

THE FLAME

August 2014



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

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Hospitality at First
Unitarian Church

Meet Our Leaders

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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.

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Partner Church - Janet West

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Women's Alliance - Nellie Chenoweth

Young Adult Group - Maria Wallace

YRUU - Ben Wallace & Shawne Coonfare



First Unitarian members and friends at the Pride Parade in June.

August 3—An Ancient Creation Story: Farewell to Eden

Rev. Ron Knapp, Minister Emeritus

The service will be structured around the creation story found in Genesis, which is the foundation myth of three great world religions: Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. Part of the service will be a brief play reading, "Farewell To Eden" by Edward Borgers as produced and directed by Barb Ross.

August 10—Dreams and Reality

Rev. Frank Rivas

"A dream doesn't become reality through magic," wrote Colin Powell. "It takes sweat, determination and hard work." This morning I will share some of my dreams for the upcoming year at our church. Some of my dreams might conflict with yours; I'll also try to address that potential conflict.

August 17—How Do You Define Your Family?

Rev. Royal D. Bush

Biological, immediate, given, chosen, close are all good starts for so many of us. Let's explore definitions of family.

August 24—What Do I Have?

Rev. Sheila Mee

We make many decisions in life based upon what we believe we have. What do we really have?

August 31—A Modern Creation Story: A Theory of Everything

Rev. Ron Knapp, Minister Emeritus

The sermon will deal with how, over the past two centuries, scientists have been revealing how life and the universe has emerged in what seems to involve a theory of everything.

Join us for Sunday service at 10:30am

Rev. Elations

Monthly Column from our Minister, Rev. Frank Rivas

Jan Wilson, our director of religious education, and I attended General Assembly in Providence, Rhode Island. It has been several years since I attended, and I had forgotten how moving General Assembly can be. There are informative lectures and innovative worship, there are colleagues whom I haven't seen for years, and there are people whose ministry inspires me. Some, like Rebecca Parker, who just retired as president of our divinity school in Berkeley, and Bill Sinkford, who is the most recent past president of our Association, I thanked once again for all that they contributed to our movement. Some, like Simone Campbell, the nun on a bus, I had never met before, but was honored to be in their presence.

Campbell, who presented the Ware Lecture, spoke of justice from an unabashedly Christian perspective. She concluded with a poem in which she identified each of us as an incarnation of God, and an auditorium full of Unitarian Universalists stood and applauded so long that the moderator had to ask them to stop. When a great person speaks, her religious affiliation and the language she uses make no difference at all. A great soul is a great soul.

Ours is a church with its own significant history and its own great people. But every so often it serves us to be in the presence of great individuals beyond our walls and outside our worldview.

Blessings and love,
Frank

You Are Invited!

Sunday, September 7 at 10:30am

Welcome Home Sunday

Our beginning-of-the-church-year extravaganza brings together the entire congregation for an affirmation of who we are and where we're going. The celebration once again recognizes that children and youth are an integral part of our religious community. Please join us.

My Top Five Reasons for Joining the Sarah Joslyn Society

By Harriet Major

I became a member of the First Unitarian Church in November of 2010, and shortly thereafter I signed up with the SJS. Here are my top five reasons for doing so. Maybe they'll encourage you also to join the SJS.

1. Signing up with the SJS will make your covenant with First Unitarian more meaningful.
2. Your bequest will help preserve our church.
3. You will join up with a special group of people who also care about the future of our church.
4. You'll feel good about being a member of the SJS.
5. It's easy to become a part of the Sarah Joslyn Society.

Spirit Circle

Sunday, August 3

The Circle will walk the labyrinth at First Congregational. We will gather at the First Unitarian Church at 6pm and walk to First Congregational at 7pm. We will have a pot luck afterwards. Questions? Contact Ryan at ryanpcook@hotmail.com.

Marble Run-off

Intergenerational, Interactive, Ingenious

Teams will create their marble runs out of recycled materials such as cardboard, popsicle sticks, paper or plastic cups, and paper towel tubes. Please leave your donations of these materials in Jan's office. The goal is to create a marble run which lasts the longest (timed in seconds), has unique features, and involves the broadest range in ages on the construction team. A toddler may drop the marble to start the run. We want to get YOU involved. Contact Jan to join a team or start a team. Email dre@firstuuomaha.org or pick up a marble run-off form at church. The teams' creations will be celebrated, timed, and displayed at October's CommUnity Night.



UU & You

September 10 at 7pm

Visitors, newcomers, and the just curious are cordially invited to this introduction to Unitarian Universalism class meeting on Wednesday, September 10 at 7pm in the Merritt Lounge. UU&You classes provide an introduction to Unitarian Universalism and our church along with an opportunity to share our religious journeys in a theologically diverse "safe" place. Conversation will include some history of Unitarian Universalism and our church, what the church does, how it functions, and opportunities and paths. RSVP or questions can be addressed to uuclass@firstuuomaha.org or call class facilitator Jaime Alexander 402-657-9386.

President's Letter: Looking Beyond Ourselves

by Louise Jeffrey, Board President

One of the biggest attractions that Unitarian Universalism holds for me is its focus on reaching out to others. This has seemed especially relevant as we confront the horrific plight of child immigrants arriving at our border and the lack of compassion some Americans have shown toward them. We Unitarians do not view our lives as merely a prelude to an afterlife; our principles revolve around our connectedness with others and enhancing the quality of those connections. Clearly, I am not alone in our congregation in eagerly embracing this aspect of our faith.

During our recent Leadership Retreat and for the two following Sundays at coffee hour, all members and friends of the congregation were invited to help generate a list of our congregation's perceived strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats. A substantial number of these comments revolved around a commitment to improve the outreach of our church to the community. As a church and as individuals, we have many opportunities to grow through our outreach to others.

The last month has been one during which several members of the congregation have experienced illness and hospitalization and have welcomed our cards, visits, and support. We have long-time members who now reside in care facilities and seldom get to church, but they are still among us and our lives are enhanced by our willingness to reach out to them. Our Caring Team has taken effective leadership in these efforts since (and long before) I have been part of this church. Hope in Action, a recently developed undertaking of some of our members and affiliated with the Caring Team, seeks to reach out further to members of our community with special needs.

Omaha Together, One Community (OTOC) is an interfaith organization to which our church has had a commitment since its inception. Its work is on issues of immigration, housing, and mental health (among others) within the larger Omaha community. Community Meals has become one of the anchors of the Park Avenue area, with both guests and volunteers looking upon it as a source of support and affirmation. Members of our church have been active in all of these efforts.

Opportunities for looking beyond ourselves abound. As we look ahead to growing our congregation, we can also grow our efforts in outreach. The rewards accrue to us not in an afterlife, but in affirming our connectedness to others, here and now.

Eloremegy!



Hospitality at First Unitarian

All of these people pictured above and many more have participated in our summer trial of Hospitality Teams. Ask them about the benefits of Hospitality Teams. See page 17 for more information about what a Hospitality Team is and how you can get involved!

RE Update *by Jan Wilson, Director of R.E.*

This year, I had the distinct pleasure of attending my first General Assembly. Rev. Frank and I heard a particularly exciting presentation by Rev. Cathleen Cox, minister at the Unitarian Universalist Church of Berkeley. She spoke on her work with counseling folks in better communicating with compassionate listening, respect and empathy. She studies and practices skills from the research of Marshall Rosenberg. Dr. Rosenberg's book, *Nonviolent Communication*, has been the focus of twenty years of study, and she is still learning from it. (It is also called Compassionate Communication, which I prefer.)

Rev. Frank and I were immediately taken with her presentation. We thought the skills she outlined were valuable enough to bring to our congregation when we returned. As I attended other sessions at G.A., the ideas from Rev. Cat kept spinning in my head. Briefly, it teaches skills to reframe our interactions so that we can truly understand what each person is saying, feeling, and needing. Our goal is to enrich the lives of those around us with deep listening, respect, and empathy.

The basis of the concept is that everyone has unmet needs. We are usually pretty terrible at expressing our own needs or listening to the needs of others. Somehow we imagine that the only way to be heard is to overstate our case with inflated exaggerations and moral pronouncements. We judge others' motives, intelligence, sanity, etc. This is a convenient way to explain our feelings, but there is a big problem. It allows us to discount magnificent people as unworthy or to dismiss their needs as ridiculous. Unless we take the time to do some real listening, we may miss the real person behind the words. These judgments cut us off from the possibility of connecting with some pretty wonderful human beings. The paradox is that if we hold someone else back from getting what he/she needs, we fail to get our own needs met as well.

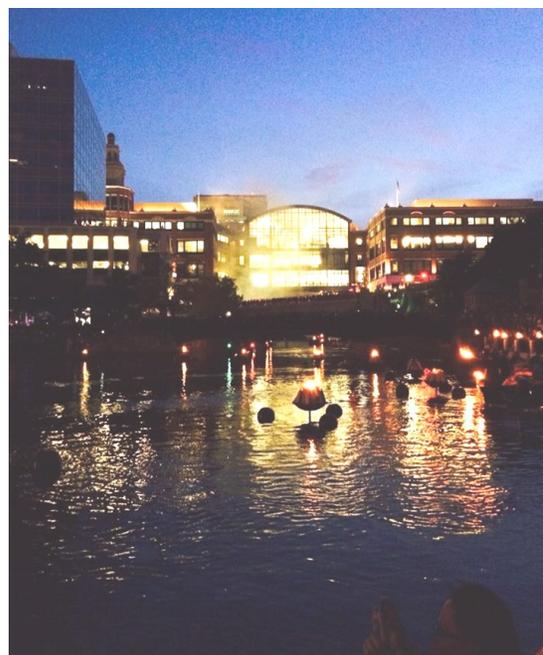
Another key element in making better connections is our tendency to blame someone. If the other person is to blame for our unmet needs, we become blind to the possibilities to change our environment. We become powerless. Compassionate Communication teaches that outside actions can be a stimulus for our behavior, but we make a choice to act as we do. No one is really holding us back unless we choose to allow it.

In a perfect world, once we learned these skills, we would remember to practice them always. None of us lives, or goes to church, in a perfect world. We will fall back into old ways and vent vigorously. The judgments and exaggerations will be dramatic. That's O.K. We're people with ingrained habits and passionate emotions. Learning these skills is a beginning of what can be a lifetime practice.

In the year ahead, the children will be learning Compassionate Communication skills. Adult Religious Education will make offerings available, and Frank will bring his insights from the pulpit.

I hope you will find this information as helpful and interesting as I do.

Sincerely,
Jan



Adult Religious Ed

Exploring Transcendentalism

Join Rev. Ron Knapp and Catharine Dixon as they explore the literary movement that is transcendentalism, and discuss Unitarian history. We will look at the poetry of Emerson, Margaret Fuller, Theodore Parker, Hedge, and Thoreau.

If you plan to attend, please RSVP to admin@firstuomaha.org. You will be given a paper copy or email copy of Ralph Waldo Emerson's essay *Nature* to read before the first class meeting.

We will meet Thursdays at 7pm in the Common Room.

Dates:

August 7

August 14

August 21

We will gather at 6pm for a brown bag dinner in the Common Room.

Awakening the Dreamer

Sunday, August 3—2 to 5pm in the Common Room

An engaging, interactive seminar in which concerned citizens will deepen their understanding of the state of humanity and connect with each other to envision change.

The Awakening the Dreamer Symposium is about waking up from the "dream of the modern world" that is destroying our planet and way of life. Through videos, slides, presentations, and discussions, we aim to create an environmentally sustainable, socially just, and spiritually fulfilling human presence on Earth. While we deal with some disturbing facts, we promise that you will leave feeling optimistic, empowered and inspired to help create our new future.

For more information contact host:

Steve Torneten, [402-215-7118](tel:402-215-7118), stevetorneten@gmail.com.

To register go to:

<http://www.uptous.org/event/1994/pachamama-nebraska>

Wellness Series with Douglas Lee-Regier

6 to 8pm in the Common Room on these dates:

August 28

September 4

September 11

September 18

September 25

October 2

Different topics each week with some combined. Topics such as: reflexology, reiki, healing touch, bodytalk, shamanic healing, myofascial stretching and self-treatment.

Each presentation will include some instruction and practice. We want to present methods of self-healing that people can learn from and benefit from and then have something to take home to do for self-improvement. To RSVP or to reserve childcare please contact adultre@firstuomaha.org.

The Women's Religious Studies Group

The Women's Religious Studies group is reading *The Epic of Unitarianism: Original Writings* from the History of Liberal Religion. We continue our discussion of short works by influential writers such as Frances David and Ralph Waldo Emerson. Our group meets most Thursdays from 1pm until 2:30pm. Interested? Contact Rae Barry at [402-422-1404](tel:402-422-1404) or raeb1@hotmail.com.

Share the Plate—Siena/Francis House

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

This month we share the plate with Siena/Francis House. Founded in 1975, Siena/Francis House is Nebraska's largest shelter, providing food, emergency shelter and clothing along with outreach/case management to homeless families and individuals from Omaha and surrounding communities. For more information, visit the website: <http://www.sienafrancis.org/>.

The Women's Religious Studies Covenant Group

The Women's Religious Studies Covenant Group will meet on Thursday, August 21, at 1pm in the Merritt Lounge. Our topic for this month is Sustainable Living facilitated by Linda Parker. We have found our covenant sessions a means to deepening our friendships as well as encouraging our personal growth. All women are welcome. For further information, contact Harriet Major at 402-391-0248 or at hmajor323@cox.net.

Paint-a-Thon 2014

First U is partnering with Second U and with Bemis Park Neighborhood Association to paint a house. We will be painting on Saturday, August 16 and will probably be doing some prep work on Friday, August 15. Volunteers can contact Alan at alan.char@cox.net.

What is a Paint-A-Thon? Paint-A-Thon is a community partnership that recruits volunteers to paint the homes of low-income elderly and disabled homeowners. Paint-A-Thon organizes teams for the painting of the homes and provides the teams with a qualified homeowner.

Church Events Coming Up

Community Night

Friday, August 1 at 5:30pm
See page 13 for information.

Ministry Team Meeting

Saturday, August 2 at 2pm in the
Common Room

Awakening the Dreamer

Sunday, August 3 at 2pm in the
Common Room
See page 9 for details.

Spirit Circle

Sunday, August 3 at 6pm in the
Common Room
See page 5 for details.

Adult RE: Transcendentalism

Thursdays, August 7, 14, 21 at 7pm
in the Common Room
See page 9 for more information.

Board Meeting

Tuesday, August 12 at 7pm in the
Common Room

Flame Deadline

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

Membership Team Meeting

Saturday, August 16 at 12pm in the
Whitney Young Room

Young Adult Game Night

Friday, August 15 at 6:30pm in the
Common Room

Paint-A-Thon

Friday & Saturday, August 15-16
Offsite
See page 10 for details.

Transition Omaha

Sunday, August 17 at 2pm in the
Common Room

Choir—First Meeting of this Church Year

Wednesday, August 20 at 6:30pm in
Common Room and Sanctuary
See page 19 for details.

Women's Religious Studies' Covenant Group

Thursday, August 21 at 1pm in the
Merritt Lounge
See page 10 for details

RE Teacher Training

Saturday, August 23 in the Common
Room
Contact Jan for details at
dre@firstuuomaha.org.

RE Council Meeting

Sunday, August 24 at 11:45am in
Jan's office

Book Club

Monday, August 25 at 7pm in the
Merritt Lounge
See page 18 for information.

Adult RE: Wellness Series

Thursdays, August 28, September 4,
11, 18, 25, October 2 in the
Common Room
See page 9 for more information.



In June First Unitarian participated in the
Pride Parade

Recurring...

Women's Religious Studies Group

Meets every Thursday at 1pm in the
Merritt Lounge
See page 10 for information.

Bridge Group

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

Looking ahead...

Save the Date: Women's Alliance Meeting

Monday, September 8—social hour
at 6:30pm; Dinner and program at
7pm. See next month's Flame for
details.

Return to two services—9:30 and 11:15am

Sunday, September 14

Volunteer Fair

Sunday, September 14 during both
coffee hours in the Common Room

Poet, Preacher, and Promoter of Unitarianism—Rev. Robert T. Weston 1898-1988 Minister at First Unitarian Church of Omaha 1960-1964 Part I of III

by Dave Richardson

Many eloquent voices have been heard from our pulpit over the past 145 years, but perhaps none so inspiring and expressive as the sermons and writings of Robert Terry Weston who served us during a very interesting time in our history. During his tenure here he initiated a number of changes including the founding of Second Unitarian of Omaha. His accomplishments in Omaha will be the topic of the two upcoming installments of this discussion of Reverend Weston. The present piece will serve as an introduction to his life and work in total.

To many Unitarian Universalists he is best known for his poetry. His poem “Out of the Stars” is widely anthologized. Anyone who has been a regular attendee at Sunday services over the years is familiar with this very inspiring and insightful poem, often done as a reading or as part of a sermon. He has published several poetry collections. The most widely known of these is *Seasons of the Soul* which contains some of his finest verses. He also composed and published several prose tracts containing observations and explanations about our faith. Several have become standard informational introductions to UUism for guests and visitors. These works include “Faith Without Fear,” “Religion Without Creed” and “Religion for the Open-Minded.” The latter was composed during his tenure at First Unitarian

of Omaha. One of his works from 1949 bears the intriguing, albeit lengthy, title “Some Unitarian definitions, or, why go to war when you can fight at home anyway? A study of neuroses and sanity, in verse, with random reflections on religious organizations.”

Reverend Weston served in both World Wars. He was a member of the US Army Expeditionary Force that fought in Europe in 1918. In 1929 he was ordained a Unitarian minister and later served as a navy chaplain in WWII. The book *The Premise and the Promise* notes that proportionate to their numbers more Unitarian ministers were Chaplains in WWII than any other denomination. In addition to Rev. Weston, two other First Unitarian ministers served in that capacity, Rev. Ralph Miller and Rev. Charles Phillips.

Prior to coming to Omaha in 1960, Rev. Weston occupied pulpits in Lexington, MA, Trenton NJ, Schenectady, NY and Louisville, KY. After his departure in 1964 he moved on to serve the congregations of Ft. Lauderdale, FL, Bakersfield, CA and Boca Raton, FL. He retired in 1973 to Highland Park, IL. His obituary in *The Chicago Tribune* on March 20, 1988 contains numerous tributes from his congregations, colleagues and friends.

In the upcoming months we will examine his work during his tenure in Omaha. His leadership was

vigorous and his accomplishments were many. In addition to the previously mentioned overseeing of the founding of Second Unitarian he also was widely heard on local radio. His impact on the congregations of both Unitarian churches in Omaha are indeed significant.



CommUUnity Night

Join us for CommUUnity Night on Friday, August 1 at 5:30pm in the Common Room. Definitely fun for the whole family! Join our potluck with your favorite food and a board game for this relaxing get-together. RE provides the main dish.



Holland Lecture Series in October

Save the date for our next lecture:
Wednesday, October 1
Title: “We’re All Better Off When We’re All Better Off”

Eric Liu is an engaging storyteller who speaks to the power of being part of something larger than oneself, whether through mentorship, diversity, or American identity. He is a columnist, author, educator, and civic entrepreneur who founded the Citizen University. His latest book, with Nick Hanauer, is *The Gardens of Democracy: A New American Story of Citizenship, the Economy, and the Role of Government*. His other books include *The True Patriot*; *Guiding Lights: The People Who Lead Us Toward Our Purpose in Life* and *The Accidental Asian: Notes of a Native Speaker*.



Hope in Action—Starting in August

We all face the uncertainty of daily life, and sudden events can leave us feeling vulnerable and isolated. And we all have different gifts, such as knowledge, skills, or resources, to share with someone in need.

Our church believes in community, and that is what Hope in Action, a sub-team of the Caring Team, is all about. We want to make it easier for you to ask for support and easier for you to offer support when others are in need.

Hope in Action wants to help First Unitarian members, contributing friends and their spouses, as well as regular attendees meet some of their needs. The support we offer will vary depending on individual needs and the resources we have available to respond. Although we are not equipped to handle emergencies, we can help by making referrals to social service agencies, arranging rides to church, visiting the homebound, or just offering a sympathetic ear. Short-term financial assistance may be available for lodging, food, clothing, medication, transportation, and utilities.

Request for assistance must be made directly by the person needing help. Starting in August, these requests may be made in one of three ways. You may send an email to hopeinaction@firstuuomaha.org. You may call the church and press ext. 105 to leave a message for Hope in Action. Or, you may simply complete a Caring Card located in the church pews and place it in the designated box in the church foyer.

If the Hope in Action team is not able to help an individual, we may notify the whole congregation via email, asking for assistance. Of course, all

communications will be done in a manner that maintains the degree of confidentiality requested by the person asking for help.

Hope in Action is an opportunity for everyone in our church community to support one another by sharing our many skills and resources.



Letter and Photos from Rev. Kati to Janet West

Hi Janet,

It will be nice to see you in September. I think about it a lot. I would have written to you, but it was not a good time or the computer wasn't working, or I was very busy. Improved Kőrispatakban church (*the other church she is responsible for*) and in both places was confirmation, which is a big event in the churches and great seats ready to go. I'll send you some pictures of the konfirmálásról (*confirmation ceremony*).

This year the camp will not be here and I'm glad, because it involves a lot of organization to organize a camp. The following week Boti and Matthew (Matte) go on holiday to Croatia for a week, then after 10 days we're going to Lake Balaton in Hungary. This is the summer holiday. Where do you spend your summer? How are you? What's the news in your church?

This year there are eight scholarship: two (high school) and six college students.

I wish you all the best,
Kati



Autumn In Transylvania: You are Invited to Join the September Trip to Visit Our Partner Church in Firtosmartonos, Transylvania, Romania

The pilgrimage to our church's Partner Church will begin on Monday, September 15 and conclude on October 10. The travelers will spend approximately six days in Bucharest and surrounding areas, eight days in the village visiting our Unitarian cousins and many historic Unitarian sites, four days in Kolozsvár, the historic capital of Transylvanian Unitarianism, and five days in Budapest. The travelers will fly from Omaha to Bucharest and fly back to Omaha from Budapest. Estimated expenses per person:

Airfare: \$1150

Hotels: \$700 (I am looking for cheaper accommodations in Budapest)

Gabor's services: \$400 (transportation and translating services for nine days)

Food and lodging in the village: \$120 (eight days in the village)

Food on non-village days: \$510 (estimate)

Train transportation: \$100 (estimate)

Total: \$2980

For more information: Contact Janet West
jmasonwest77@yahoo.com or
402-553-3162
(leave a message)





SCRIP GIFT CARDS

*The Fundraising team cordially invites you
to*

*visit the Unique Boutique at
First Unitarian Church*

Every Sunday during coffee hour

to peruse hundreds of gift cards

that can be purchased for birthdays, special occasions, or your everyday shopping needs.

Every card sold earns First Unitarian a % back. Most earnings range from 2%-10% per card.

*And don't forget your groceries! Fundraising also offers Baker's AND
Wohlner's gift cards for your grocery, cookout, and summer party needs.*

Please make checks payable to First Unitarian Church, and in the memo write "scrip".
Volunteers wanted!

We are in need of a few volunteers to help sell scrip when Kathi Oliver and Donna Neff are not available.

If interested, please see the scrip table during coffee hours.

And thank you to EVERYONE who has helped make this ongoing event a success!!



Scrip cards (in \$25 units) are now available for our mid-town neighbor, Wohlner's Neighborhood Grocery and Deli! Grab a table for lunch at their deli after Sunday service, browse their extensive wine/beer stock, and see all the other convenience and gourmet groceries they offer. Locally owned with locally sourced, high-quality meats, including home-made sausage. 5% of all Wohlner's sales go to the church and a \$20 purchase entitles you to enter a drawing for a free Mini Cooper!

Halloween Heads-Up: 2014 Heart & Hand Auction!

Hard to think of cool fall activities in the heat of summer, but mark your calendars *now* to attend the **Halloween Heart & Hand Auction: Friday, October 24, 6-10 pm!!** Our major annual FUNdraiser for the church and a great party as well. So named because it features members and friends auctioning their skills and social events for the benefit of the church, fueling a year full of deeper friendships and community. Buy a social life as well as intriguing objects! Start now to ponder what you might donate.

This year will roll out several *new* features, including on-line advance bidding for many items, flipping the times of the silent and live auction segments, and an experimental "it's not all about us" component. Got a favorite non-profit or charity (besides First U, of course)? If you donate *more* than 1 auction item, you can (if you wish) have the proceeds for 1 item go to your favorite charity, paired with brief information about that group in the Auction Catalog.

So put a big "X" on your calendar for **Friday, Oct. 24** and get involved in this important event. Contact Donna Neff or Kathi Oliver with ideas, questions and to volunteer (auction@firstuomaha.org) and stay tuned for fall fun.

To Be or Not To Be

This was the question that plagued The Bard as he contemplated, “Is this a Hospitality Team I see before me?” To which we responded no, good sir, this is the summer trial that precedes the decision to implement Hospitality Teams at First Unitarian Church of Omaha.

A Hospitality Team is a group of about 12 congregants who work together to provide the hospitality for a Sunday. The individual tasks include welcoming congregants and visitors, helping everyone get settled in the sanctuary, nursery, or classroom, accepting the offering, and providing coffee and treats after the service.

Our Ministry Team has been considering hospitality teams since the concept was first introduced at their meeting in June 2013. After discussion at several meetings, a Trial Run Team was formed to prove that the concept worked. One-week trial runs were held in February, March, and April and we didn't encounter any significant difficulty. Shakespeare admonished, “Wisely and slow. They stumble that run fast.” Bearing this in mind, we are now using the summer services to further work out the procedures and to practice our recruiting skills. 45 member congregants have signed up to serve on 5 hospitality Teams this summer. Each team will host 3 services.

So far the trial is going well. Assuming it continues to do so, it is likely that your church leadership will be willing to endorse adopting Hospitality Teams as our way of serving each other on Sundays. To be successful, approximately 120 people will need to join the teams. 8 Teams of 12 will each serve once every other month (a total of only six times per year per team). The two additional teams will handle the months with 5 Sundays and provide a cadre of substitutes in unusual situations. Each team will have approximately twice as many people as are needed to provide adequate staffing so vacations and conflicts should be well-covered.

Summer Hospitality Team Participants					
Teams & Dates					
Dates	First Sunday	Second Sunday	Third Sunday	Fourth Sunday	Fifth Sunday
May				May 25th	(June & August only)
June	June 1st	June 8th	June 15th	June 22nd	June 29th
July	July 6th	July 13th	July 20th	July 27th	N/A
Aug	Aug 3rd	Aug 10th	Aug 17th	Aug 24th	Aug 31st
Leader(s)	Bill Ross	Louise Jeffrey	Brian Callaghan Kim Callaghan	Janet West Ron Withem	Need Volunteer Leader
Team	Evelyn Whitehill Lois Norris Shawne Johnson Coonfare Nellie Chenoweth Tony Host Sandy Host Lynnette Ryder Jack Heidel	Amy Barlow Kate Godfrey Bruce Godfrey TerriLynn Brewer Shelton Hendricks Abby Cape Kathi Oliver	Barb Ross Kay Lynn Goldner Kim Dunovan Donna Neff Walt Jesteadt Marcia Leise Cy Leise Lisa Calhoun Claude Matthews	Douglas Lee-Regier Rae Barry Pam Kirby Joe Schaaf Lori Janis-Hefeli Kate Wiig Abby Borgmann Lana Hammel Linda Hess	Ben Wallace Krystal Davis Wendi Jensen Troy Jensen Dee Otte Jaime Alexander

Our major concern about adopting hospitality teams is whether we can make a successful effort to recruit and train 120 people to lead and staff the teams. We again take strength from the Bard who said, “Things done well and with a care, exempt themselves from fear.” Will you please take some time to acquaint yourself with this new way of serving each other by reviewing the information at: <http://bi1228.wix.com/firstuomhospitality#>.



Book Club

Our next meeting is Monday, August 25 at 7pm in the Merritt Lounge. At this meeting, we will all be sharing what we have read over the summer. Everyone is invited to attend. In September we will meet on Monday, September 29 at 7pm. At that meeting we will discuss Eric Liu's newest book *A Chinaman's Chance: One Family's Journey and the Chinese American Dream*. Eric Liu is the speaker for the next Holland Lecture on October 1, and we usually read a book by the speaker the month before the lecture. If you would like to receive emails about the book club, please contact Dave Richardson at drrichardson@westside66.org.



The Young Adults have been busy this summer! This photo collage (thanks to Kathi Oliver) is from their volunteer work and fun at Shakespeare on the Green. Are you a young adult? Want to get involved? Contact youngadults@firstuuomaha.org. The next Young Adult Game Night is Friday, August 15 at 6:30pm.

Summer Schedule

The church will continue the summer schedule of one service at 10:30am until Sunday, September 14 when we return to two services. See you at church!

New Member News

Apparently, advertising on NPR does work! At least that's how new member Stephanie Rodriguez heard about First Unitarian. She first visited our church about two years ago and found the sermon to be both intellectually and spiritually stimulating. She became a member on June 4 because the church gave her a sense of community that she had never experienced and because she has made so many good friends.

Steph was raised as an "Army brat" and was active duty Air Force for ten years so she has lived lots of places. But the Air Force brought her to Omaha and it is now her favorite place of all. In fact, her entire immediate family (sister, brother and parents) have all moved to Omaha so they can be together. Although she is now a member of the Air National Guard, she also works as a weather observer at Eppley Airfield and is a student of Computer Science at UNO.

Steph and her husband D J Lewis are the parents of a six-month-old son, also named D J. Their family also includes Zander, Zion and Professor Lillian Von Strauss (all felines) and a hamster by the name of Littlefinger. Before her pregnancy, Steph performed with the Early Morning Risers, and she is active in Spirit Circle. She likes volunteering and has enjoyed assisting residents at the Eastern Nebraska Veterans Home with games and day trips. She is passionate about women's rights, politics and learning, and she loves nerdy board games.

Please welcome her to membership.



Choir *by Bob McMeen*

It's August and that means it's start-up time for the choir. I'm going to give it a go again and we have a unique accompanist arrangement. Reuline will continue to play and Keith will play when he's not doing shows, etc. I haven't worked out the exact schedule. We are fortunate to have two wonderful people as our accompanists.

Rehearsals will begin on August 20 with a social gathering which might include reading through a piece or two, then we will begin in earnest on August 27. Our first service will be on Sunday, September 14. If we sing again in September I think it would be on the 28th with a quick turn around to sing on October 5.

We have a wonderful and talented choir, but we still need more members. To anyone contemplating joining the choir please come and try us out. The choir meets on Wednesday evenings from 7pm to 8:30pm. Come sing a song with me.

Volunteer Fair—September 14

All of our Ministry Teams will present their important services at the Volunteer Fair. You'll have an opportunity to learn more about what they do and how you can get involved! Come check out the teams during both coffee hours on Sunday, September 14!

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