

September 2016

# The Flame



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

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Remembering  
Dick Holland



## Sunday Service — All are welcome

**September 4 — One Service at 10:30am**  
**“Rethinking Darkness and Light”**

Rev. Sheila Mee

Many of us go through life wanting and valuing light and trying to push away the darkness. Here is an opportunity to reevaluate the meaning of both of these in our lives and, perhaps, live more fully.

**September 11 — One Service at 10:30am**  
**“Welcome Home”**

Jan Wilson and Frank Rivas

An intergenerational service that focuses on the importance of community in story and song.

**September 18 — One Service at 10:00am**  
**“Our Town”**

The First Unitarian Players

Theatre often moves us to a moment of profound insight. We begin this church year with Act III of Thornton Wilder’s *Our Town*. Barb Ross is both the stage manager and the director. A memorable way to begin a new church year!

**September 25 — One Service at 10:00am**  
**“Our Church”**

Rev. Frank Rivas

Reflecting on “Our Town,” Rev. Frank reminds us of what lies at the foundation of our faith community.

## Sunday Forums Begin Sept. 18

**September 18 at 11:20am in the Sanctuary**  
**Forum: The Death Penalty in Nebraska**

Janet West will present the OTOC/RETAIN views on the death penalty. In the spring of 2015, members of the Nebraska legislature, the Unicameral, voted to eliminate the death penalty in Nebraska. When the act was sent to Governor Ricketts for his signature, the governor vetoed it. The vetoed act was then sent back to the Unicameral. The Unicameral voted to override the governor’s veto. Then some citizens of Nebraska collected enough signatures to place a challenge to the Unicameral action on the November 8th ballot. OTOC supports the legislative act, which substitutes life in prison with no possibility of parole for the death penalty in Nebraska. This will be an open forum where all views will be respected.

**September 25 at 11:20am in the Sanctuary**  
**Forum: Why We Need a Price on Carbon**

Frances Mendenhall will present the case for a price on fossil fuels that is 100% returned to American households, followed by a discussion.

As climate scientist James Hanson often says, “as long as there are cheap fossil fuels, somebody will burn them.”

# Rev. Elations

## Monthly Column from our Minister, Rev. Frank Rivas

This fall there will be some changes in our Sunday program. Breathe. All the changes are experimental and reversible. They represent, at least to me, an openness, a trust that our community can adjust.

The big hairy change you've probably already read or heard about. We will experiment with having one Sunday service year round. This was elicited both by low attendance at the second service and by the excitement that so many of us experienced with the full sanctuary this summer. The energy of a jam-packed sanctuary called forth the best in speakers and musicians alike.

A couple of changes follow that big change. The children's program will shift accordingly, and we will begin a Sunday adult education program as well. The adult program will offer the Unitarian Universality history class I spoke of last spring, something like the forums we had some time ago, and other options as well. We'll experiment to develop the program that best fits our congregation.

In addition, there are small modifications I plan in the worship itself. One, which I already warned you about, is lengthening the moment of silence. Silence often gives rise to our most insightful, even prayerful, moments; we would do well to practice silence together.

Further, there will be a minor adjustment to what used to be our spiritual odysseys. Instead of the odyssey of old, I will be encouraging two alternatives. One, the justice pulpit, began last year, although it's this year that I'm hearing from people who are ready to speak. In a justice pulpit, individuals are encouraged to share their personal commitments to justice and the changes they have witnessed in their target audience and in themselves. In the spiritual moment, people are encouraged to share not their entire spiritual journey, but rather one moment that profoundly affected their understanding.

There are jokes about moving at the speed of church. The jokes point to a truth, of course; churches often seem decades or even centuries behind the culture as a whole. But when there is trust, the fear of change loses its hold. We are blessed to share such a moment with one another.

Frank

## Church Events

### CommUnity Night

*Friday, Sept. 2 at 5:30pm in the Common Room.* If you haven't participated before, CommUnity Night is a fun, laid-back all church event. We gather for a potluck of side items (the main dish will be provided by R.E.) and we don't worry about who is bringing what. Kids are free to play. If you can't bring anything or you are feeling too rushed to grab or make something last minute COME ANYWAY! There is always plenty of food and what we really want is YOUU!

### Mystic Sojourn CUUPS

*Sunday, Sept. 4 at 6:30pm in the Common Room.* We will celebrate the change of seasons and ending of summer with our own ritual honoring Persephone, who will be returning to the underworld soon. Ritual starts at 7pm followed by a pot luck dinner.

### YRUU Parent/Youth Meeting

*Wednesday, Sept. 7 at 7pm in the Common Room.* See page 10 for more information about our Youth Group Program.

### Tolerant Atheist Group

*Thursday, Sept. 8 at 7pm in the Common Room.* We will be viewing the Star Trek episode *Who Watches the Watchers?* After viewing, discussion will be framed by a series of thought-provoking questions, which will hopefully keep you pondering the ways of the universe long after the evening is done. As usual, the doors will open at 6pm for those interested in "Bring Your Own Dinner" and socializing.

### Memorial Service for Shelton Hendricks

*Saturday, Sept. 10 at 10am.*

### "Peace, Love & Tubstanding Tour" Performance

*Saturday, Sept. 10 at 7pm in the Sanctuary.* See page 6 for details.

### Welcome Home Ice Cream Social

*Sunday, Sept. 11 during coffee hour.* This event is put on by our Fellowship Team and all are invited! Reconnect with your church friends after summer.

### Women's Alliance

*Monday, Sept. 12 at 6:30 in the Common Room.* Women, and those who identify as women, are invited to attend with socializing and beverages starting at 6:30pm and dinner following at 7pm. The speaker will be Allison from Youth Emergency Services. We ask for \$15 which goes to the cost of dinner, the Merritt Education Fund, the Partner Church scholarship, and various activities at First Unitarian. If this will be your first time attending a WA get-together, please be our guest! Our dinner selection will be from Mangia Italiana: meat lasagna, cheese ravioli with alfredo sauce, tossed green salad and parmesan rolls. Desserts will be provided by Nellie Chenoweth and Kathi Oliver. RSVP via phone: 402-214-2718. Please leave a message. RSVP via email: [kathryn.oliver@outlook.com](mailto:kathryn.oliver@outlook.com). Please RSVP with your preference of meat or veggie meal.

### The Women's Religious Study Covenant Group

*Thursday, Sept. 15 at 1pm in the Merritt Lounge.* This group meets on the third Thursday of each month. Rae Barry will be our facilitator for the 8th chapter, "Strangers", in *Listening Hearts*, the current book we're reading. All self-identified women are most welcome. If you are interested in the Covenant Group, please contact Harriet Major at 402-391-0248 or [hmajor323@cox.com](mailto:hmajor323@cox.com).

### Adult Game Night—New Night!

*Saturday, Sept 17 at 6:30pm in the Common Room.* Join the young adults for some fun and games. No need to RSVP. Just show up for some fun!

### Arts and Crafts Night

*Sunday, Sept. 18 at 7pm in the Common Room.* Bring your current project and supplies and join us for some artistic fellowship! We will meet from 7-9 pm on the third Sunday of the month in the Common Room. Contact Kate Godfrey at [coachkate@cox.net](mailto:coachkate@cox.net) or (402) 880-1327 for details.

### People's Film Festival

*Monday, Sept. 19 at 7pm in the Common Room.* We will show *The Day After Peace*, the second award-winning documentary film from Jeremy Gilley, which follows his work towards a globally observed day of ceasefire and non-violence. But even after the member states of the UN unanimously adopt Peace Day, the struggle isn't over. As years pass, there's not a single ceasefire.

## Church Events Continued...

### Board Talk Back

*Sunday, Sept. 25 at 11:00am 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.

### First Steps

*Sunday, Sept. 25 at 11:15am in the Whitney Young Room.* Gather at the visitors table in the Common 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. Future dates: 10/23, 11/20, 12/18.

### OWL Classes Begins

*Sunday, Sept. 25.* See page 10.

### Book Club

*Monday, Sept. 26 at 7pm in the Merritt Lounge.* We will discuss Mothers, Tell Your Daughters by Bonnie Jo Campbell. For more information, contact Dave at [richardson.david@westside66.net](mailto:richardson.david@westside66.net).

### Omaha Polyamory Discussion Group

*Monday, Sept. 26 at 7pm in the Common Room.* We meet every fourth Monday from 7pm-9pm. We invite any who embrace and support ethical non-monogamy-based loving relationships. We strive to offer a safe place to meet and discuss topics, issues and hardships we face as polyamorous individuals and families. If you have any

questions, please contact Susan at [iamdosh@msn.com](mailto:iamdosh@msn.com).

### Taoism Discussion Group

*Tuesday, Sept. 27 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, [gerickson03@yahoo.com](mailto:gerickson03@yahoo.com).

### Recurring Events

#### Women's Religious Studies Group

This group meets every Thursday, except not the 3rd week of the month at 1pm in the Merritt Lounge. New members welcome. We are reading a book on Native American spirituality by Joseph Bruchac, Our Stories Remember: American History, Culture, and Values Through Story Telling. Our next book is The Battle for God by Karen Armstrong. For information, please contact Neva at [hansen.cozine@gmail.com](mailto:hansen.cozine@gmail.com).

#### Dungeons and Dragons Group Meeting

*Meets the 1st and 3rd Sunday of each month in the Common Room at noon.* All D&D role players are invited. If you have questions, contact Roman at [rmnoriegal@cox.net](mailto:rmnoriegal@cox.net), 402-769-4260.

#### Bridge Group

*Meets the 2nd and 4th Sunday of each month in the Conference Room at*

*11:30am.* If you've played before, come for some entertainment and time at the game table. Novices welcome too. Contact Scott at [scott.kemper@gmail.com](mailto:scott.kemper@gmail.com).

### Meditation

Tuesdays at 8am in the sanctuary. Please join us for meditation and mindfulness practice. This informal group meets every Tuesday and everyone is welcome to attend. Come to relax, breathe, or just enjoy some peace and quiet in our beautiful sanctuary.

### Young Adult Discussion Group

*First Sunday of each month at 11:30am at Delice (3201 Farnam St #6112).* Calling all people aged 18-35! We have a once-a-month young adult discussion group aimed for people within this age range. We'll be covering any topic that we think is relevant to who we are and our lives.

### Coming Up in October Pathways

*Sundays, Oct. 9, 16, 23, 30.* This class explores who we are and what we believe and provides opportunities for members to share with newcomers what it means to be a Unitarian Universalist. Whether you are new to the church, or have been coming for a while, this is a great opportunity to learn more about this community. Questions? Or want to RSVP? Contact Carrie at [coordinator@firsttuomaha.org](mailto:coordinator@firsttuomaha.org).

### Heart & Hand Auction

*Friday, Oct. 28 at 5:30pm.* See pages 14 and 15 for all the details.

## **“Peace, Love & Tubastanding Tour” Performance with Kabin Thomas**

*Saturday, September 10, 2016 at 7 p.m.  
First Unitarian Church of Omaha*

Take a humble custodian...add Peace, Love,  
Understanding and TUBA...and together, you get magic!

Kabin Thomas has experienced acts of racism his entire life. Instead of responding with fear and anger, Kabin chooses love and forgiveness. He has created a positive, upbeat and inspirational message of inclusion and tolerance. As an actor and former music professor, Kabin expresses his message by playing his tuba and telling stories of peace, love and understanding.

According to Kabin, “Our country needs racial healing and a better understanding of each other. There is a tension and mistrust in the air, fueled by greedy media and hate mongers wanting to feast on our fear and vulnerabilities. I want to do something about it.

“We are all decorations, colored by God, nature and love. No hate speech or hateful symbols can change that.”

After serving in the Marines and the Navy, Kabin earned his undergraduate degree at University of Michigan and graduate degree from University of Wisconsin. He is a former music professor who went to Los Angeles to work as an actor for a number of years and moved to Omaha in 2013 after spending a year as a game show host in Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates. He is writing a book, “The Adventures of Tuba-Man,” a collection of stories about his adventures – and misadventures – throughout his life that have led to important life lessons.

Kabin’s “Peace, Love & Tubastanding Tour” is a performance of his humorous, honest, and poignant stories, along with music that you’ve probably never heard performed on tuba! This free performance will be held at First Unitarian Church at 7 p.m. on Saturday, September 10. Please join us!

See the Facebook event, by going here:

<https://www.facebook.com/events/1784688638481879/>



## Outside Opportunities

### Retirees Group: Retain the Repeal—Event at Second Unitarian Church

You are invited to Retirees Group at Second Unitarian Church for a presentation focused on Retaining the Repeal of the Death Penalty in Nebraska on Tuesday, September 13 from 1pm to 2pm. Our guest will be Marylyn Felion, who shares her experience of accompanying Robert Williams to the electric chair, the last person executed in Nebraska. Marylyn began writing to Robert Williams while he was on death row. After two years of correspondence, she was allowed private visits as a Sister of Mercy chaplain. She listened as he came to grips with the horror and brutality of killing two women. Not long before he was executed, Robert asked Marylyn to accompany him to the death chamber. She agreed and walked behind him. Second Unitarian Church is located at 3012 South 119th Street in Omaha. Retirees Group meets monthly for socialization and learning. You don't have to be retired to attend—all are welcome!

### Elders for the Earth: A Retreat in the Spirit of Chautauqua

October 3 - October 6 at Mahoney State Park. Geared to those 50 and over, but all are welcome. Featured speakers: Jane Kleeb, Chuck Hassebrook, Ken Haar, Nancy Williams, Susan Whitfield, Don Wilhite and Kim Morrow. This is a multi-day interdisciplinary gathering including fellowship, lectures, music, the arts, being in nature and even some fun in the midst of the climate crisis. The cost is \$110 for the full retreat which includes meals but not lodging. Single-day passes are also available. For more information, visit: <http://www.elders4theearth.com> or call 402-431-2238.

## Ways to Help

### Wakonda Tutoring

First Unitarian will join Clair Memorial Methodist Church again this year in providing tutors to work with the fourth grade classes at Wakonda Elementary School. The time slot will be 2:00 - 3:05pm, Monday - Friday. The start date has not yet been set and there will be an orientation meeting with the Wakonda leadership ahead of time. If you are interested in participating for one or more days a week, please contact Jack Heidel ([jackheidel@yahoo.com](mailto:jackheidel@yahoo.com)).

### 3rd Annual Blessing Bag Day is scheduled for Saturday, November 5th at The Inclusive Life Center

(1941 South 42nd St. Suite 124, Omaha)

10am-12pm will be item drop-off time with 12pm-2pm being used to build the bags! We will have 100 nylon draw string bags to put each of t

he blessing bags into! We are excited about this addition. These bags will be handed out via First Unitarian Church and a few will be given to Pastor Kenith and The Siena/Francis House. We need your help, your time, your donations, your help finding resources for these items is needed. The shelters are tracking higher numbers than usual for this time of year, and they are seeing more mothers with children.

This year we are also collecting scrubs (new, newer, and used.) On blessing bag day we will collect ANY donations of used/new clothing that will be given directly to the Siena/Francis House.

For details, please visit [www.inclusivelife.org/blessingbags](http://www.inclusivelife.org/blessingbags) or visit our FaceBook event for details: <https://www.facebook.com/events/321423061535132/>.

## First Unitarian Church to Begin Single-Service Trial

During the August 9<sup>th</sup> meeting, the First Unitarian Church Board voted to move to a single-service format beginning September 18<sup>th</sup> to run through January 1<sup>st</sup> on a trial basis. This decision was based on feedback from the musicians, administrative and RE staff, volunteers most affected, the congregants attending during the summer, those at our Leadership Retreat, and our Board Talk Back session. A congregational meeting and vote will be held no later than December 4<sup>th</sup> on whether we stay with a single service or move back to two services on January 8<sup>th</sup>.

Sheri Conner, Board Member

## Sunday Mornings Starting September 18th

As mentioned above, beginning Sept. 18<sup>th</sup>, we will have one service at 10am. The Sunday service will last one hour. Coffee Time will begin at 11am in the Common Room and end promptly at 11:45am so that the Hospitality Team can begin clean up. There will be no coffee available after 11:45am.

Each Sunday a forum will be held at 11:20am in the Sanctuary. The forum will last for 45 minutes. Please note: drinks and food are not allowed in the Sanctuary.

In addition to the Sunday sermon title, music for each Sunday will be posted on the website and listed in the enews each week.

## We Have a Lot to Be Proud Of

*By Jackie Anderegg, Church Board President*

We have a lot to be proud of. Whitney Young, a black man who was a famous civil rights activist, was a member of our church. He and Kabin Thomas are our mighty minority. Newton Mann, a minister who filled our pulpit was the first minister in the United States to preach evolution. Imagine the courage that took in a conservative Midwestern state. We have a lot to be proud of. The Unitarians, both ministers and congregants, were the largest religious denomination represented in the Civil Rights Movement. We have a lot to be proud of. In the early 1900s, a Unitarian white woman named Mary White Ovington was one of the founders of the NAACP and later, the Urban League. We have a lot to be proud of. Internationally, going back centuries, the Unitarians have stood up when justice was biased. I do not believe this history, locally, nationally and internationally, obligates us to act. I think an easy yes is a weak commitment. I think an easy no is thoughtless opposition. I do believe our history obligates us to consider the big, tough questions and to debate the action. And this we did here. Approximately 90% of our congregation that voted supports the Black Lives Matter movement in our church. We stood up and we valued the debate. We have a lot to be proud of, and I am proud to be your president this year.

# State of the Church Report

*By Jackie Anderegg, Church Board President*

Following the State of the Union address by our President last January, I decided to do State of Our Church Conversations with all of the members of our church, no matter how long it takes or what I have to do to track you all down, including following you home. If I live long enough, I will be coming for you. So far, I have interviewed 17 people and will continue to give these reports yearly. The questions I have asked and will be asking are the following:

- On a scale of 1-10, how satisfied are you in our church?
- What do you see as the positives?
- What do you think needs work?
- Do you believe we deal with conflict or differences directly and respectfully?
- Do you feel appreciated for what you do for our church?
- What do you think is important for our future?

So far, on a scale of 1-10, with the question “ **How satisfied are you with our church?**” I had one person rate an 11, three people rated us a 10, one person a 9 and 1/2 and six people ranked a 9. Overall 11 people gave us a 9 or higher, three people gave us an 8 and three people gave us a 7.

**“What do you see as the positives?”** we got universally high marks for our minister, our RE program, our camaraderie, diversity of ideas, “fresh blood”, and our level of enthusiastic commitment. Very high overall impressions.

**“What do you think needs work?”** Clarity about our mission, recruiting older people (isn't that interesting?), need programs designed for older adults, getting new members involved, younger people in leadership positions, more activism, willingness to experiment more, take advantage of the creative thinkers among us, more critical thinking, getting the word out about our church, appeals to younger people, ways to reach out to lapsed members, creating more unity by having one service and coffee hour, more careful listening, more informal social gatherings.

**“Dealing with conflict respectfully and directly?”** We got universally high marks for this, but I haven't interviewed everyone yet, so that may change, but there were no dissenters with this one.

**“Do you feel appreciated for what you do?”** Very high marks, and it was almost universally positive, although as we all know that can range on any given day.

**“What do you think is important for our future?”** Very, very interesting. Having a vision twenty years out, having big goals, the courage to be more creative, more social activism to appeal to the changes in our young people and to stay consistent with our past, very carefully replacing Frank unless he agrees to honor the until-death-do-us-part section of his contract, improving our relationship with the UUA, planning for future space needs, and a significant emphasis on planning for our financial future with suggestions about having a small group of members assigned to approach donors more directly and a change in our culture over being bashful about our financial future, and making an effort to creative a financial enterprises for the benefit of our future. Some concern over becoming complacent with our overall satisfaction and a concern that our future cannot afford our complacency. I strongly agree. Please feel free to approach me if you would like to have this conversation or e-mail or phone if you would like. This is very informal, very anonymous and very interesting. If I don't approach you, it is because you look busy, or rushed, or I am on my way somewhere. Email me at [janderegg@cox.net](mailto:janderegg@cox.net).

## OWL: Get Your Classes in!

Through the efforts of both UU congregations, we have a great supply of facilitators at all levels to provide OWL to our members and friends! The OWL curriculum, with trained facilitators, teaches children confidence when making decisions about their bodies, answers questions about development, and involves parents and families in discussions about values. To learn more about OWL (there are different age levels) please visit: <http://www.uua.org/re/owl>.

Since we offered elementary OWL at Second Unitarian last year, First Unitarian is taking the lead this year to catch the rest of the children who were not able to attend. We are also offering middle school OWL and want to offer a young adult/adult OWL.

**Kindergarten & 1st Grade:** Requires parent permission and mandatory attendance to a parent meeting scheduled for Sunday, Sept. 25 at noon in the Upstairs Classroom. Class runs from Oct. 2 to Nov. 20.

**5th & 6th Grades:** Requires parent permission and mandatory attendance to a parent meeting scheduled for Sunday, Sept. 25 at noon in Jan's office. Class runs from Oct. 2 to Nov. 20.

**7th-9th Grades:** We will have a mandatory parent meeting during YRUU on Wednesday, September 29 at 7pm at First Unitarian. At that time we will also be discussing when and where to hold the meetings.

Contact Jan at [dre@firstuomaha.org](mailto:dre@firstuomaha.org) to sign up your kids for the OWL classes.

**Young Adult/Adult OWL:** We would like to offer this class (probably this spring) but would like to know which one has more demand. Young adult OWL is for those who are primarily still single. Adult OWL is for those who are older or partnered. Please let your DRE know which one you are interested in. They are both around 14 sessions.

## Wednesday Nights YRUU

Young Religious Uus is a joint group of youth from First and Second Unitarian Universalist Churches. Youth from grades 7-12 are invited to join.

Our youth love this group because it offers acceptance and belonging while allowing them to question. Youth are free to be themselves in a truly supportive community.

**Welcome Back** Parent/Youth Meeting  
Wed. Sept. 7, 7:00 PM  
Common Room

updates: [facebook.com/groupsomahayruu](https://facebook.com/groupsomahayruu)

### Coming of Age

The Coming of Age program gives youth the opportunity to explore their own beliefs. With a trusted mentor, they develop a Credo; a statement of belief.

This is available with coordination of the DRE to anyone who is 9th grade or above.

contact: Jan Wilson  
[dre@firstuomaha.org](mailto:dre@firstuomaha.org)

## A Note from Jan, Director of Religious Education

Attendance in July for children and youth in RE increased from 38 for July in 2015 to 95 in the same month for 2016. We are pleased to have an exciting RE program in the summertime and look forward to increased activity in the fall.

We welcomed new faces to our teaching schedule. Jen McEvoy and Elaine Wells shared firsthand international experiences with our students. The RE Council has increased in participation as well. We value our collaborative RE model and value the varied input that makes us strong. Our gardener in RE, Jody Petrow, has had the children's garden overflowing with herbs and vegetables. It has been a pleasure to offer our organic produce to the congregation at coffee hour.

As an additional special interest activity, kids have been fascinated with rocks, minerals, and fossils. We welcome donations of interesting rocks from the congregation. We will be tumbling Montana moss agates soon in a doted rock tumbler. Families are invited to attend the Omaha Rock and Mineral Show at Westside Middle School after church on October 2.

We look forward to a new season studying World Religions, and building our program in all areas.

If you have questions or ideas, please contact me at [dre@firstuuomaha.org](mailto:dre@firstuuomaha.org).

## Overview of Sunday School and Activities Beginning 9/18

Birth-Kindergarten — 9:30am—12:30pm. Nursery open. Parent/guardian sign in and out.

Kindergarten-Grade 5 — \*10:00—11:00am. Class Time. Formal curriculum and teachers. K-2nd grade meets north classroom (Jan's office). 3rd-5th meets middle classroom of RE wing. After class time, we will have special programming.

Grades 6-12 — \*10:00—12pm. Spielbound time! Game choice and discussion with teachers. Youth at church walk over to SpielboundGame Café with Ryan Cook meeting at west RE door. Otherwise, parent responsible for drop-off.



*Salsa Sunday on August 14th was a hit!*

## 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 depend-

ing 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. You may call the church office and press ext. 105 to leave a telephone message for Hope in Action. Or, you may simply complete a Caring Card located in the church pews and place it in the box in the church foyer.

### WHO DECIDES WHAT SUPPORT WILL BE OFFERED?

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

## Community Meals

Every Saturday churches in our area join together to cook a meal, serve their neighbors and bring a sense of community to our neighborhood at First Baptist Church. Our church has committed to the following Saturdays for Community Meals in 2016:

**November 12**

**December 3**

**December 24**

Please mark your calendar. We will need people to help with desserts, cooking, serving and cleaning up. Thank you to everyone who has already helped with meals earlier this year.

Thanks!

Diane Withem,  
[dianewithem@gmail.com](mailto:dianewithem@gmail.com)  
Community Meals Leader

## Share the Plate This Month: Project Everlast

Each month one-half of the loose currency collected in the offering plate is donated to a cause that advances important principles of Unitarianism. Our Share the Plate recipient for September is **Project Everlast**, a grassroots effort that promotes using community resources to improve a youth's opportunities and networks for housing, transportation, and health care. Please visit their website at <http://www.projecteverlast.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!

## Join OTOC on September 1 to End Detention of Women and Children Seeking Asylum

Join leaders of OTOC, Sisters of Mercy, Servants of Mary, Notre Dame Sisters and several community organizations on Thursday, Sept. 1 from Noon to 12:45pm at 7126 Pacific (outside offices of Rep. Brad Ashford) to kick-off a campaign to end the indefinite detention of Central American women and children who are seeking asylum. There are more humane and cost effective ways for these women and children to live while their asylum cases are being evaluated and decided by a judge. Go to [www.OTOC.org](http://www.OTOC.org) for more information and to contact OTOC with questions.

## Introducing the Choir Director: William Miller

William, a native of Valley, NE, has a long history in liturgical music having served as Choir Director at First Presbyterian in Council Bluffs from 1992-1995 and then at Benson Presbyterian from 1995 to 2015. Aside from choral conducting, he directed and participated in both organizations' hand bell choirs. His undergraduate degree is in Voice Performance from the University of Nebraska at Omaha. A member of the Opera Omaha chorus since 1991, William has performed in over 40 productions with the company. A skilled keyboardist, he has accompanied vocal soloists and choirs as well as performed in instrumental ensembles.

When not pursuing his love of music, he has held several positions at local companies including Vice President of Procurement at First Data, Senior Director of Strategic Sourcing at West Corporation and is currently employed at Union Pacific Railroad as a Director of IT Strategic Sourcing.

Choir rehearsals begin Wednesday, Sept. 14 at 7pm in the Sanctuary. Want to join the choir? Please email William at [choirdirector@firstuomaha.org](mailto:choirdirector@firstuomaha.org).



# HALLOWEEN "Heart & Hand" Auction Party

Friday, October 28<sup>th</sup>, 2016 6-10 p.m.

At First Unitarian Church 3114 Harney St.

A major FUNdraiser for the church operations budget

Eat, Party, Shop!



Delicious Food!  
Fall Favorites  
Potluck

Cash Bar: beer, wine, soda  
(lemonade, coffee, etc. free)

What will YOU Donate??



## Auction Categories

### 1. Gourmet Gatherings

(dinners, dining out)

### 2. Giving & Receiving

(services, lessons, a helping hand)

### 3. Going Wild

(games, activities, sports, outings)

### 4. Great Goods

(tempting gifts & merchandise)

### Mark Your Calendar!

Featuring MC/Auctioneer:

Kabin Thomas!!

Enjoy a fun eve & support  
First UU!

### Casual-Informal-Fun!

FREE Childcare by reservation  
(infant-5th grade)

### Costumes Encouraged (but optional)

Prizes for Best Costumes!

Door Prizes!

### Big Silent Auction!

followed by

### Fun Live Auction!

Browse the growing Auction  
Catalog & pre-bid on-line

To DONATE items for Auction

To VOLUNTEER to help out

Email [auction@firstuuomaha.org](mailto:auction@firstuuomaha.org)

Visit the Auction Area (Common Room) Go to the website (<http://www.firstuuomaha.org>)

Donation deadline is October 24 (sooner is better, of course)

To SIGN UP for the potluck or childcare

To GET A BIDDER # for early shopping

Call Donna 402-699-3183

## Party! Pumpkins! Potluck! Purchases! Put your “Heart” and “Hand” in our service auction!

Save the date: **Friday, October 28th, 6-10 pm** (at the church) is our **Halloween Heart & Hand Auction Party!** This is our major fall social event and FUNdraiser for the church operating budget. The heart part of the auction is when donors offer seats for sale for social activities through the year, or donate classy items for purchase at the Auction itself. The hand part is when donors offer their skills and time through lessons or help with projects. Of course, both heart & hand are involved for the many helpers needed to pull off this big event!

Now is the time to ponder donations and volunteer to help. What might you offer to pep up our social lives, jump start a new hobby, or tackle a project on that endless to do list? What intriguing items might you donate to tempt party goers into a shopping frenzy? As donations are received, they are posted to our on-line Auction Catalog, so monitor it frequently. The Auction Party itself features delicious food (Fall Favorites potluck and desserts), a cash bar, door prizes, crazy costumes (for those so inclined), a room full of silent-auction delights, and a fun live auction run by our MC/ Auctioneer Kabin Thomas and his cadre of assistants. Free childcare (by reservation) provided for infant through 5th grade with Halloween fun there, too.

Our operating budget calls for \$17,000 from FUNdraising to balance, most of which comes from the Auction. Luckily, these Auction parties are as fun as they are successful! Last year we had over 155 items auctioned and met our goal thanks to the many generous donors, buyers, and auction helpers who supported our church. With your help, this year’s Auction will be equally fun and successful!

Places to go for Auction information and action: the Auction flyer in this Flame (see previous page), the Auction Table at church (starting Sept. 11), the on-line Auction Website (access through the church website or directly at [www.auctria.com/auction/HH Auction2016](http://www.auctria.com/auction/HH Auction2016)), email [auction@firstuomaha.org](mailto:auction@firstuomaha.org) or call Donna (402-699-3183). See you October 28th!



## Richard Holland, 1921-2016

By *Dave Richardson*

As the city pays tribute to one of its most beloved philanthropists, much will be made of Dick's contributions to the arts and public affairs. It is impossible to calculate the impact he has had on our city. This tribute will focus primarily on Dick's contributions to our church.

In his memoir Truth and Other Tall Tales Dick tells a favorite family story of how his mother and grandmother became members of First Unitarian. Dick relates that his mother, Ellen, left Sacred Heart Catholic Church as a young girl after being publicly scolded by the priest for being late to her confirmation ceremony. Her mother encouraged her to find a church she liked, and as Dick notes she found "friendlier surroundings" at First Unitarian where she and her mother became members. Later his mother met her husband Edward at First Unitarian where they were soon married.

Dick and his late wife Mary joined the church in 1953. They were active in several committees and programs including the Finance Committee, The Women's Alliance and numerous social activities. The program that Dick most enjoyed was the Hoagland Lecture Series. The series, sponsored by First Unitarian, brought prominent public intellectuals to Omaha. He notes that many of the speakers helped shape his views on cultural, political, economic and ethical issues. These issues became the main focus of his philanthropic efforts after his retirement from his advertising agency in 1983.

In 2006 he conceived of a lecture series that could do for the city what the Hoagland series did for him. It was Dick's wish that no admission would be charged and no "good will" offerings would be taken up, much like Sarah Joslyn's original vision that the Joslyn Art Museum would always be free to the public. Beginning in 2006 with the appearance of noted ethicist Peter Singer, Dick's vision became reality. Twice yearly Omahans are treated to lectures by some of the nation's most prominent thinkers on a wide variety of national and international topics.

The lectures have become a "don't miss" event for many Omahans. Since its inception, at Dick's request, First Unitarian has been identified as the sponsor of the event. Dick has also contributed generously to maintaining and improving our building.

Long-time members may recall that formerly there was a derelict building where our parking lot is located. In the late 1990s Dick paid to purchase and raze that eyesore. This dramatically changed the landscape and esthetics of the west side of our building. In 2006 Dick underwrote the complete renovation of the Common Room. This was an extensive and long overdue project. The renovation has created a much more hospitable and inviting location.

Dick maintained close friendships with many members and friends of First Unitarian throughout his life. His sense of humor and candor were a welcome addition at church meetings as well as at public appearances.

It is not an exaggeration to say he may be the finest humanitarian this town has ever produced. Of the many members of First Unitarian who, over the years, have contributed much to this community, Dick is right at the top of that list along with people such as philanthropist Sarah Joslyn and Civil Rights leader Whitney Young.

In the words of the Bard "I doubt we shall see his like again."



## Pilgrimage to Firtosmartonos, Transylvania, Romania by Three Members of the First Unitarian

*By Nancy Scott, Kandelyn Scott, and Janet West*

In July 2016, Nancy Scott, Kandelyn Scott, and Janet West took a pilgrimage trip to Transylvania, Romania. They visited a number of Transylvanian Unitarian historic sites and joined the Unitarian residents of Firtosmartonos, Transylvania in celebrating the 110-year anniversary of the Unitarian village church.

First Unitarian Church of Omaha has had a Partner Church relationship with the Unitarian village of Firtosmartonos, Transylvania, Romania since 1992. Members and friends of First Unitarian have visited Firtosmartonos eight times since the Partnership began in 1992. Over the years, the Omaha church has sent money to help maintain the village church building and the parsonage. Since 2005, the members and friends of the Omaha church have provided partial scholarships for the village young people to attend residential high schools and colleges. In October 2013, the minister of the village church, Rev. Katalin Szasz-Cserey, and her husband, Boti, visited our Omaha church.

Nancy, Kandy, and Janet flew into Kolozsvar (Cluj), Transylvania, Romania. Kolozsvar is the “capital” of Transylvanian Unitarianism. The office of the bishop of the Unitarian churches of Transylvania and Hungary is located in Kolozsvar. The three pilgrims toured the Unitarian administration building which houses the office of the bishop, one of the two Unitarian high schools in Transylvania, and the Unitarian seminary. They also attended a Sunday church service at the 1st Unitarian Church of Kolozsvar.

After attending church in Kolozsvar, they were driven to Torda. Their translator, driver, and solver-of-all problems, Gabor Ugron, lives in Marovasarhely, Transylvania and has been the translator for the pilgrims from Omaha since 2010. He also accompanied Rev. Katalin and Boti when they visited Omaha.

Torda is the site at which the Edict of Torda was declared by King John Sigismund, the king of Transylvania and the only Unitarian king ever. The edict is a Proclamation of Religious Freedom. Francis David, the

founder of Transylvanian Unitarianism in 1568, was an advisor to King John and the organizer of the meeting (diet). After King John died in 1571, Francis David was arrested for his non-Trinitarian beliefs. He was imprisoned and tortured in a 13th century citadel in Deva, Transylvania. He died in the citadel in 1579. While in Deva, Nancy, Kandy, and Janet toured that same citadel, which has been semi-restored.

When pilgrims from First Unitarian visited the village, Firtosmartonos, in 1993, there were about 400 ethnic Hungarian residents in the village —all Unitarians. Now, there are only 140 ethnic Hungarians villagers, many of whom are elderly women. Rev. Kati and her husband, Boti, have an eight-year-old son, Mate, who is the youngest Unitarian person in the village. (There are a few Roma families in the village and surrounding area who do not attend the Unitarian church.)

The 110-year anniversary celebration of the church was a village homecoming. The day started with a church service and ended with an all-night party of grilled food, beverages, singing, and dancing. After the church service, many of the returnees visited the village cemetery to clean the grave sites and plant new flowers. There was also an all-village luncheon with food prepared by the women of the village and served by the village young people. During and after the luncheon, a band played traditional and modern music interspersed with humorous stories told by one of the men returning for the homecoming. Students from the Unitarian high school in Szekelykeresztur, dressed in traditional costumes and danced Hungarian folk dances. As a part of the celebration, an entire room of the village school was devoted to a display of Romanian embroidery using traditional Hungarian heritage motifs, as well as some Romanian motifs, done by a woman who grew up in Firtosmartonos. She explained the meanings of the designs for everyone. The striking red and white Hungarian embroidery is the main ornament in every Unitarian church we visited.

Before the Omaha visitors left the village the next day, Nancy taught the village youngsters how to make pounded flower prints using fresh flowers, hammers and rocks to transfer the shapes and colors of the flowers to fabric.

Nancy, Kandy, and Janet thoroughly enjoyed being a part of the village celebration.

**Minister**

Frank Rivas

[minister@firstuomaha.org](mailto:minister@firstuomaha.org)**Director of Religious Education**

Jan Wilson

[dre@firstuomaha.org](mailto:dre@firstuomaha.org)**Membership Coordinator**

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Catharine Dixon

[admin@firstuomaha.org](mailto:admin@firstuomaha.org)**Organist**

Pat Will

**Early Service Pianist**

Stan Harper

**Minister Emeritus**

Ronald Knapp

**Nursery Coordinator**

Jenny Hastings

**Custodian**

Bobby Medrano

**Nominating Committee**

Mary Thomas, Kim Callaghan,

Molly Dewell, Nadine Keith,

Dave Olson, Carol Ramsey,

Ben Wallace

**THE FLAME**

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

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**First Unitarian Church**[www.firstuomaha.org](http://www.firstuomaha.org)

402-345-3039

# Meet Our Leaders

**Board Members**

Jackie Anderegg (President), Alan Vovolka (President-Elect), Sheri Conner, Joe Schaaf (Secretary), Linda Parker, Kabin Thomas, Floyd Prine, Cy Leise

[board@firstuomaha.org](mailto:board@firstuomaha.org)**Trustees of the Capital Trust**

Steve Hutchinson (2017), Evelyn Whitehill (2018), Dean Christensen (2019)

**Committee on Ministry**

Skip Ciulla, Sandy Host, Marie Sedlacek

**Ministry Team Council**

Rev. Frank Rivas, Nellie Chenoweth, Alan Vovolka, Diane Withem

[mtc@firstuomaha.org](mailto:mtc@firstuomaha.org)**Ministry Teams and Team Leaders**

Archives—Dave Richardson

Black Lives Matter—Rene Harper

Caring—Louise Jeffrey

Chalice Guild—Kay Lynn Goldner

Community Meals—Diane Withem

Fellowship—Judith Wright, Nadine Keith &amp; Nellie Chenoweth

Finance—Walt Jesteadt

Fundraising—Donna Neff

Hope in Action—Kim Dunovan

Hospitality Teams—Carolyn McNamara

House and Grounds—Pierce Carpenter

Membership—Caitlin &amp; Tom Seguin

Neighborhood Ministry—Royal Carleton

Office—Carolyn McNamara

Omaha Together One Community—Laurie Gift

Partner Church—Janet West

Religious Education—Sheri Conner

Social Justice—Lori Schaaf

Women's Alliance—Nellie Chenoweth

Worship Arts Team—Megan Gustafson

Young Adult Group—Anne Rodriguez

YRUU—Adam Sagert and Caroline Miller

Our next Teams Meeting is scheduled for Saturday, Oct. 1 at 2pm in the Common Room.

## Church Events

### CommUnity Night

Friday, Sept. 2 at 5:30pm in the  
Common Room  
See page 4 for details.

### Young Adult Discussion Group

Sunday, Sept. 4 at 11:30am at Delice  
(offsite)  
See page 5 for details.

### Mystic Sojourn CUUPS

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

### YRUU Parent Meeting

Wednesday, Sept. 7 at 7pm in the  
Common Room  
See page 10 for details.

### Private Wedding

Friday, Sept. 9 at 4pm in the  
Sanctuary

### Memorial Service for Shelton Hendricks

Saturday, Sept. 10 at 10am in the  
Sanctuary

### “Peace, Love & Tubastanding Tour” Performance

Saturday, Sept. 10 at 7pm in the  
Sanctuary. See page 6 for details.  
information.

### Welcome Home Ice Cream Social

Sunday, Sept. 11 at 11:30am in the  
Common Room  
See page 4 for details.

### Women’s Alliance

Monday, Sept. 12 at 6:30 in the  
Common Room  
See page 4 for information.

### Board Meeting

Tuesday, Sept. 13 at 7pm in the  
Common Room

### Flame Deadline

Submit your newsletter articles to  
[admin@firstuuumaha.org](mailto:admin@firstuuumaha.org) by  
Sept. 15 at noon.

### The Women’s Religious Study Covenant Group

Thursday, Sept. 15 at 1pm in the  
Merritt Lounge  
See page 4.

### Private Wedding

Saturday, Sept. 17 at 3pm

### Young Adult Game Night

Saturday, Sept. 17 at 7pm in the  
Whitney Young Classroom  
See page 4 for information.

### Sunday Forum

Sunday, Sept. 18 at 11:20am in the  
sanctuary  
See page 2 for details.

### Arts & Crafts Night

Sunday, Sept. 18 at 7pm in the  
Common Room  
See page 4 for information.

### People’s Film Festival

Monday, Sept. 19 at 7pm in the  
Common Room  
See page 5 for information.

### Private Wedding

Sept. 24 at 4pm in the Sanctuary

### First Steps Class

Sunday, Sept. 25 at 11:15am in the  
Whitney Young Room  
See page 5 for information.

### Board Talk Back

Sunday, Sept. 25 at 11:00am in the  
Common Room  
See page 5 for information.

### Sunday Forum

Sunday, Sept. 25 at 11:20am in the  
sanctuary  
See page 2 for details.

### OWL Classes Begins

Sunday, Sept. 25. See page 10.

### Book Club

Monday, Sept. 26 at 7pm in the Merritt  
Lounge  
See page 5 details.

### Polyamory Discussion Group

Monday, Sept. 26 at 7pm in the  
Common Room  
See page 5 for details.

### Taoism Discussion Group

Tuesday, Sept. 27 at 6:30pm in the  
Common Room  
See page 5 for details.

### Recurring...

### Meditation

Every Tuesday at 8am in the  
sanctuary. See page 5.

### YRUU Meetings

Wednesdays at 7pm in the  
Common Room. See page 10 for details.

### Choir Rehearsal

Wednesdays at 7pm beginning Sept. 14  
in the Sanctuary. See page 13 for more  
information.

### Women’s Religious Studies Group

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

### Dungeons & Dragons Group

Meets the 1st and 3rd Sunday of each  
month. See page 5.

### Bridge Group

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



We whose names are here subscribed associate ourselves together as a Religious Society for mutual helpfulness in right living and for the advancement of sound morals and pure religion in the community: and we hereby pledge ourselves to bear our part in the common cause and to care for the welfare and influence of the Society of which by this act we become members. Basing our union upon this expressed moral and religious purpose rather than upon any dogmatic statement of belief, and emphasizing the religion of character and daily life above all creedal confessions, we invite to our membership all who are seriously drawn to us in our spirit and aims and who desire to have with us their Church Home under the Articles of Incorporation.

— **Bond of Union, August 22, 1869**

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