

July 2015

The Flame



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

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Sunday Services
this Month

Pages 5-6

Church Events

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Religious
Education



Sunday Service is at 10:30am

Photographer: Royal Bush

July 5

“Everybody’s All American”

What does it mean to be "American?" Our society is full of messages and assumptions regarding this issue. Who are we hurting by the exclusionary nature of those assumptions? Presented by Rene Harper and Megan Gustafson.

July 12

“Church as Workshop”

Rev. Frank Rivas

Excited as many of us are about our partnership with Clair Memorial United Methodist Church, we need to recognize that conflict is inevitable. Words used innocently by one can sound disrespectful to the other; a statement of personal belief by one can be interpreted as evangelism by another. Perhaps the church is a workshop in seeing the holy through our many differences.

July 19

Social Justice

This is the first in a three-part series to explore important social justice issues as they hit very close to our home. Economic inequity, immigration inequity and racial inequity affect our neighbors within blocks of our church doors. Special musical guest Kristen Graves will perform. See page 16 for details.

July 26

“The New Genesis: Out of the Stars, Up from the Earth”

Rev. Ron Knapp

Advances in science during the 19th and 20th centuries have generated a new awareness of the human place in the universe. That new awareness provides a new modern genesis. It can also provide the foundation stones for an appropriate liberal religious theology in the 21st century.

Rev.Elations

Monthly Column from our Minister, Rev. Frank Rivas

The schedule of Sunday worship speaks to our vitality as a congregation. (Our weekday schedule and our Sunday religious education schedules also speak to this vitality, but those are different topics.) This summer the topics are weighted toward social justice, skewed toward the local. The music is both relevant and of the highest quality. And more potential speakers have identified themselves than there are slots.

The autumn schedule is as impressive. I preach the first three Sundays of each month; already the fourth Sundays for September, October, November, and December are scheduled by John Goldner, Joe Sisson, Steve Raybine, and Carol Ramsey (not the order in which they will speak)—reflections that each of us would do well to hear.

This has happened not because I plan far in advance, but rather because members with wisdom to share have requested the opportunity to do so.

A church is not an institution in which one person climbs the Holy Mountain and returns with stone tablets to share with the multitude. Instead, the church is a community in which each teaches, each learns, and spirited dialogue sharpens each of our perspectives. *Ekklesia*, you'll remember, was the ancient Greek word for a tumultuous gathering. We have such a church, and we are grateful.

Blessings and love,
Frank

In Sunday School the kids are learning about the Golden Rule.

Photographer: Kate Wiig



A Discussion About Our Building *by Jack Round, president*

I attended the Midwest Leadership School last year (2014) and met members from the First Unitarian Society of Madison (located in Madison, Wisconsin). They are fortunate enough to meet in a building designed by Frank Lloyd Wright. The First Unitarian Society members I met estimated that 15 to 20 percent of their congregation felt the building was the primary reason they attended. We also have a beautiful building, and we care about it very much. This article is about work done several years ago which considered expanding our building and several current and potential projects.

Expansion:

Several years ago, our Board commissioned a local architecture firm to do some conceptual work regarding expanding our building. The rendering below was one outcome of that work (there are other scenarios, renderings, and floor plans). At the time, it was estimated it would cost at least several million dollars to construct the expansion and after carefully considering it and seeking input, the Board determined there wasn't sufficient passion to fund the project. The conceptual plans are very interesting and are available for any member to review. The Board's discussions and decision-making processes are documented in the Board meeting minutes recorded at the time. And I'm sure any board member who was involved in the discussions would be happy to discuss it with anyone interested. One consideration in the decision making process was the Board (and those consulted) felt if we desired more space, prudence might suggest we first investigate space in the Midtown Crossing facilities and/or in a building nearby. (Both of these options would cost significantly less than a new building.)



Additional Thoughts about Expansion / Developing a Compelling Vision:

Joe Schaaf, Ben Wallace, and I had a short, informal meeting about the building expansion earlier this year and several thoughts emerged. Since space is arguably a commodity now, what if we instead focused on the development of a compelling vision of what any expansion space might achieve?

For example (and this is just one example), what if our vision was we wanted the building expansion to be purposed to be a "Center For Critical Thinking" and that its mission be to help catalyze a vision of our values (open discussions, independence of thought, freedom of thought, common sense) deeper into our community, especially as they relate to critical thinking and perhaps early childhood learning.

Related to both, we might partner with like-minded entities such as a Montessori school (so the building would be used during the week), which could also help fund the project. This "start with a compelling vision" approach/mindset was felt to have some potential (at least to the three of us) and is perhaps worthy of further discussion. We haven't taken these thoughts any further yet, and

See page 12 for the rest of this article

Church Events

The Women's Religious Studies Group

This group is discussing *The Making of Buddhist Modernism* by David McMahan. We meet in the Merritt Lounge from 1pm to 2:30pm most Thursdays. Questions? Contact Marcia Leise at mkleise@cox.net.

Lunch With or Without the Minister

Thursdays at noon in the Common Room. Although the Lunch With the Minister gathering is officially on break for the summer, several of the regular attendees have decided to continue the Thursday lunch discussion group throughout the summer. Rev. Frank will be in attendance when his schedule allows. This is an informal bring-your-own-lunch gathering discussing random topics including community, national, international topics as well as the church. All are welcome — drop in.

Celebration For Bob Hess

During Coffee Hour on Sunday, July 5 there will be refreshments and cake to celebrate the retirement of Bob Hess, church member. Bob has worked at UNMC/Nebraska Medicine for 35 years. Please stop by to celebrate and have a piece of cake.

UU & You Class

Sunday, July 5 at 11:45am in the Whitney Young Room. Unitarian Universalism and You classes provide an introduction to Unitarian Universalism and our church, along with an opportunity to share our religious journeys. Visitors, newcomers, and the just curious are cordially invited. A light lunch will be served to bolster the always interesting conversation. The class lasts about an hour and 30 minutes so ending time will be about 1:15, although those interested in a brief tour of the church may be a little later. If you need childcare please let us know by the Monday before. RSVPs or questions can be addressed to uuclass@firstuomaha.org or call Jaime Alexander at 402-657-9386.

Second Saturday Playdate

Saturday, July 11 at 10am in the nursery. You and your toddler/young child are invited to join us on the second Saturday of each month for a play date in the nursery. (If it's nice we can relocate to a nearby playground as well.) Please RSVP to Liz Sagert at esheftersagert@gmail.com.

The Women's Religious Study Covenant Group

Thursday, July 16 at 1pm in the Merritt Lounge. Elaine Wells will led the discussion on "Shadow" from our book, *Soul To Soul*. Before attending, you will need to sign a covenant statement. Please contact Evelyn Whitehill at 712-366-2748 or ewwhitehill@cox.net.

Community Meals

Saturday, July 18 offsite at First Baptist Church (421 Park Ave) First Unitarian Church will be sponsoring another Community Meal and we need volunteers please. We will be serving a fried chicken "picnic" so the only food needing to be cooked will be desserts. Help needed from 10am-1:30pm. We need two people for setup and 10-12 desserts (cookies or bars). We also need eight people for serving and clean up. Call Diane at 402-679-8916 or email dianewithem@gmail.com with questions or to sign up. To learn more about Community Meals and First Unitarian's role in the program, please see page 14.

Church Events Continued...

Exploring Humanistic Perspectives in Literature with Ron Knapp: "One Foot in the Grave" The Wit and Wisdom of James Thurber

Tuesday, July 28 at 7pm in the Common Room. This session brings together Unitarian humanists, secular humanists and others interested in exploring literature. The sessions take place in an informal coffee house atmosphere on the fourth Tuesday of each month with a new topic each month and with volunteer readers and time for discussion. Open to the public. Come and have a good time with literature!

Young Adults Summer Outings

Join the YA for Summer Movies in the Park Friday evenings at Bayliss Park in Council Bluffs. Movies start at dusk (around 9pm). Bring a lawn chair or blanket and snacks! Below is a list of movies the park will be showing:

July 10: Into the Woods
July 17: Sleeping Beauty
July 24: The Sandlot
July 31: Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles (2014)

Join the YA for Summer Music in the Park Wednesday evenings from 6:30-8pm at Bayliss Park in Council Bluffs. Bring a lawn chair or blanket and snacks! Below is a schedule of the events:

July 1: Swampboy Blues Band (Blues)
July 8: Solid Brass Quartet (Classical and Pops)
July 15: Pam and the Pearls (Vocal Variety)
July 22: Dixie Heads (Dixieland)
July 29: The Gravy Dippers (Swing)
August 5: Camille Metoyer Moten Band (Vocal Variety)
August 12: Thompson Music Brass (Classical Pops)
August 19: The Brits (British Invasion)
August 26: USAF Vortex (Pop and Country)
September 2: Sabor (Latin Sounds)

Please contact Nellie Chenoweth with any questions about these events (parking, start times, rain delays, etc.) at ladycheno@gmail.com.

OWL Facilitator Training

Happening at Second Unitarian Church on July 31 and August 1 OWL stands for Our Whole Lives. It is our sex-and-relationship education class. If you are looking for an oppor-

tunity to become a facilitator for your congregation for the kindergarten-first grade and fourth through sixth grade OWL curricula, here's your opportunity! Our friends over at Second Unitarian Church will hold a training session Friday, July 31 and August 1. Times are from 9am to 9pm. The cost for the class registration is \$240 before July 2. After that, the cost rises to \$275. The sessions will be held at Second Unitarian Church. For more information, please go here: <http://www.2uomaha.org/owl-facilitator-training>.

Movie Events

Hey Movie Enthusiasts (and friends of movie enthusiasts): Film Streams/Ruth Sokolof Theater will be showing great movies this summer. Times and carpooling will be announced in the enews and on Facebook. around 6:15pm at the church. Get your tickets online at www.filmstreams.org.

Here are the dates:

Labyrinth: July 19;
Willow: August 6;
The Sound of Music: August 20;
Pee Wee's Big Adventure: September 12;
Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles (1990): September 24.

Church Events Coming Up in August

YRUU Rummage & Book Sale—Saturday, August 1 in the Common Room

Please join us for this event! Help the youth group fundraise for its new program, IncluCity. The IncluCity program works to reduce acts of school violence and bullying by challenging the assumptions, attitudes and beliefs around issues of difference (appearance, gender, race, faith, sexual orientation, ability, etc.). See below for more information. Drop off your items to donate to the sale July 27-30, Monday-Thursday, any time between 9am and 3pm or drop off your items on Friday, July 31 (preferred as that is the date the youth group will be setting up the sale). Then come out and shop on Saturday, August 1. We hope to see you there!

YRUU Youth Group to participate in 2015-16 IncluCity Program

The YRUU Youth Group is excited to announce its participation in the 2015-16 IncluCity Program through Inclusive Communities Omaha. The program works to reduce acts of school violence and bullying by challenging the assumptions, attitudes and beliefs around issues of difference (appearance, gender, race, faith, sexual orientation, ability, etc.) and includes a full-day workshop for youth and adults, a year-long internship program for two youth that will focus on putting the tenets of the Inclusive Communities program into action, and a 4-day Intensive Residential Program that will be held in Ashland in January. This is a wonderful opportunity for our youth to learn skills to confront and challenge prejudice, bias and stereotypes and discover new ways to become allies for one another. The program has a significant cost and will require fundraising efforts by our group over the next six months. If community members have questions about the program or are interested in donating towards defraying the program costs, they can contact Ben Wallace or Shawne Coonfare via email at omahayruu@gmail.com or call Ben at 402-680-6226.

CommUUnity Night

Friday, August 7 at 5:30pm in the Common Room. CommUUnity Nights are a fun, laid-back all-church event! There is always plenty of food and we really want you to join us! **Parents of Toddlers:** bring your little ones. We will have a paid babysitter on duty. Questions? Contact Jan at dre@firstuuomaha.org.

Book Club

Monday, August 31 at 7pm in the Merritt Lounge. We will discuss what everyone has been reading over the summer. This has always been an enjoyable discussion. Questions? Contact Dave Richardson at drichardson@westside66.org.

Spirit Circle will not meet in July. See you in August!



Religious Education at First Unitarian

by Jan Wilson

We have just finished our Art Camp on June 12. It was a great joy to work with 15 great campers and our volunteer crew of adults and teen leaders. Our parents provided snacks and transportation to field trips.

You may have seen our art show in the Common Room on June 14. We had activities in art-making, music, dancing, literature, recreation and recycling in the morning from 9:30-12:30. At 1pm each day we carpoled to various art venues in the city to meet artists and interact in many different materials. At Connect Gallery we created steel sculptures with heavy magnets. At the Union for Contemporary Arts we were introduced to collagraphs, embossing and mono-printing. Touring the Hot Shops, we watched glass being blown, and we were spellbound by the magic of the potter's wheel, and asked questions to a weaver who was weaving with a tool called a

boat shuttle. We saw her use her feet to lift the threads and heard about the fibers and preparation before actual weaving begins. We saw the painting studio of Nancy Light Johnson and marveled at the number of brushes and tubes she uses. Finally, we had time to play at the exhibit called PLAY at the Kaneko. Many said the Kaneko visit was their favorite spot.

We will plan another camp next summer for the second week in June. Keep it in mind when planning summer activities. On the opposite page and below are just a few photos of our wonderful week together.

To find out what's happening in Religious Education planning, see page 17.



First Unitarian Church of Omaha

September 5 to September 6, 2015

Family Labor Day Weekend Retreat



Registration form for Church Family Retreat

Name: _____

Phone number: _____

Email address: _____

___ 1 person attending: \$138

___ 2 people attending: \$111/person

___ 3 people attending: \$99/person

___ 4 people attending: \$89/person

___ 5 or more people attending: \$78/person

\$ _____ Total

(Please note: kids 5 and under are free)

Please list the names of those in your party:

If you require financial assistance please let us know how much you need so we can make sure you are able to attend.

Please place this form in an envelope and send to the church office.

Please make your check payable to First Unitarian Church. Payments and RSVPs are due by Friday, August 21. Space reservations are first come, first served. Thank you!

Highlights

We will gather at Swanson Lodge of the Carol Joy Holling Camp, close to Mahoney State Park.

We will share games, hikes, meals, and worship. In addition, adult activities will include spiritual practices like sitting meditation and yoga (children also welcome); children's activities will include spiritual practices like walking meditation and art projects (adults also welcome). Four meals (Saturday lunch and dinner; Sunday breakfast and lunch) as well as snacks are included in the price. Family can leave immediately after lunch on Sunday, or enjoy the camp for another couple of hours before returning home. Please join us! **Fill out the form to the left and return it to the church office.**

Our Sister Church

By Rev. Frank Rivas

Our partnership with Clair Memorial United Methodist church began with the Flint Discussion Group panel on violence against African Americans. The panel energized many, but a handful of us met to examine how our church should respond. We quickly realized that the perspective of a predominantly White church in Midtown was limited so we invited a small group from Clair Memorial to join us. One thing led to another, and, after several meetings, the small group decided that it was time to engage our entire congregations.

We identified three ways to engage with one another:

- inviting one another to events at our churches (with the hope that the congregations become more comfortable with one another)
- sharing our pulpits (with the hope that we will one day share not only pulpits, but actually invite our entire church to Clair Memorial one Sunday and their entire church here one Sunday)
- hosting small groups of four members from each church to interact with one another much as our initial group did (with the hope that members from each of

these groups will meet together to discern whether our two churches have a shared calling in the greater community).

The goal is to engage with one another as people, to appreciate our differences, to broaden our perspectives, and to be more effective in our ministry to Omaha.

So far we have shared two events, a yard sale at Clair and a concert at our church. Rev. Portia and I have preached at one another's churches. And we plan to begin our first small group this summer. We anticipate many more interactions in the fall.

As Whitney Young pointed out decades ago, Sunday morning is the most segregated hour of the week. Sadly, Young's words are still true. Our relationship with Clair helps us to reach beyond this division and gives us the perspective to address broader issues in our city.

The goal is to engage with one another as people, to appreciate our differences, to broaden our perspectives, and to be more effective in our ministry to Omaha.

A Discussion About Our Building

(Continued from Page 4)

by Jack Round, president

obviously anyone who has a passion for critical thinking and/or early childhood learning (or both) or something else is welcome to dream and re-start the discussions.

Current Projects:

Driven by the perseverance and generosity of Dean Christensen, two Sanctuary globes (that have had bare bulbs for quite some time) will likely soon be restored. Dean has also helped drive the foyer improvement project (which is important because it is one of the first impressions of our church). Marie Sedlacek is helping coordinate and design the improvements (with input from the Congregation). Dean and Marie are considering improvements ranging from restoring antique furniture to developing new entrance traffic patterns for members and visitors, to a different, standardized name tag system. We greatly appreciate Dean's drive, perseverance, and generosity.

Potential Projects (Media in the Sanctuary):

Many churches have the capability to use modern audio/video technology to enhance services. We have discussed this over the last year, and given the historic nature of our sanctuary, have to take small, measured steps to research and identify potential technologies to bring media into the Sanctuary in an aesthetically compatible way. Many people I've talked to love the idea. Others like the Sanctuary just as it is. We hope to be able to implement a solution this year that is acceptable to all members.

Ongoing Maintenance:

Given that we have an older building, ongoing maintenance is a significant issue, and we appreciate the work of Dave Rosser, Jack Perry, Dean Christensen, and others, as well as the donations/bequests from members which help fund the maintenance activities. Our building is well-maintained.

Thank you!

Reminder: Using the Building

Please be sure that if you move furniture, tables and chairs around that you return everything to the one way you found it. You're more than welcome to move items, but please be kind to the people coming behind you.

Thanks!



New member: Carol Cronin. She joined the church on Sunday, May 31.

New Members



New members: Candi and Ray Walden. They joined the church on Thursday, June 4.



New members Stephen Davis and Donna Tubach-Davis. They joined the church on Sunday, June 7.

If you're interested in joining the church, please attend our UU & You class. The next one is scheduled for July 5 after the Sunday service. See page 5 for more information.

What is 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 confidential-

ity requested by the person seeking assistance.

WHAT SUPPORT CAN BE EXPECTED?

Hope in Action is there when people are dealing with a medical problem, need transportation or help around the house, can use assistance with referrals to social service agencies or just need someone to talk to about the ups and downs of life. Our response will vary depending on the type of support that is needed in our church community and what resources we have available.

Although Hope in Action is not able to respond to emergencies, short-term financial assistance may be available for lodging, food, clothing, medication, transportation and utilities. Financial disbursements are not made directly to the person making the request for assistance.

HOW TO ASK FOR SUPPORT

Requests for assistance must be made directly by the person needing help. Hope in Action does not respond to any anonymous or third-party requests for assistance.

Here are the ways you can ask for support from Hope in Action. You may send an email to hopeinaction@firstuomaha.org or use the Hope in Action link on the church website. You may call the church office and press ext. 105 to leave a telephone message for Hope in Action. Or, you may simply complete a Caring Card located in the church pews and place it in the box

in the church foyer.

WHO DECIDES WHAT SUPPORT WILL BE OFFERED?

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

What is Community Meals?

Community Meals is an outreach to people in need in our church's neighborhood.

Every Saturday members of various "First" churches and others take turns providing a hot meal and groceries to those in need at First Baptist Church (our neighbor just one block east of our church). First Unitarian Church has been part of this effort for several years. Four times a year our church "caters" and serves the meal and distributes the groceries provided by Trader Joe's. There are First Unitarian Church members who work at the site on a weekly basis and additional help is always welcome. We serve again on July 18. See page 5 for more details or call or email Diane Withem, 402-679-8916, dianewithem@gmail.com.

Parking Garage Info at First Unitarian

If you are able to park in the MidTown Crossing Garage to the west of our parking lot, it would leave our small parking lot for visitors and those who need to park closer to the building.

Here's the drill: Use any entrance to get in. Punch the button and take the ticket. Use only one exit to get out—on Farnam St. (north-side, middle-level, only one with an attendant.) Give him/her your ticket. 3 hours are free. If you're at church more than 3 hours, run your ticket through the machine that is downstairs in the Common Room for free parking or pay \$1/hour. Thank you for your help!

Note: Please do NOT move the machine. If you have any questions or concerns, contact the church office at admin@firstuomaha.org.

Share the Plate—OTOC

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. This month's recipient is OTOC (Omaha Together One Community), a local interfaith organization of which First Unitarian is a member. We encourage you to learn more about OTOC by visiting their website www.otoc.org.

Wayside Pulpit Update

Thank you to everyone who submitted quotes for us in our Wayside Pulpit. New signs will arrive Mid-July. Be sure to look for them when you visit the church.

We're Lookin' Good (Revisited)

By Dixie Lemon

In the last issue of *The Flame* I wrote a short piece saying how pleased I was that our church seems to be blossoming. That was even before Toddler Sunday! On that day Jan Wilson (Director of Religious Education) asked all toddlers and parents who were in attendance to go to the front of the church. I wish that I had counted them; they were impressive!

The next thing that will happen is that they will grow up and as they do they will be making ever-increasing demands on the institution of the church. They will need more RE space, more teaching supplies, more juice cups, more everything!

Many of the day-to-day necessities are provided for in the budget. Unforeseen expenses are not and need a cushion available. To provide for these toddlers and for their siblings, older and younger, many members of the church have made the decision to leave a portion of their estate to the church. It's very easy. Just state in your will that you wish to bequeath a fixed amount or a certain percentage of your estate to the church.

These toddlers and their grandchildren will thank you. Now I am sure you have some questions. Just ask me, Dixie Lemon, and we will figure it out. You will soon be a member of the Sarah Joslyn Society known since 2004 for its support of the church (and lovely annual luncheon). Email Dixie at dixielemon2@cox.net.



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

It's easy!! Visit
www.firstuomaha.org and
click the **AMAZON** logo

OR

Visit www.smile.amazon.com,
update **CHARITY** information
to **FIRST UNITARIAN OF
OMAHA.**

Support First Unitarian Church
with **EVERY** purchase
you make!



Pictured above are Rene Harper and Kate Wiig performing at the Speakeasy Soiree held at First Unitarian on May 29.

Special Musical Guest on July 19

Sunday, July 19, visiting artist Kristen Graves will be performing at the 10:30am service. She is making her second appearance at First Unitarian, and first performed for us two years ago. Graves is a singer, songwriter and humanitari-

an from Fairfield, CT, serving as the current Connecticut State Troubadour. Recently mentioned as 'the new generation of folk' by the *New York Times*, Kristen gives approximately 175 performances a year throughout the country. She's thrilled to return to First Unitarian before spending the next month and a half volunteering on the Cheyenne River Reservation in South Dakota. For more information, visit her website: www.kristengraves.com.



Making a “Map” for Religious Education (RE)

By Donna Neff and Kate Wiig

What “map”? An important RE project is underway! Please learn about it and get involved if you are interested! A small group of RE volunteers has been working to create a “big picture” map of RE curricula to anchor our Sunday programming. This map would cover a 3-year cycle, include knowledge deemed fundamental for Unitarian Universalism, and frame each topic in age-appropriate ways. We started by asking ourselves, *“If a child is born into our congregation, what would we want them to know and understand by the time they went off on their own?”*

Why a map? We hope this map will: provide consistency regardless of changes in church staff, volunteers, and families; provide opportunities for input on what is important to teach; help assure our program covers what matters to families; provide materials to encourage volunteers to teach and to inform families; lessen “reinventing the wheel” for planning and teaching; and provide an anchor to the RE program that is still flexible in detail and implementation.

What is “mapped” so far? To date, we have: 1) set the basic structure of the map--trimesters and a summer session each year; 2) decided on six age categories; 3) selected topics with associated “big questions” for the 3-year cycle; and 4) started developing the next level of detail--core concepts for “critical knowledge and understandings”-- through Year 2. Summer quarter, when RE attendance is often unpredictable, has been left flexible. Our DRE will consider all resources available each summer and create an “X and Religion” curriculum (e.g., “lessons of the garden”). Thus, only trimesters have assigned topics.

Here is the DRAFT map of the topics and associated “big questions” for the 3-year cycle. “Big questions” are challenging, open-ended, adaptable to all age ranges, and guide the specific curricula bought or adapted. This is only the broadest of overviews! Please contact us to get as much more detail as you wish, to give us feedback, and to join us. This is a work-in-progress.

Year 1: Sept-Nov: UU Core Values: **What does it mean to have values?**; Dec-Feb: Direct Experience of the Sacred: **Where do we find the holy?**; Mar-May: Inspiring Lives: **How can one person make a difference?**

Year 2: Sep-Nov: World Religions: **What is the role of religion?**; Dec-Feb: Critical Thinking & Reasoning: **How do you decide what you believe?**; Mar-May: We Are Part of the Universe: **How are we connected to the earth?**

Year 3: Sep-Nov: Abrahamic Religions (Judaism, Christianity, Islam)- Part 1: **How do Abrahamic religions influence culture?**; Dec-Feb: Abrahamic Religions- Part 2: **How do Abrahamic religions influence culture?**; Mar-May: UU Heritage: **Why did we become UUs?**

What next? We plan to launch this fall with teaching Year 1 of the map, while developing the detail of later years. Implementing the map will be an evolving process, but exciting! Watch for DRAFTS of “map” materials on the church website and Common Room bulletin board for your information and feedback. Our meetings are publicized and all are welcome! For more information, contact Jan Wilson (DRE), Kate Wiig, Sheri Conner, Donna Neff, or Patricia Soto.

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Bob McMeen

Nursery Manager

Jolene Dalton

Custodian

Bobby Medrano

Early Service Pianist

Stan Harper

Choir Accompanists

Reuline Nightingale

Keith Hart

Minister Emeritus

Ronald Knapp

Nominating Committee

Mary Thomas, Kim

Callaghan, Molly Dewell,

Joe Schaaf, Nadine Keith,

Dave Olson

Board meetings are held the 2nd Tuesday of each month and are open to all members.

THE FLAME

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

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Meet Our Leaders

Board Members

Jack Round (President), Jackie Anderegg (President-Elect),

Sheri Conner (Secretary), Cy Leise, Kabin Thomas,

Dean Christensen, Jack Heidel, Linda Parker

board@firstuomaha.org

Trustees of the Capital Trust

Tim Duggan (2016), Steve Hutchinson (2017), Evelyn Whitehill (2018)

Committee on Ministry

Jaime Alexander, Katrina Schmidt, Marie Sedlacek, Alan Vovolka

Ministry Team Council

Rev. Frank Rivas, Barb Herring, Amy Barlow, Jackie Anderegg

mtc@firstuomaha.org

Ministry Teams and Team Leaders

Archives - Dave Richardson

Caring - Katrina Schmidt

Chalice Guild - Kay Lynn Goldner

Community Meals - Diane Withem

Fellowship - Judith Wright, Nadine Keith & Nellie Chenoweth

Finance - Walt Jesteadt

Fundraising - Donna Neff & Kathi Oliver

Governance - Alex Nather

Hope in Action - Kim Dunovan

Hospitality Teams - Kim Callaghan

House and Grounds - Dave Rosser

Membership - Beth Conover

Office - Carolyn McNamara

Omaha Together One Community - Laurie Gift

Partner Church - Janet West

Religious Education - Sheri Conner

Women's Alliance - Nellie Chenoweth

Worship Arts Team - Megan Gustafson

Young Adult Group - Maria Wallace

YRUU - Ben Wallace & Shawne Coonfare

Church Office Closed

July 1-July 4

UU & You Class

Sunday, July 5 at 11:45am in the Whitney Young Room

See page 5 for details.

Second Saturday Playdate

Saturday, July 11 at 10am in the nursery.

See page 5 for more information.

Board Meeting

Tuesday, July 14 at 7pm in the Common Room

Flame Deadline

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

Women's Studies Covenant Group

Thursday, July 16 at 1pm in the Merritt Lounge

See page 5 for more information.

Community Meals

Saturday, July 18, offsite

See page 5 for more information.

RE Council Meeting

Sunday, July 19 at 11:45am in Jan's office

Exploring Humanistic Perspectives in Literature

Tuesday, July 28 at 7pm in the Common Room

See page 6 for information.

Private Wedding Rehearsal

Friday, July 24 at 5pm in the Sanctuary

Private Wedding

Saturday, July 25 at 4:30pm in the Sanctuary

Private Wedding

Sunday, July 26 at 3pm in the Sanctuary

Church Events

Recurring...

Lunch with or without the Minister

Thursdays at noon in the Common Room

See page 5 for details.

Women's Religious Studies Group

Meets most Thursdays at 1pm in the Merritt Lounge

See page 5 for information.

Bridge Group

Meets the 2nd and 4th Sundays of each month after the service in the Whitney Young Room or in the corner of the Common Room.

Looking ahead...

YRUU Sale

Saturday, August 1

See page 7 for details.

Labor Day Family Retreat

Sept. 5-6, offsite

See page 10 for information.

Please join us for our All-Church Retreat happening over Labor Day Weekend at the Carol Joy Holling Camp (near Mahoney State Park).
See page 10 for more information.



First Unitarian Church of Omaha
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