Heritage
- Year 2. World Religions
- Year 3. Judaism, Christianity, Islam

Next Fall, we will begin the third cycle, by learning the stories and beliefs known as the Abrahamic religions. The family tree of those who descended from Abraham branched from Judaism to Christianity to Islam.

While these stories may be familiar to many in other religious cultures, we present them from a Unitarian Universalist perspective. We see them as stories or myths to be examined with our own critical thinking skills.

Our culture is so intertwined with these stories that educated religiously literate children should know them. How do these religions influence our culture?

As always, we express religious views with respect and tolerance. Respect for our fellow human beings does not require us to think or love or worship in the same way.





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

Interested in Joining the Church?

Pathways to Membership Class Happens this Fall

Sundays in October: 8th, 15th, 22nd, and 29th at 11:45am in the Whitney Young Room

This four-week class will take a more in-depth look at what it means to be a Unitarian Universalist and to be a member of First Unitarian Church of Omaha. Class is open to anyone interested in learning more about our church—non-members and members alike! Questions? RSVP to Carrie Helmberger, Membership Coordinator at coordinator@firstuomaha.org. Pictured below: group of new members in December 2016.



First Unitarian Church is Hiring

We seek an experienced pianist to accompany our adult choir for weekly rehearsals and services.

Position Information and Skills:

Primary performance instrument is a Steinway Grand piano (Organ competency not required)
 Choir averages 25 members
 Sight reading and ability to follow direction
 Comfortable with eclectic mix of musical styles and genres (i.e. Classical, Traditional Christian Hymns, Gospel/Jazz, Pop and Contemporary Worship)
 Ability to accompany singing groups or soloists
 Demonstrated proficiency in piano/keyboard instruments.
 3 to 5 years choral accompanying experience preferred

Responsibilities:

Provide piano accompaniment for all rehearsals. The choir rehearses Wednesday evenings from 7:00-8:30pm, September — May.
 Provide piano accompaniment for 10:30am service, 2 times per month.
 Be present for choral warm-ups before the service.
 Meet as needed with the Choir Director
 Approximately 4 to 6 hours per week, includes independent rehearsal time.
 Be available for special services as needed (eg. Christmas Eve).
 Provide other assistance as requested and agreed upon.

Submit your application to choirdirector@firstuomaha.org

Share this link with your musical friends: <http://www.firstuomaha.org/choir-accompanist>

Nominations for President-Elect

CHALLENGE FOR OUR CHURCH —WE NEED YOUR HELP

Because our excellent President-Elect, Wendy Hessler, is now moving to Idaho, the Nominating Committee (Molly Dewell, Kathi Oliver, Dave Olson, Ben Wallace, Carol Ramsey, and Marie Sedlacek) are faced with reviewing nominations from the congregation, and then selecting a replacement for Wendy as President-Elect. That is a position that has a year-long tenure and then moves into a year-term as President of our Board of Trustees. The Past-President, Jackie Anderegg, convenes the committee but does not have a vote. A quorum of the committee is three members. These are bylaw restrictions when we have a resignation of board members or a President-Elect that is 60 days away from an annual meeting. We will not have the advantage of time, a vote at the annual meeting and an endorsement by the whole congregation. So, your suggestions for this committee's review are fundamental to this choice.

Please send your suggestions and reasons for your nomination to nominations@firstuomaha.org. Please include any questions you may have about the position or the process or speak to anyone on the nominating committee.

Thank you!

Thank You!

The pastor of an unidentified Catholic church received a letter marked, “Please give to Harry the Usher.” It was handed over to Harry, and this is what it said: *“Dear Harry. I’m sorry I don’t know your last name, but then, you don’t know mine. I’m Gert, Gert at the ten o’clock Mass every Sunday. I don’t know the priests too well, but somehow feel close to you. I don’t know how you got to know my first name, but every Sunday morning you smile and greet me by name, and we exchange a few words: how bad the weather is, how much you like my hat, and how I am late on a particular Sunday. I just wanted to say thank you for taking the time to remember an old woman, for the smiles, for your consideration, for your thoughtfulness. — with love and gratitude, Gert.”*

As you can see, the Ministry of Hospitality is an important one no matter what church or religious belief. Your words and gestures can make a big difference to those entering the church on Sunday, whether they are strangers or regular attendees. A welcoming environment is one of the really special things about First Unitarian Church. Our faithful Ambassadors and Greeters play a major role in creating that environment. As “first representatives” we strive to make sure each person is greeted with a kind word and a warm smile upon arrival. That greeting is reinforced by the support of our Coffee Hour Hosts after the service in the common room where their goal is to make people feel at home. A smile or a handshake can speak volumes!

I would like to say **“Thank You”** to those who serve in this capacity, whether it is making sure the doors are unlocked and the candles lit, handing out orders of service or guiding parents to the nursery, providing information to visitors or taking up the collection, visiting during coffee hour or tidying up afterward, it is all important. Thank you to the team leaders and the team members for helping to make my task of coordinating easier by the generous gift of your time. So here’s to the extroverts AND the introverts. (I apologize if I failed to acknowledge someone.)

Flaming Chalice: Kim Dunovan (Leader), Jerre Tritsch, Steve Raybine, Beth Conover, John & Linda Hruska, Kate Wiig, Judith Wright, Diane Withem, Peg Pidgeon, Cassi Moucka, Mary Kay Peters

Friendly Faces: Joe & Lori Schaaf (Leaders), Sherri Conner, Michael McAtee, Jaime Major, Dan Boster, Lee Clausen, Kabin & Mary Thomas

Rounders: Jack Round (Leader), Bob Hess, Roger & Julie Nicolaisen, Laurie Gift, Jen McEvoy, Mark Loscutoff, Jeri Thurber & Chris Krull, Bebe McCammond

Singing Sensations: Kay Lynn Goldner (Leader), Vanessa Timberlake, Frank McKee, Dave Olson, Christina & Roman Noriega, Bob & Kay McMeen, Tom & Caitlin Seguin, Catherine Plumlee

Fifth Sunday Fill-Ins: Carolyn McNamara (Leader), Jaime Alexander, Dee Otte, Linda Parker, Kerri & Seth Wingert, Jody & Greg Petrow, Wendi Jensen, Krystal Davis, Terri Ann Brame

Open Arms: Janet West (Leader), Ron Withem, Rae Barry, Deb & Tim Duggan, Debbie Hunsberger, Nadine Keith, Linda Hess, Peter & Sharon Piehler, Douglas Lee-Regier

Un-Holy Rollers: Louise Jeffrey (Leader), Bruce & Kate Godfrey, Carolyn McNamara, John Wagner, Terri Lynn Brewer, Anne Rivas, Geoff Erickson, Dave Richardson, Diana & Daniel Byrd, Kathi Oliver

Mindful Ones: Kim Callaghan (Leader), Brian Callaghan, Larry Goeser, Walt Jesteadt & Donna Neff, Cy & Marcia Leise, Barb Ross, Jim Daniels, Lisa & Will Calhoun, Nolan DeVries

Fireballs: Bill Ross (Leader), Jack Heidel & Sharon Conlon, Lois Norris, Nellie Chenoweth, Jackie Anderegg, Tony & Sandy Host, Shawne Coonfare, Katie Zimmer

Coffee Brewing and Set Up: Kim & Brian Callaghan, John Wagner

Finally, I want to thank all of our church members and friends who go out of their way to make visitors feel welcome, keeping in mind that we are **ALL** part of the Ministry of Hospitality. Being part of a hospitality team is an important but simple commitment of only six Sundays per year and it’s fun! If you are interested in serving in this capacity on a regular or substitute basis, please contact me at caylamc@cox.net.

— Carolyn McNamara, Hospitality Teams Coordinator

Coming soon: First Annual “Celebrate Hospitality Sunday”

Listening Circles Now Forming!

What is a Listening Circle?

A small group of individuals – friends, visitors, or members of UU who listen and discuss various topics. Both the topics and format of discussion are designed to encourage active listening, which strengthens and deepens relationships.

What Can Listening Circles Do For Me and Our Community?

A listening circle develops and enhances relationships of participants, builds trust, strengthens listening skills, and develops a safe space for everyone. These skills and relationships will improve all First UU activities as we grow and connect with one another.

What Kind of Topics Will We Discuss?

Both challenging and fun topics are explored. Currently we have prepared these topics: play, living simply, justice, forgiveness, expectations, endings, confronting evil, aloneness, and addictions.

How Often and For How Long Do Groups Meet?

Groups will meet twice a month for an hour to an hour and a half either at church or in homes.

What Does a Meeting Look Like?

A clear format is used for listening circles to ensure everyone is heard. We read several quotes on a single topic, followed by a short period of contemplation, and then discuss the quotes in three rounds.

- Round 1: Each member shares impressions without response.
- Round 2: Discussion. Follow up on ideas expressed, question, and expand.
- Round 3: Final thoughts shared by each individual. Did your viewpoint change from the conversation?

What if I Want to Facilitate One Meeting or More?

Great! The set format for listening circles makes guiding easy. Facilitators do as much or as little as they would like and have the opportunity to receive a vast amount of support. Minimally, just bring the topic of the day. Before your first meeting, you will receive a quick 5-10 minute one-on-one orientation, a manual with suggestions and topics, become a part of an on-line facilitator's community, and have the option of attending a group training meeting.

What Do You Expect of Me if I Join?

We ask that you be committed to attending and let the facilitator know if you cannot. We ask participants to listen and share deeply, be aware how much time they are taking to share, welcome new members, avoid cross talk, avoid judging, avoid giving feedback, avoid "fixing" people, and keep stories shared confidential.

We Want You!

We would like to grow and learn with you in small groups. We hope this will bring together people who may not normally interact with one another, and we hope to strengthen our community. Please email listeningcircles@firstuomaha.org or go to <http://www.firstuomaha.org/circles> to fill out the online form.

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. 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.

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 (401 Park Ave). Please contact Diane Withem at dianewithem@gmail.com or call 402.679.8916 if you would like help in the future. Thank you!

Share the Plate This Month

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. In the month of August we share the plate for **Siena/Francis House**. Go to this website for more information: <http://www.sienafrancis.org/>.

Change for Change

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

Share the Plate 2018

Do you know a nonprofit organization that should be considered for a month in our Share the Plate program? Organizations should be nonprofits and should have a local impact. Please let the MTC know by the end of August. The MTC makes the decision in the fall for the next year's schedule. The form to fill out is here:

http://docs.wixstatic.com/ug-d/6ac81d_60d1e8c496734397b892cbca2823df70.pdf

Please email completed forms to mtc@firstuomaha.org or mail the form to the church office.

Do You Shop on Amazon?

Follow this link to www.smile.amazon.com and when you make a purchase, Amazon will donate a percentage to First Unitarian Church of Omaha through the AmazonSmile program.

Steps:

1. Visit www.smile.amazon.com
2. Search for First Unitarian Church of Omaha then select the organization's name. Be sure to confirm you are electing the correct organization, as many charitable organizations have similar names.

Or just use this direct link:

<http://smile.amazon.com/ch/47-0388142>

3. Add items to your cart and pay. It's That Easy!
When you shop at AmazonSmile, you'll find the exact same low prices, vast selection and convenient shopping as Amazon.com with the added bonus that Amazon will donate a portion of the purchase price to First Unitarian Church of Omaha. You use the same account on Amazon.com and AmazonSmile. Your shopping cart, Wish List, wedding or baby registry, and other account settings are also the same.

Questions? Contact Donna at neffd@cox.net.

Reminder: Using the Church Building

Please be sure that if you move furniture, tables or chairs around that you return everything to the way you found it. You're more than welcome to move items, but please be kind to the people coming behind you. Thermostats sometimes need to be changed, (especially in the summer heat) but please return the temperature to the setting you found it at. If you have questions, contact the office at admin@firstuomaha.org.

Thank you!



What is OTOC?

Omaha Together One Community (OTOC) teaches people to become effective leaders, to explore their legitimate interests, to do solid research, to engage in sometimes tough, but always respectful public discourse, to hold elected officials accountable, and to create positive change through collective action. Through the practice of these skills, people build relationships of trust and, by acting collaboratively, become part of solving their own problems rather than expecting someone else to take care of them.

OTOC Action Teams:

(How you can get involved.)

- Immigration and Refugees
- Environmental Sustainability
- Mental Health
- Housing and Revitalization
- Medicaid and Expansion and State Tax Policy

OTOC membership:

There are 18 regular members. Religious institutions include First and Second Unitarian Churches. There are 10 solidarity members including Creighton Center for Service and Justice, Habitat for Humanity, and South Sudan Community Association

First Unitarian Church of Omaha is a member of OTOC. Each OTOC member religious institution pays dues of .5% of their regular annual budget. In 2016, our church paid dues of \$1,600. Members of the churches can join OTOC Action Team where they would work on various local/state/national issues.

OTOC Action Teams:

- Immigration and Refugees
- Environmental Sustainability
- Mental Health
- Housing and Revitalization
- Medicaid and Expansion and State Tax Policy
- Payday Lending

For more information about OTOC or to join an Action Team, please contact Janet at jmasonwest77@yahoo.com.

OTOC News

Join Omaha Together One Community (OTOC) on Second Mondays this summer to learn how we strengthen the fabric of our democracy by building strong public relationships in our congregations, communities and organizations. Learn how to engage in effective individual meetings, develop a strong team of collaborators and build the Power needed to act effectively on issues of justice and the common good. We will meet from 7pm to 8:30pm at Augustana Lutheran Church (3647 Lafayette Ave).

Final Session:

August 14: Developing a Core Team of collaborators in your institution or group

Visit OTOC's website for more info: <http://otoc.org/>.

Social Justice Fair

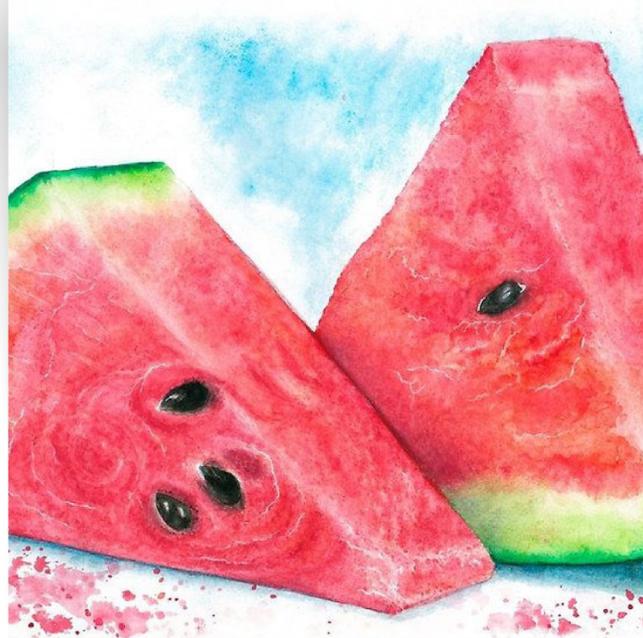
Thank you to everyone who participated in our Social Justice Fair on Sunday, July 16. Many groups and organizations were represented and many church members and friends signed up.

Did your social justice project or team miss out? Contact Catharine in the church office to sign up to participate in our Team Fair happening on Sunday, November 5. Email: admin@firstuuomaha.org.

Thank you!



Pictured above: Terri Lynn with the director of NAMI Omaha. Photo by Scott Kemper.



Kick Off Our 100th Birthday Celebration!

WHAT: All church potluck picnic

WHERE: Elmwood Park Pavilion

WHEN: Saturday, Sept. 16, 4:00-8:00 PM

HOW: Happy and Hungry

WHY: Fun for everyone!

Watermelon and kids games provided by
Religious Education

Save-the-Date: Heart & Hand Auction-Friday, October 27th!

It seems far off to think of fall activities in the heat of summer, but mark your calendars *now* to attend the **Halloween Heart & Hand Auction: Friday, October 27th 6-10 pm!** This is our major annual FUNdraiser for the church operating budget and a great party. Generous donors, enthusiastic buyers, and a big crew of volunteers will guarantee another successful Auction. Luckily, the preparation is part of the fun! It is called "heart and hand" for the emphasis on donating "seats" at social events you host or sharing your skills and hobbies, although physical items are also welcomed. Often several people team together to offer a party, dinner, concert, or outing. Events can be scheduled at the church, but folks especially enjoy the opportunity to share hospitality at homes. Auction events have become an important part of our church calendar, helping build friendships and our church community. Events need not be big or fancy, just a chance to share time together and have fun.

Start now to ponder what you might donate! In September, the familiar Auction Table will appear in the Common Room, the website will go active, and serious pestering will begin for donations. Katrina Schmidt, the new Auction Chair, and Donna Neff as co-chair, are the go-to gals for all things Auction.

Help Wanted! We need to build an Auction Team, not just one or two people who know the ropes. Right now—well before the Auction—we need someone to learn to update and manage the Auction website, using the friendly Auction software. We also need someone to start soliciting business donations, as some need lots of lead time. Contact Katrina or Donna for details of what is involved (without obligation).

Again, put a big "X" on your calendar for **Friday, Oct. 27^h** and please get involved in some way, large or small, in this important and fun event. Contact Katrina with ideas, questions, and to volunteer (auction@firstuomaha.org) and stay tuned for fall fun.





New to our church?

Join us for an informal introduction to Unitarian Universalism and our community.

The First Steps Class will take place on **Sunday, August 20 at 11:45am** in the Whitney Young Classroom (downstairs on the west side of the church by the nursery).

If you are interested, RSVP to Carrie at coordinator@firstuomaha.org or stop by the visitor's table (in the Common Room downstairs) on the 20th and we'll get you to the right room.

Grab a cup of coffee and we will see you there!



Minister

Frank Rivas

minister@firstuuomaha.org**Director of Religious Education**

Jan Wilson

dre@firstuuomaha.org**Membership Coordinator**

Carrie Helmberger

coordinator@firstuuomaha.org**Church Administrator**

Catharine Dixon

admin@firstuuomaha.org**Organist**

Pat Will

Early Service Pianist

Stan Harper

Choir Director

William Miller

choirdirector@firstuuomaha.org**Minister Emeritus**

Ronald Knapp

Nursery Coordinator

Jenny Hastings

childcare@firstuuomaha.org**Nursery Aide**

Gale Callaghan

Custodian

Bobby Medrano

Nominating CommitteeMolly Dewell, Dave Olson,
Kathy Oliver, Carol Ramsey,
Marie Sedlacek, Ben Wallace**THE FLAME**Deadlines are the 15th of each month.
Word limit: 200. Send submissions toadmin@firstuuomaha.org.Editor/Designer: Cat DixonProofers: Lana Hammel,
Scott Kemper, Lois Norris,
Debbie HunsbergerFlame Mailing Team:Debbie Hunsberger, Lois Norris,
Linda Hruska, Kim Callaghan,**First Unitarian Church**www.firstuuomaha.org

402-345-3039

Meet Our Leaders

Board MembersAlan Vovolka (President), Wendy Hessler (President-Elect), Joe Schaaf (Secretary),
Linda Parker, Catherine Plumlee, Floyd Prine, Donna Tubach-Davis,
Maria Wallaceboard@firstuuomaha.org**Trustees of the Capital Trust**

Evelyn Whitehill (2018), Dean Christensen (2019), Daniel Byrd (2020)

Committee on Ministry

Skip Ciulla, Jack Round, Donna Tubach-Davis

Ministry Team Council

Rev. Frank Rivas, Nellie Chenoweth, Wendy Hessler, Diane Withem

mtc@firstuuomaha.org**Ministry Teams and Team Leaders**

Archives/Heritage Task Force—Dave Richardson and Carol Cronin

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 and Katrina Schmidt

Hope in Action—Kim Dunovan

Hospitality Teams—Carolyn McNamara

House and Grounds—Pierce Carpenter

Listening Circles—Katrina Schmidt

Membership—Caitlin & Tom Seguin

Neighborhood Ministry—open

Office—Carolyn McNamara

Omaha Together One Community—Janet West

Partner Church—Janet West

Religious Education—Sheri Conner

Social Justice—Lori Schaaf

Women's Alliance—Catherine Plumlee

Worship Arts Team—Megan Gustafson

Young Adult Group—Collin & Becca Hatcher

YRUU—Adam Sagert and Carolyn Miller

Ron Knapp's July Sermons

Printed copies of Ron Knapp's two July sermons – "The Four Cardinal Virtues of A Heretic" and "The Primacy of Perception" – are now available in the foyer of the church.

Church Events

CommUnity Night

Friday, August 4 at 5:30pm in the Common Room. See page 4.

Teams Meeting

Saturday, August 5 at 2pm in the Common Room. See page 4 for info.

Hiroshima/Nagasaki Event

Saturday, August 5 at 6pm in the Common Room. See page 4 for details.

First UU Young Adults

Sunday, August 6 — meet in the Common Room after the service. We'll go to Delice. See page 4 for details.

Mystic Sojourn CUUPS

Sunday, August 6 at 6:30pm in the Common Room. See page 4 for info.

People's Film Festival

Monday, August 7 at 7pm in the Common Room. See page 4 for details.

Board Meeting

Tuesday, August 8 at 7pm in the Common Room.

Worship Arts Team Meeting

Wednesday, August 9 at 6pm in the Merritt Lounge.

Hiroshima/Nagasaki n Event

Saturday, August 12 at 6pm in the Common Room.

Flame Deadline

Submit your newsletter articles to admin@firstuomaha.org by August 15 at noon.

First UU Young Adults Game Night

Friday, August 18 at 6pm in the Common Room. See page 4.

Listening Circle Facilitators

Workshop

Saturday, August 19 at 8:30am in the Common Room. See page 4.

Brush Up Nebraska:

Paint-A-Thon

Saturday, August 19, offsite
See page 6 for information.

Private Wedding

Saturday, August 19 at 3pm.

The Women's Religious Study Covenant Group

Thursday, August 17 at 1pm in the Merritt Lounge. See page 4.

First Steps: A Class for Visitors

Sunday, August 20 at 11:45am in the Whitney Young Classroom. See page 17.

CUUPS Book Study Group:

12 Wild Swans

Sunday, August 20 at 11:30am. See page 4.

Taoism Discussion Group

Tuesday, August 22 at 6:30pm in the Common Room. See page 4 for details.

Examined Life Group

Tuesday, August 22 at 7pm in the Merritt Lounge. See page 4 for details.

Private Wedding

Saturday, August 26 at 2pm.

Board Talk Back

Sunday, August 27 at 11:30am in the Common Room. See page 4 for information.

People's Film Festival

Monday, August 28 at 7pm in the Common Room. See page 4 for details

Recurring...

Women's Religious Studies Group

Meets most Thursdays at 1pm in the Merritt Lounge. See page 5.

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.

Tai Chi Class

Tuesdays at 5pm in the Common Room. See page 5.

NAMI Connections

Meets Wednesdays at 1pm in the Whitney Young Room. See page 5.

Future Events...

Sign-Up Fair for Small Groups

Sunday, Sept. 10 during coffee hour. See page 5.

100th Anniversary Celebration Kick-off

Saturday, Sept. 16 at Elmwood Park. See page 15 for information.

Spielbound Teens Fundraiser: Talent Show

Sunday, Sept. 17 at 12pm in the Sanctuary. See page 5.

CALL FOR PHOTOS!

Like to take pictures? If you capture a great photo of the Sunday service or the garden outside or an event in the Common Room, please send your photo to the church office at 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!

SOCIAL MEDIA AND FIRST U

Like our Facebook page here:

<https://www.facebook.com/First-Unitarian-Church-of-Omaha-158134657609262/>

The church creates Facebook events for Sunday services and often for other church events. This is a public page meaning if you post to the page, anyone on Facebook can view that post.

Join our Facebook group here:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/77808136080>

The group is a little different than the page. You need to request to be added to this closed group. This way the posts are private and only be seen by other church members and friends who are already in the group.

Follow us on Twitter

[@FirstUOmaha](https://twitter.com/FirstUOmaha)

Mission: Fostering the Whole Person, Compassion, and Justice

Vision: An inclusive Community that Listens, Engages, Inspires, and Acts

We covenant to:

- Listen to understand and grow
 - Seek and value all voices
 - Model respect and kindness
 - Assume good intentions
- Resolve conflicts directly and compassionately
- Contribute time, talent, treasure
 - Respect people's time
- Celebrate, support, appreciate

Adopted May 14, 2017

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

www.firstuomaha.org