

September 2015

The Flame



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

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Sunday Services

Photographer: Jan Wilson

September 6 at 10:30am

“A Shamanic Journey in the Amazon Rainforest” with Steve Torneten

This was a trip of a lifetime. I had the rare privilege to experience a profound immersion with intact indigenous people deep in the Amazon Rainforest. We were invited into their ancestral culture, providing direct experience to learn from an uninterrupted lineage of Shamanic wisdom within the vibrant forest. The tranquility and interconnectedness was deeply felt in this remote environment where I had the opportunity to participate in many transformational shamanic ceremonies. Guest Music: Jay Wise Trombone Quartet

September 13 at 10:30am

Welcome Home Service: “A Promise” with Rev. Frank Rivas (Children Welcome)

On the first service of the church year, we welcome entire families. There will be more music and fewer words as we explore our covenant—a fancy word for the promise that we make with one another.

September 20—Two services at 9:30am and 11:15am with Rev. Frank Rivas

“A Service of Memory and Hope”

Following the Jewish calendar, we will once again recall the lives of loved ones who have died in the preceding year. Those whom we love are with us forever.

September 27—Two services at 9:30am and 11:15am with Ronald Knapp, Minister Emeritus

“Human Destiny”

What is human destiny? What is that which used to be called, in a less politically correct time, “man’s fate?” What is the human condition? What is the meaning, or the nature, or the purpose of existence? This is one of the great themes of literature. It is also the topic of this sermon.

Rev. Elations

Monthly Column from our Minister, Rev. Frank Rivas

The services this summer have been amazing. Great speakers, important topics, outstanding music, record attendance. Leaders within the congregation made this happen: Megan Gustafson and the worship arts team; Judi Torneten, summer music coordinator; and Lori Hefeli, social justice coordinator.

I look forward to a new church year in September with greater recognition that the work of our church is shared among many talented people—musicians and speakers, to be sure, but also visionaries and financial wizards, educators and organizers, those who care for our building and those who remind us why we gather in this place. This year I'm envisioning yet another way in which members can get involved.

The Odyssey series has been and continues to be successful. It has helped us to hear and to appreciate differences in personal history and current faith. Each has benefited from witnessing the spiritual journeys of others.

This year we are beginning a second series, the Justice Pulpit. As I cannot represent each person's faith, neither can I represent each person's passion for justice. I speak of my passions, of course, but there are members with perspectives that have never been articulated in Sunday worship. Some are committed to addressing climate change, some to fairness for animals, some to justice in the production and consumption of food. Some are passionate about the Middle East, some about sub-Saharan African, some about justice for immigrants right here. Each of these positions needs to be given voice.

Starting in October, worship each month will include one Odyssey and one Justice Pulpit. I encourage members and friends who would like to share their passions for justice in three to four minutes at both services to contact me. The advantage of our great diversity is that we can broaden one another's awareness of the world.

A new church year reminds us that it is truly a blessing to be together.

Frank

Lunch With the Minister

Thursdays at noon in the Common Room. All are invited to join Rev. Frank for a "bring your own brown bag lunch" every Thursday in September in the Common Room. No RSVP necessary.

Two-Church Picnic

**Saturday, Sept. 19, 3-10pm
at Halleck Park**

You Are Invited to Our Two-Church Picnic!

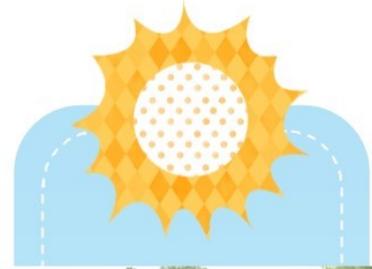
This year we are inviting the Members of Clair Memorial UMC to join in our fall picnic.

The fun starts at 3pm at Halleck Park in Papillion. We encourage you to come early and play! Dinner will be at 5pm in the pavilion. Beverages will be provided. Please bring your own utensils, plates and napkins.

This is a potluck event and groups are free to organize what they would like to do such as play Frisbee, volleyball, baseball, or try some fishing. Kids will enjoy the playground and fishing.

If you need a ride or want to carpool, please contact the Church Office at 402-345-3039, ext. 101, admin@firstuomaha.org

Halleck Park is located just a quarter mile to the east of the intersection of Washington and Lincoln Streets in downtown Papillion. Questions? Contact Nadine at ncketh1@cox.net or 712-310-8259.



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.

Dungeons and Dragons Group Meeting

Meets the 1st and 3rd Sunday of each month in the upstairs classroom after the service. All D&D role players are invited. If you have questions, contact Roman at rmnoriegal@cox.net, 402-769-4260.

Spirit Circle

Sunday, Sept. 6 at 6:30pm. This meeting we will be working on divination so bring your favorite tarot deck and join in the fun! Meeting up in the Common Room and bring a dish to share for feasting.

YRUU (YOUNG RELIGIOUS UNITARIAN UNIVERSALISTS)

The Youth Group, The Parent and Youth Meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, Sept. 9 at 7pm in the Common Room. The YRUU weekly meetings start the following Wednesday, September 16 at 7pm. Questions? Contact Leaders Ben and Shawne at omahayruu@gmail.com.

Bridge Group

Meets the 2nd and 4th Sunday of each month in the upstairs classroom after the service. This Bridge Group is also a class. If you're a complete novice, join us to learn how to play this age-old game. It will boost your memory and your deductive rea-

soning skills. If you've played before, come for some entertainment and some time at the game table. We usually play for about two hours. Questions? Contact Scott at scott.kemper@gmail.com.

Italian Cooking Class

Thursday, Sept. 10; Thursday, Sept. 17; Thursday, Sept. 24; Thursday, Oct. 1; Tuesday, Oct. 6 (note the change of day for this week only); Thursday, Oct. 15 in the Kitchen and Common Room. Cooking sessions on Italian and Mediterranean cooking and eating from Marco, member of Second Unitarian Church, a 65-year-old Italian bachelor who learned to cook watching his mother in the kitchen. You will create antipasti, pasta, soups, skillet meals, and delicious fruit plates. This class is now full. To be added to the waiting list please contact admin@firstuomaha.org.

Memorial Service for Barbara Rippey

Saturday, Sept. 12 at 11am. We are very sad to inform you that Barbara Rippey, long-time church member and former Director of Religious Education at First Unitarian, passed away peacefully on July 28. Cards can be sent to her daughter, Krissa Lee-Regier.

Welcome Home Coffee Hour

Sunday, Sept. 13 at 11:30am. After the intergenerational service, head down to the Common Room for fruit kabobs and time to catch up with all of those we have missed over the summer.

Women's Alliance

Monday, September 14, 6:30pm to 9pm in the Common Room. Women, and those who identify as women, of First and Second Unitarian Church are invited. Women's Alliance meets the second Monday of every month, starting in September. Our first program, "A Glimpse of General Assembly," will be presented by First Unitarian's Sharon Conlon, Jan Wilson, and Nadine Keith. We ask for \$15 which goes to the cost of dinner, the Merritt Education Fund, and the Partner Church scholarship. If this will be your first time attending a WA get-together, please be our guest. Please RSVP by Sept. 10 to Kathi Oliver: 402-214-2718 or kathryn.oliver@outlook.com. Please include your meal preference: veggie or meat.

UU & You

Wednesday, Sept. 16 at 7pm in the Merritt Lounge. Visitors, newcomers, and the just curious are invited to this introduction to Unitarian Universalism which provides an introduction to UU and First Unitarian Church of Omaha, along with an opportunity to share our religious journeys in a theologically diverse "safe" place. Conversation will also include some of our history and things going on here at our church. RSVP or questions can be addressed to uuclass@firstuomaha.org or call Jaime Alexander (402-657-9386).

Church Events Continued...

The Women's Religious Study Covenant Group

Thursday, Sept. 17 at 1pm in the Merritt Lounge. The topic will be "Play" led by Linda Parker. If there are questions, contact Evelyn Whitehill, 366-2748 or ewhitehill@cox.net.

Adult Coloring Night

Friday, Sept. 18 at 7pm in the Whitney Young Classroom. Join the young adults for some adult coloring activities. Bring your crayons, colored pencils, markers, sharpies, anything to color with. Coloring books/pages will be available. Or bring your own. No need to RSVP! Just show up if you like to color!!

Concert: The BeatNiks

Friday, Sept. 18 at 7pm in the Common Room. This free concert is open to all. Cupcakes, coffee, lemonade and tea will be provided. Come out for a great concert!

Two-Church Picnic, offsite

Saturday, Sept. 19, 3-10pm
See page 4 for the flyer.

Exploring Humanistic Perspectives in Literature: Living in Our Beethoven

Tuesday, Sept. 22 at 7pm in the Common Room. Beginning with a magnificent film with the Egmont Overture on the soundtrack, the program will continue with selections from Romaine Rolland, Edna St. Vincent Millay, Rita Dove, along with more music from Beethoven. All are invited to attend. We meet the fourth Tuesday of each month.

Investment Club

Wednesday, Sept. 23 at 7pm in the Whitney Young Room Classroom.

This group is open to anyone interested in learning more about investments and will be run by Dean Christensen, long-time church member. Questions? Call Dean at 636-577-5899.

Book Club

Monday, Sept. 28 at 7pm in the Merritt Lounge. Like books? Join us for our monthly meetings. Contact Dave to see what we're reading: drichardson@westside66.org.

People's Film Festival

Tuesday, Sept. 29 at 7pm in the Common Room. All are welcome. The film that will be shown is *Merchants of Doubt*: Inspired by the acclaimed book by Naomi Oreskes and Erik Conway, *Merchants of Doubt* takes audiences on a satirically comedic, yet illuminating ride into the heart of conjuring American spin. Filmmaker Robert Kenner lifts the curtain on a secretive group of highly charismatic, silver-tongued pundits-for-hire who present themselves in the media as scientific authorities, yet have the contrary aim of spreading maximum confusion about well-studied public threats ranging from toxic chemicals to pharmaceuticals to climate change. The amazing current situation is compounded by the Main Street Media's complete ignoring of the fact that the major players who rail against the facts have been exposed in their own emails and documents.

Pagans & Friends Recovery Group

Sundays at 2pm in the Whitney Young Classroom. This group is an Overeaters Anonymous group that follows the 12 Steps and Traditions as originally outlined in the Alcoholics Anonymous program, substituting "food" for "alcohol" and "overeater" for "alcoholic." Compulsive overeaters, food addicts, and people with eating disorders are all welcome. We meet in the Whitney Young room (downstairs classroom) every Sunday at 2pm. There is no entry cost to attend, though we do pass around a donation basket in keeping with the seventh tradition. You can contact Cassi at 402-709-4436 via call or text message for further information.

Outside Opportunity—Retiree Group Open to All

Tuesday, Sept. 8 at 1pm at [Second Unitarian Church](#). Lauren Williams of Nebraska Appleseed will give a presentation on Health Care Access for Nebraskans at the monthly Second Unitarian Church Retirees' Group. The presentation will be a bit about the Affordable Care Act and eligibility requirements for Medicaid, as well as the coverage gap that exists for Nebraska. Lauren will also talk about Medicaid expansion, which is the only solution that has been proposed to close the existing gap. Lauren is an Omaha native; her passion for equality in health care access led her to Appleseed where she is a Field Organizer.

Church Events Continued...

Holland Lecture Series Speaker Dale Ho Presents “In Defense of Democracy: Voting Rights 50 Years after Selma”

Thursday, Sept. 24 at 7:30pm at the Holland Performing Arts Center

Dale Ho supervises the ACLU's voting rights litigation nationwide, with active cases in over a dozen states in every region of the country. He defends our most fundamental right by combating voter suppression and by opening opportunities for participation for the historically disenfranchised.

FREE tickets for this reserved seating event became available on Monday, August 24 at Ticket Omaha. Please put this lecture on your calendar and on the calendar of your friends! The highly regarded Holland Lecture Series is now in its 11th year of presenting internationally recognized thought-provoking speakers. To help you introduce friends and neighbors to the series, each caller may request up to six free tickets for the lecture.



Please join us for this sale! 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 page 11 for more information. Drop off your items to donate to the sale that week, any time between 9am and 3pm, or drop off your items on Friday, Sept. 25 (preferred as that is the date the youth group will be setting up the sale). Please come shop on September 26 from 8am to 3pm!

Simplified Governance *by Jack Round, Church President*

In order to attempt to support, nurture, and further grow our talented church community, the Board developed annual goals (which were presented in last month's "Flame").

Following is the simplified governance process we followed to develop this year's annual goals:

- 1) Start with our Five Year Goals (which are our de facto vision of the future). This year's annual goals were designed to position our church to achieve the five year goals developed at the last two leadership retreats. Here are the generalized five year goals that emerged during those retreats:
 - Advance membership.
 - Deepen our internal community.
 - Increase our internal diversity.
 - Increase our social justice impact.
 - Facilitate and broaden church leadership.
 - Good branding/marketing/advertising ("get our message out there").
 - Increase the use of technology.
 - Improve and maintain the building (potentially a renovated RE wing).
 - An RE program that covers the life span of members and has a strong reputation in the community.
 - Work toward financial sustainability.
 - Increase community involvement and leadership (potentially expanding the Unitarian presence in Omaha)
 - Celebrate the 150-year anniversary of the church and 100-year anniversary of our sanctuary.
 - An active teaching church that helps train ministerial interns.

- 2) We asked if there are any current situations that required our attention. The answer to this question was "Yes." Specifically, we feel we may need to be more welcoming to the GLTB community.

- 3) We considered whether our current mission statement was sufficient to address (1) and (2). The answer was "Yes." Here is our current mission statement as information: "The First Unitarian Church of Omaha strives to be a welcoming, liberal religious community with traditions of reason and tolerance, which are reflected in how we live our lives. We are committed to introducing our youth to the breadth of religious thought and encouraging them to responsibly discern their own spiritual paths. We promote spiritual growth, social justice and sustainable living to affect positive change in our society and ourselves."

- 4) We asked if there were any specific goal areas that members of the Board had an interest in and would be willing to focus on? The answer was "Yes." These were the areas:
 - Dean Christensen was interested in an Investment Club which, in addition to sharing the advice of successful investors, could potentially create Capital Trust trustees.
 - Dean was also interested in helping the church move forward on a number of building projects.
 - Cy Leise agreed to create a class around a Values Framework which will help inform and provide a solid, deeper foundation for social justice and other initiatives going forward.
 - Sheri Conner is working with other interested individuals on an RE program covering the life span of members.

(Continued on next page)

Simplified Gov. cont.

- Kabin Thomas is interested in diversity.
- Jack Heidel is interested in building the systems and creating the conditions under which membership engagement can be increased.
- Jackie Anderegg is focused on working with the Ministry Team Council and Ministry Teams to achieve the annual goals of the church.
- Jack Round is, among other things, interested in collaborating with Second Unitarian to see if there is a need and interest for expanding the Unitarian/“Liberal Church” presence in the area.

5) Informed by (1) – (3), we developed this year’s annual goals (presented in last month’s “Flame”). From a delegation perspective, except for a few goals we’ve kept (e.g., the foyer project), the goals have mostly been delegated to the Ministry Team Council for action.

6) For the remainder of its term, the Board will continue to focus on the future. We will do this by (1) helping ensuring current year goals are achieved – if we achieve our current-year goals, we greatly increase the probability of achieving our five-year goals, (2) attempting to minimize/eliminate inertia in its various forms and incarnations, and (3) being very open to ideas, suggestions, and feedback from our church community.

We encourage those who have an interest in visioning what the church community can become in the future to become part of the Board. In order to do this, please reach out to Louise Jeffrey and let her know you are interested. Thank you!

Jack’s email is president@firstuuomaha.org.
Louise’s email is louisekjeffrey@hotmail.com.

Religious Education with Jan Wilson, DRE

It used to be that teachers and students went back to school in the fall. My husband, who teaches physics at Millard North, attended teacher meetings August 3. That hardly qualifies as fall.

Teacher meetings—and I have been to decades of them—focus on new initiatives designed to improve the achievement for all students. These methods have been proven by academic research to work. I always smiled a little when I heard the virtues of academic research. As a teacher, I daily experimented with a host of techniques in my classroom to adapt to the needs of my students. In essence, I was doing academic research every single hour of every day. Some worked and some didn’t. The difference was my work was never recognized as research.

Here at church, our RE Council is doing research. We are experimenting with stories and activities, which we believe will engage the minds and spirits of our kids. We have the challenges of sporadic attendance and multi-age groups. Our challenges are outweighed by the enthusiasm and intelligence of these children and their families.

I still love teaching. I love learning and passing ideas and knowledge to the next generation. I love dreaming up experiences that will spark creativity and support their unique journey. It is an honor to get to know these children and to participate in seeing them develop as fully themselves.

Sincerely,
Jan Wilson, Director of Religious Education

Email Jan at dre@firstuuomaha.org.

October Church Events Preview

CommUUnity Night

Friday, Oct. 2 at 5:30pm in the Common Room. All are welcome to this casual potluck and game night. The church supplies the main dish and you bring the sides. Please join us!

The Tolerant Atheist Group (TAG)

The Tolerant Atheist Group plans to start fall programming at its October 8 meeting by showing and discussing the first of four films, "The History of Free Thought in America." The series will continue on the second Thursday of each month through January. Doors open at 6pm for BYOD (Bring Your Own Dinner) and conversation. Meeting at 7pm in the Common Room. Everyone is welcome. Questions? Contact tag@firstuomaha.org.

Party! Pumpkins! Potluck! Purchases! Put your "Heart" and "Hand" in our service auction!

Save the date! Friday, October 23, 6-10 p.m. (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 submit donations. What might you offer to help us 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 partygoers into a shopping frenzy? Donations are posted to a growing on-line Auction Catalog ahead of the Auction, with pre-bidding on many items! 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 an evening of "pun" and live auction run by our MCs/Auctioneers Royal Carleton, Ben Wallace and Kabin Thomas. Free child-care (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!

For more Auction information, see the Auction flyer in this Flame, stop by the Auction Table at church, check out the church website, email auction@firstuomaha.org or call Donna (402-699-3183) or Kathi (402-214-2718). See you October 23!

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. Please shop our Rummage Sale on Sept. 26. See page 7 for more details.

Musical Guest on Sunday, Sept. 6: Jay Wise Trombone Quartet

Jay Wise has been the bass trombonist of the Omaha Symphony since 1987. He also performs on tenor and alto trombones, euphonium and tuba. For the past several years he has also served as Principal Trombone of the Lincoln Symphony and has performed with orchestras in Cedar Rapids, Iowa and Midland, Texas, and festivals in Flagstaff, Arizona and Fayetteville, Arkansas. Come enjoy his music on Sunday, Sept. 6 at 10:30am.

Please Note: **CommUUnity Night** will NOT be meeting in September. Our next get together will be Friday, Oct. 2 at 5:30pm in the Common Room.

Also, the **Second Saturday Playgroup** will not be meeting in September. The next date has not been determined yet.

All-Church Labor Day Retreat, Sept. 5-6

Reservations are now closed for our church retreat. We are excited that 42 people have signed up for the overnight and the Saturday-only options. Please take photos of your nature hikes, your surroundings and your groups while you are at the retreat and send them to the church office via email at admin@firstuomaha.org. If you were not able to join us this year, please do come next time! We hope to make this an annual get away, but the timing will most likely change. Thanks!

Volunteer Needed

The church office is looking for another newsletter proofreader. Could that be you? Do you find mistakes in magazines, newspapers, and even this newsletter? If you are someone with an eagle eye and want to help, please contact the Church Administrator by calling the church office at 402-345-3039, ext. 101 or emailing admin@firstuomaha.org.

Foyer Improvement Project

The Board has approved the Foyer Improvement Project. There are still design adjustments to be made, and the Board empowered Dean Christensen and Marie Sedlacek to seek additional design input from anyone interested and proceed to completion with the project. See below about how you can help by contributing to our foyer improvement project.

Some new foyer ideas developed from first comment session in spring:

- Create a welcoming and inviting first impression for visitors and members
- Focus on what is important –“the elevator speech” for the church
 - Display important, framed church documents that “speak” to who we are now and historically
- House and display member badges aesthetically
- Reduce clutter by providing appropriate storage for membership and ambassador items including visitor badges
- Create a safe entrance way without trip hazards

After the July 12th comment session the project now includes:

- **New entry door hardware: historically correct and functional**
- **Member badge storage and display units on the south wall**
- **Two coat-rack cabinets; one on either side of the east window**
- **Wainscot and chair rail throughout the east side of the foyer**
- **Storage cabinet for membership and ambassador needs & visitor badges and hearing assist devices below the east window**
- **Walk-off carpet throughout foyer**
- **New hardware for sanctuary doors**
- **New hinge hardware for toilet doors in lower foyer**
- **Repair plaster at circular window above the stairs going up to the organ loft**
- **Paint and touch as needed in foyer, up to choir loft and down stairs to lower foyer**
- **Exterior front entry pressure-washing: ceiling, doors, columns & windows**
- **Repair and refinishing of 9 Windsor Sacback arm chairs in the sanctuary**
- **Repair the sanctuary chancel table and refinish the top**
- **Reproduction Windsor 72” settee and two Windsor side tables**
- **Barrier to organ loft**
- **Rocking chair**

Work on the foyer project will begin in the middle of September, but should not interfere with Sunday services or weddings. If you have questions about use of the sanctuary in September or October, please contact the office at admin@firstuomaha.org.

The inspiration for the design of the foyer renovation comes from the stair, window, chair rail, pew details found in the foyer and sanctuary and as shown in the original architectural drawings.

Donation Opportunities

Be a part of the project

Listed below are some discreet items that are part of the renovation project with their associated costs. These are opportunities for anyone who wants to also help by contributing financially to the project. Please contact Dean Christensen, Marie Sedlacek or Jack Round with questions regarding contributions. As you can see, three items have already been donated. Thank you to the Women's Alliance and the donor who is helping with the door hardware.

- New entry door hardware: historically correct and functional \$3,560—donated by Anonymous donor
- New hardware for sanctuary doors \$924—donated by Anonymous donor
- New hinge hardware for toilet doors in lower foyer \$50
- Walk-off carpet throughout foyer: Shaw Contract Group walk-off carpet: welcome II tile, red #31850 \$2,700
- Repair & refinish a Windsor Sac Back arm chair from the Sanctuary (9 total chairs) \$240 each chair or \$2160 for all 9 chairs
- Repair Chancel table and refinish top \$500—donated by Women's Alliance
- Reproduction Windsor 72" settee \$1850
- Reproduction Windsor side tables \$800
- Barrier to organ loft \$120

Marie Sedlacek

Email:

marie.sedlacek@outlook.com



Marie Sedlacek's rendering of the foyer

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. See page 15 for a chance to help.

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. Our next Community Meals opportunity will be Saturday, October 31 at First Baptist Church. Watch this space for more information or email dianewithem@gmail.com.

Share the Plate— Hope in Action

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 Hope in Action, a sub-team, of the Caring Team. See opposite page for more details.

Change for Change

Bring your change to help make some change! All change raised in the offering plate on Sundays will go directly to fund projects that give our children the experience of reaching out to others in the community. For the last several months all change collected has gone to the Neighborhood Ministry to help people who come to the church door for diapers, bus passes, gas cards, and food gift cards.

Hope in Action: Call for Help

Due to changes in the bus routes, Terri Lynn, a long-time church member, no longer has access to public transportation to church on Sundays. Please contact Terri Lynn if you are able to give her a ride to church. Thanks for your help! Here is a link to the signup if you are able to help:

<http://www.signupgenius.com/go/10c0c4fa4af2fab9-terri>.

Carrie Helmberger: Membership Coordinator

If you missed reading the newsletter last month, you may have not heard that the church has hired a part-time Membership Coordinator. If you haven't yet had the chance to meet Carrie, please seek her out on Sundays during coffee hour. She is here to help visitors and members in the church community. She can be reached at 402-345-3039 ext. 106 or coordinator@firstuomaha.org. Welcome Carrie!



“A Quest for Light” or “How many Unitarians does it take to replace a light globe?”

By *Dave Richardson*

One of the many distinctive features of the sanctuary of The First Unitarian Church of Omaha is the stately ornamental globes of the light fixtures in the ceiling. They not only provide the soft ethereal light for evenings and days with limited exterior illumination, but, they also carry out the Georgian Revival theme of our soon to be 100-year-old edifice. For more than ten years the two globes of the pair of lights closest to the entrance into the sanctuary have been missing. We can now rejoice in the replacement of the two missing globes.

Many guests and perhaps some of those who may have joined recently may not have noticed the absence of the globes; however, for others it left a sense of being “incomplete.” Now the waiting is over! We are made whole again! On Thursday, August 13 a crew consisting of Dean Christensen, Judith Wright, Bob Perrin, Marie Sedlacek, John Hruska, Jack Perry, Eddith Buis and Floyd Prine completed the intricate and formidable task of installing the replacement globes. To those unfamiliar with the details of the saga of the broken globes here is a short version of the quest.

During the renovation of the sanctuary in 2003, it became

necessary to take down the fixtures in order to paint the ceiling. In that process, the painters damaged one of the globes. Initially, an attempt was made to ship the globe, which hung adjacent to its damaged brother to a glassworks firm. As fate would have it, the globe arrived broken. We were now not only missing two of these elegant globes, but the prospect of finding an exact replica seemed dim if not impossible.

Several people, chief among them Dean Christensen, Marie Sedlacek, and Bob Perrin, conducted exhaustive searches in antique stores, glassworks firms, and restoration consultants throughout the Midwest and beyond to no avail. Dean even made contact with the world-famous glass artist, Dale Chihuly, who resides in Portland, OR. Even this renowned expert was unable to provide a solution. In 2008, Dean made several trips to Madison, WI following up on the best lead he had at the time. Unfortunately, they were ultimately unable to provide a suitable replacement. During this time Dean’s wife Carol was terminally ill and he was needed as care-giver. He mentioned that Carol had been an inspiration in his quest as she had always encouraged his efforts in this direction. After her passing, Dean resumed the search. At first it appeared that a firm in Spencer, IA could do the job. The high hopes were dashed when it was apparent that their product was unsuitable after

many failures and two years of attempts.

So here comes the happy ending. On a 2014 fishing trip with his grandson, Drew, Dean mentioned to him the disappointments he had encountered during his quest. Drew suggested that he consult the 3-D imaging firm where he worked in Madison, WI. At first, the owner rejected the project; however, an engineer at the firm said he thought it would be an “interesting challenge,” so they agreed to take it on, which they did. They successfully completed the project earlier this year, leading to the ultimate installation by the aforementioned crew of church members.

This project was a testament to the persistence, dedication and skills of several folks, the most prominent being Dean. He has invested incredible amounts of time, effort and money in this quest over the past few years. We can now enjoy the beauty and serenity of the sanctuary in its totality. Dean designed and constructed the bands which hold the globes in place. On one of the bands is an inscription bearing his late wife’s name. Like so much of what Dean and a number of others have done quietly without fanfare, over the years, you may not be able to read the inscription from the floor level, but it is there.

The quote on the opposite page is proven true by the man who spoke the words.



“At this church we’ve got good people to go to.”

—Dean Christensen



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Reuline Nightingale

Keith Hart

Minister Emeritus

Ronald Knapp

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THE FLAME

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

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Meet Our Leaders

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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

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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 - Kathi Oliver

YRUU - Ben Wallace & Shawne Coonfare

Church Events

OTOC Environmental Action Team Meeting

Thursday, Sept. 3 at 7pm in the Whitney Young Room

Private Wedding

Sunday, Sept. 6 at 4pm

Spirit Circle

Sunday, Sept. 6 at 6:30pm in the Common Room

See page 5 for more information.

Board Meeting

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

YRUU Parent & Youth Meeting

Wednesday, Sept. 9 at 7pm in the Common Room

See page 5 for details.

Italian Cooking Classes

Thursdays, Sept. 10, 17, 24 in the Kitchen and Common Room

See page 5 for more information.

Barbara Rippey Memorial Service

Saturday, Sept. 12 at 11am

Women's Alliance

Monday, September 14 at 6:30pm

See page 5 for details.

Flame Deadline

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

UU & You Class

Wednesday, Sept. 16 at 7pm in the Merritt Lounge

See page 5 for details.

Women's Studies Covenant Group

Thursday, Sept. 17 at 1pm in the Merritt Lounge

See page 6 for more information.

Concert: The Beatniks

Friday, Sept. 18 at 7pm in the Common Room

See page 6 for details.

Adult Coloring Night

Friday, Sept. 18 at 7pm in the Whitney Young Room

See page 6 for details

Two-Church Picnic

Saturday, Sept. 19, 3-10pm, offsite

See page 4 for information.

Private Wedding

Saturday, Sept. 19 at 3pm

Transition Omaha

Sunday, Sept. 20 at 2pm in the Common Room. Questions? Contact Jack at round314@gmail.com.

Exploring Humanistic Perspectives in Literature: Living in Our Beethoven

Tuesday, Sept. 22 at 7pm in the Common Room

See page 6 for details.

Investment Club

Wednesday, Sept. 23 at 7pm in the Whitney Young Room

See page 6 for more information.

Holland Lecture

Thursday, September 24 at the Holland Performing Arts Center

See page 7 for details.

Private Wedding

Friday, Sept. 25 at 5pm

YRUU Rummage & Book Sale

Saturday, September 26, 8am-3pm

See page 7 for details.

Book Club

Monday, Sept. 28 at 7pm in the Merritt Lounge

See page 6 for more information.

People's Film Festival

Tuesday, Sept. 29 at 7pm in the Common Room

See page 6 for more information.

Recurring...

Lunch with the Minister

Thursdays at noon in the Common Room

See page 3 for details.

Pagans and Friends in Recovery Group

Sundays at 2pm in the Whitney Young Classroom

See page 6 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. See page 5.

Dungeons & Dragons Group

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

Choir

Rehearses every Wednesday night at 7pm in the Sanctuary

Looking ahead...

CommUnity Night

Friday, Oct. 2 at 5:30pm

See page 10 for information.

Tolerant Atheist Group (TAG) Meeting

Thursday, Oct. 8 at 7pm

See page 10 for details.

Heart & Hand Auction

Friday, Oct. 23, 6-10pm

See page 10 for information.

HALLOWEEN "Heart & Hand" Auction Party

Friday, October 23rd 2015 6-10 p.m.

At First Unitarian Church 3114 Harney St.

A major FUNdraiser for the church operations budget

Eat, Party, Shop!

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 MCs/Auctioneers:
Royal Carleton, Kabin Thomas
and Ben Wallace!

Sure to be a "pun" eve!

Casual-Informal-Fun!

FREE Childcare by reservation
(infant-5th grade)

Delicious Food!
Fall Favorites Potluck

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

Costumes Encouraged
(but optional)

Prizes for Best Costumes!

Door Prizes!

Big Silent Auction!

followed by

Fun Live Auction!

Browse growing Auction Cat-
alog & pre-bid on-line using
Auction Catalog

To DONATE items for Auction

To VOLUNTEER to help out

Email auction@firsttuomaha.org

Visit the Auction Area (Common Room)

To SIGN UP for the potluck or childcare

To GET A BIDDER # for early shopping

Call Donna 402-699-3183 or Kathi 402-214-2718

Go to church website (<http://ww.firsttuomaha.org>)

Donation deadline is October 19 (sooner is better, of course)

We affirm and promote seven principles:

- The inherent worth and dignity of every person;
- Justice, equity and compassion in human relations;
- Acceptance of one another and encouragement to spiritual growth in our congregations;
- A free and responsible search for truth and meaning;
- The right of conscience and the use of democratic process within our congregations and in society at large;
- The goal of world community with peace, liberty, and justice for all;
- Respect for the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part.

The living tradition we share draws from many sources:

- Direct experience of that transcending mystery and wonder, affirmed in all cultures, which moves us to a renewal of the spirit and an openness to the forces which create and uphold life;
- Words and deeds of prophetic women and men which challenge us to confront the powers and structures of evil with justice, compassion and the transforming power of love;
- Wisdom from the world's religion which inspires us in our ethical and spiritual life;
- Jewish and Christian teachings which call us to respond to God's love by loving our neighbors as ourselves;
- Humanist teachings which counsel us to heed the guidance of reason and the results of science and warn us against idolatries of the mind and spirit;
- Spiritual teachings of Earth-centered traditions which celebrate the sacred circle of life and instruct us to live in harmony with the rhythms of nature.



First Unitarian Church of Omaha
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