

May 2018

The Flame



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

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Annual Meeting
Notice

Church Services

Sunday, May 6 at 10:30am
“Good Faith”

Rev. Frank Rivas

Authentic faith is the opposite of rigidity.

Sunday, May 13 at 10:30am
Ye Olde YRUU Service

The combined youth of First and Second Unitarian churches will share their experiences this year for a special Mother’s Day service.

Sunday, May 20 at 10:30am
Annual Choir Concert

The First Unitarian Choir, under the direction of William Miller, invites you to attend our 2018 annual concert. The Choir will present a variety of choral works illustrating the profound impact music has on our lives. The human experience of joy, elation, hope, friendship, loss and so many others are expressed through a stirring mix of pieces, each hand selected to illustrate our innate desire to connect as human beings through song. The prelude and postlude will be offered by organist, Pat Will and the choir is accompanied by J Gawf. Come see the hard work of each individual, who gives of their time to sing in the choir and share the gifts which help all of us rise to a higher plane.

Note: this service is followed by our Annual Meeting at 12pm. See page 6 for more information.

Sunday, May 27 at 10:30am
“Blessing”

Rev. Frank Rivas

The need to bless is primal.

Note: this service is followed by a farewell reception for Rev. Frank Rivas. This is his last Sunday preaching at First Unitarian. See page 8 for the reception flyer.

A Note on Sunday Forums:

There are no Sunday forums in May. We will take the summer off. The first forum in the fall will be on Sunday, September 9, and its focus will be the NEW Soul Matters Programming that will begin this fall. See page 14 of this issue for more details.

That Sunday, September 9th our service is at 10:30am and will be followed by our

GET CONNECTED Fair: A Small Group Sign Up Extravaganza.

Various small discussion groups, including those focused on the Soul Matters topics, will showcase information about their groups and meetings during coffee hour. This will be a great opportunity to plug in and meet new friends at First Unitarian! Be sure to save the date!

Rev. Elations

Monthly Column from our Minister, Rev. Frank Rivas

The first sermon I preached at this church was about an experience with wild horses. I hadn't yet been called to this church; in fact, I was just a fill-in while Rev Kate was recuperating from surgery.

Through a series of unusual circumstances, I was stuck in the San Luís Valley of Colorado. The valley was inhospitable, with unrelenting sun, fierce wind, and rattlesnakes.

I walked the streets of San Luís and asked anyone I encountered why they lived here. One was an Indian woman, Betty, who replied, "I have lived here for two hundred years, and I would live nowhere else."

She told me that when her sons are lost, she tells them to sit in *cañón* (that's how she said it) and listen to the aspen. She told me to do the same and then return. At our second meeting, she taught me where and how to witness the bands of wild (actually feral) horses who live in the valley. I was shocked at my visceral response to the horses and eventually found a small bachelor band that invited me to be an honorary member. I spent each morning and each evening with them for almost three weeks.

I witnessed how community works. The lead stallion is not a rugged, independent Marlboro man, but is deeply connected to each member. He leads not by force, but by respect and affection. He attends to the limitations of the eldest and redirects the exuberance of the youngest. While each horse is an individual, the band moves as one, their only protection against cougar.

I also talked about parting from the horses. I expected that I alone would know that it was our last meeting, but I underestimated my community. On our last morning, the stallions arranged themselves in a receiving line. First was the elder, who had never been very trustful, but who nonetheless nudged me gently. Last was the lead, with whom I had a special relationship. After spending a few minutes together, I stood back, then he did as well, and we looked at one another. Then he and the band turned and walked about 50 yards. The lead turned around to look at me one more time, then the band galloped off.

There continue to be partings in each of our lives. One never forgets deep connections. May our parting be as eloquent as that of the horses.

Blessings and love,
Frank



Church Events

Compassionate Communication Group (Practice Group)

1st & 3rd Tuesdays, 7-8:30pm in the Whitney Young Classroom.

Using Compassionate Communication developed by Marshall Rosenberg, PhD. For information, please contact Suzanne at nvcsuz@gmail.com.

3F Book Bonanza

First Wednesday of each month. Next meeting: May 2 at 7pm in the Merritt Lounge. Mystery, Adventure, Fantasy, Love, Life—the JOY of reading. Come join us as we enter the world of fiction and read our way through the year. We'll read *1916* by Morgan Llywelyn. Please reach out to Denise (denise.allain@yahoo.com) if you have any questions.

CommUnity Night

Friday, May 4 at 5:30pm in the Common Room. If you haven't participated before, this 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. We will have a childcare worker in the nursery. There is always plenty of food and what we really want is YOUU.

Young Adult Discussion Group

Sunday, May 6 at 11:45am in the Whitney Young Room. This group welcomes everyone ages 18-35 from all over the Omaha Metro. Join us as we continue our series in the UUA publication *Becoming: A Spiritual Guide for Navigating Adulthood*.

Informational Session on the Capital Trust Amendments

Sunday, May 6 at 12pm in the Sanctuary. At the Annual Meeting on May 20, amendments will be made to the Capital Trust. Go to this web page for details: www.firstuomaha.org/captrust. If you have questions, please attend this meeting to learn more.

People's Film Festival

Monday, May 7 at 7pm in the Common Room. We will watch *Poverty Inc*. Drawing from over 200 interviews filmed in 20 countries, *Poverty, Inc*. unearths an

uncomfortable side of charity we can no longer ignore.

AHA "Atheists, Humanists, Agnostics!" Meeting

Thursday, May 10 in the Common Room. Doors will be open at 6pm for those interested in "Bring Your Own Dinner," socializing and conversation. The meeting starts at 7pm. Our topic is Bertrand Russell and a Free Man's Worship presented by Ron Knapp. *We want to stand on our own two feet and look fair and square at the world – its good facts and its bad facts; its beauty and its ugliness; to see the world as it is, and be not afraid of it.* – Bertrand Russell.

Dueling Sopranos Concert (H&H Auction Event)

Saturday, May 12 at 7pm in the Sanctuary. Price: \$20/seat. See page 10 for details.

Women's Alliance

Monday, May 14 at 6:30pm in the Common Room. Women, and those who identify as women, are invited to attend with socializing and beverages to start at 6:30pm with dinner following at 7pm. We'll discuss future presentations, bake sale alternatives, and ideas of how to represent the WA during our year-long church celebration. Bring your ideas and ways to volunteer to help keep WA running for the 2018/2019 year. Some questions to ponder before the meeting: *What kind of presentations would you like to see? Would you like a "holiday bazaar" featuring baked goods, crafts, and holiday shopping ideas instead of a bake sale in November? Would you like a "bring a friend" night and have a "get to know us" meeting? What makes you volunteer for duties? What makes you not volunteer for duties?*

Please bring a dessert or appetizer. We ask for a "goodwill donation" to the Merritt Education Fund. Childcare will be not be provided for May. Please RSVP by May 11th to Jeri at jeri.thurber@gmail.com

The Flame Newsletter Deadline

May 15 at noon. Word limit: 200. Send submissions to admin@firstuomaha.org.

Lunch with the Minister

Thursday, May 10 at noon in the Common Room. Pack a lunch and come join us. This is the last lunch with the minister. Rev. Frank retires 5/31. See page 8 for details about his farewell reception.

Women's Religious Studies Covenant Group

Thursday, May 17 at 1pm in the Merritt Lounge. This group meets the 3rd Thursday of each month. We welcome all self-identified women, and if you are interested, please contact Rae at raeb1@hotmail.com.

YES Meal Prep: WAYS TO HELP

Friday, May 18 at 9am in the kitchen. See page 12 for details.

Game Night Hosted by the Young Adults Group

Friday, May 18 at 6pm in the Common Room. All are invited to join the Young Adults for this event. We will have childcare! Bring snacks and board games.

Annual Meeting

Sunday, May 20 at noon. Eligible voting members of the church will adopt an operating budget and elect a President-elect, President, members of the Board of Trustees, a Trustee of the Trust Fund, and Nominating Committee members; hear select reports from church leaders; vote to name Rev. Frank Rivas a minister emeritus of this church; vote to approve changes to the Capital Trust; and reveal our Unitarian of the Year! The Capital Trust information, including recommended changes, can be read here: www.firstuomaha.org/captrust. For more information, see page 6.

People's Film Festival

Monday, May 21 at 7pm in the Common Room. We will watch *Denial*. Based on the acclaimed book *History on Trial: My Day in Court with a Holocaust Denier*, the film recounts Deborah E. Lipstadt's legal battle for historical truth against David Irving, who accused her of libel when she declared him a Holocaust denier.

See more events on next page.

Church Events Continued...

Book Club

Monday, May 21 at 7pm in the Merritt Lounge. The book for this month will be shared in the enews. Questions? Contact Dave at dritchardson821@gmail.com.

Taoism Discussion Group

Tuesday, May 22 at 6:30pm in the Common Room. Join us to discuss anything and everything related to Taoism! As Taoism is best understood through practice rather 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. For more information, contact Geoff at gerickson03@gmail.com.

Omaha Gives 2018

Wednesday, May 23—all day.
A 24-hour, online, charitable challenge to benefit metro-area nonprofits. YOU can participate in Omaha Gives! with a minimum gift of only \$10. Please help support the Midtown Helping Hands Team at First U. See page 11.

Farewell Rev. Frank Reception

Sunday, May 27 at 11:30am in the Common Room. Our beloved minister, Rev. Frank Rivas, will be retiring at the end of May. Please join us for a coffee and cake reception in his honor, immediately following his last service on Sunday, May 27. Come and share your fond memories and best wishes with Frank and Anne as they begin this next stage in their lives. If you cannot attend, please consider sharing your thoughts with a note or a card. See page 8.

Recurring Events

YRUU—Youth Group

Wednesdays at 7pm in the Common Room. Our weekly youth group at church meets September - May. Need more information? Contact the advisors at yruumaha@gmail.com. The last meeting this year is 5/16.

Choir

Wednesdays at 7pm in the Sanctuary. Would you like to join the choir? Contact our Choir Director William at choirdirector@firstuomaha.org.

Women's Religious Studies Group

This group meets every Thursday, except for the 3rd week of the month at 1pm in the Merritt Lounge. We're reading *Idiot's Guide to Philosophy* by Jay Stevenson. For questions or information, please contact Linda Parker, lparkerlib@gmail.com.

Insight Meditation

Every Thursday, 5pm to 5:50pm in the Whitney Young Classroom. If new to meditation, you may wish to attend the 6pm meeting (see below).

Dharma Chautauqua

Every Thursday, 6pm to 7:30pm, in the Whitney Young Classroom. This group reflects a free and open-minded exploration of ideas and practices found within Buddhism, mindfulness, and spiritual, psychological, and recovery literature.

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 Kemper at scott.kemper@gmail.com.

Future Events

UU Summer Kids Camp 2018

June 11-15. Contact Jan at dre@firstuomaha.org for info.

POPS: Parents of Preschoolers

Saturday, June 16 at 5:45pm in the Common Room. All parents of preschoolers (from littles through primary grades) are invited to attend POPS Nights to connect with other parents from both First and Second Unitarian communities. Childcare is provided on-site. Bring a dish to share and BYOB. Grown-ups will gather in the Common Room. Kids will eat and play in the nursery. Kindly RSVP (for adults and children) to Sarah Eades Hamilton (email: seades.hamilton@gmail.com)

First Steps: A Class for Visitors

Sunday, June 17 at 11:45am in the Whitney Young Room. See page 17.

Leadership Talk Back

Sunday, June 24 at 11:30am in the Common Room. Note: We will not have a Leadership Talk Back in May due to the Annual Meeting and other events. If you have questions for the MTC please email MTC@firstuomaha.org. If you have questions for the board, email board@firstuomaha.org.

Pride Parade 2018

Saturday, June 30. See page 16 for details how YOU can get involved.

Vocal Recital: Fundraiser for Black Lives Matter

Sunday, July 1 at 2pm in the Sanctuary. Enjoy an afternoon recital featuring our talented baritone choir member, Bill Tull. Childcare provided with RSVP. See the Facebook event here: www.facebook.com/events/2039897176251221/.

Heart & Hand Auction May/June Events with Open Seats

You can still snag seats for the auction events listed below. To get info and buy tickets [click here](#), use the "Auction" button on the main church webpage, or email auction@firstuomaha.org. All proceeds go to the church.

May 5—*Kentucky Derby Day Party* 3-6:30pm (host-Withem, off-site, \$25/seat).

May 12—*Dueling Sopranos Concert* 7pm (hosts-McNamara, Schmidt, Sedlacek, Wallace, Pidgeon, DeVries) at church, \$20/seat. Free childcare provided with RSVP. See page 10.

May 19—*Tie One On VI: Ladies' Night Out* 7pm (host-Neff/Shurson, off-site, \$15/seat).

June 2—*Family-friendly Hike at Tranquility Park* 9:45am (host-Hamilton, off-site, \$10/family).

June 9—*Garden Party!* 6pm (host-Byrd, off-site, \$25/seat).

ANNUAL MEETING NOTICE

The 149th Annual Congregational Meeting of First Unitarian Church of Omaha will take place at the church on Sunday, May 20 at 12:00 p.m.

Eligible voting members* of the church will adopt an operating budget for the 2018-19 church year; elect a President-elect, President (Maria Wallace is completing Wendy Hessler's term), members of the Board of Trustees, a Trustee of the Trust Fund, and Nominating Committee members; hear select reports from church leaders; vote to name Rev. Frank Rivas a minister emeritus of this church; vote to approve changes to the Capital Trust; vote to authorize use of \$20,000 from the Preserve our Building Fund for the Sanctuary Window Project; and reveal our Unitarian of the Year! The Capital Trust information and resolution, including recommended changes, has been posted to the church website. Go to www.firstuomaha.org/captrust. An informational meeting on the Capital Trust changes will be held at the church on Sunday, May 6 at 12:00 p.m. in the Sanctuary. If you have questions about the Capital Trust and the proposed changes, please do attend this informational session with our treasurer Walt Jesteadt and Board President Alan Vovolka.

For the Annual Meeting, childcare will be provided and your Board of Trustees will host coffee hour following the 10:30 a.m. service and provide snacks and drinks to help tide you over during the meeting. We encourage all members to attend this important church event on May 20th.

If you are not able to attend this meeting in person and would like to view it online, please contact the church office (admin@firstuomaha.org) by Tuesday, May 1st to let us know. We will attempt to stream the annual meeting online for those who cannot attend in person. Please note: our streaming process still faces some technical challenges, and we cannot guarantee that it will work perfectly. We will not stream the meeting unless we have church members who have notified the church office that they need the meeting streamed online.

**Individuals are eligible to vote who have been members of the church for at least three months and have made a financial contribution in their name to the church between April 20, 2017 and April 20, 2018.*

Stewardship Update

By Mary Kay Peters

We would like to give a big thanks to everyone who stepped up and helped with the annual Pledge Campaign this year. We have 131 pledges totaling \$256,558, including the Holland bequest. Last year on 4/21/17, our total was \$233,327 from 118 pledges. We are really close to realizing our budget goal of \$265,000! We would also like to remind everybody that if you missed pledging, you can still do so.

Go to this link to download the pledge form: <http://www.firstuomaha.org/stewardship>

You can email your completed pledge form to the church office: admin@firstuomaha.org

Or mail the pledge form to the church: First Unitarian Church, 3114 Harney St., Omaha, NE 68131

Thanks for all your love and support for the church, let's all keep making our dreams a reality.

A special thank you to the Stewardship volunteers who spoke during Sunday services, helped with the Hamilton & Eggs Brunch, assisted in mailing the pledge packet and reaching out to members. Thank you!

Letter from Our Church President

By Alan Vovolka

The 149th Annual Congregational Meeting of First Unitarian Church of Omaha will be held at the Church on Sunday, May 20 at 12pm. Church members will vote on an operating budget for the 2018-19 church year and elect members of the Board of Trustees, a Trustee of the Trust Fund, and Nominating Committee members. This year we will also consider revising the Capital Trust Agreement, and decide whether to use money from the Preserve Our Building fund to complete repairs to the sanctuary windows. These are important decisions for the church and must be made by a quorum of church members, which, this year, means about 50 people; so please plan to attend.

Many congregation members have contributed to the Preserve Our Building fund over the years, confident that the money would be used to care for the beautiful edifice that none of us built, but all of us enjoy. In order to insure that the money would be used wisely, the founders of the fund chose to require a congregational vote to approve spending.

Similarly, when the Capital Trust Agreement was written in 1981, it specified that changes to the agreement could only be made by a vote of the congregation. The trust was intended to continue indefinitely into the future, providing money to the church each year by preventing the “principal” from being spent without a congregational vote, but moving all of the “income” out of the fund and into the church treasurer’s control, for use by the board.

Since 1981, the world of finance has changed in significant ways. In order to comply with the original intent of the agreement in the modern financial world, some changes have been proposed by trustees of the trust fund, board members, and others who have the stamina to revise and re-revise legal documents until reaching agreement that the changes strike an appropriate balance that achieves the contradictory goals of saving money for future needs while spending money for current needs.

Because managed funds (even index funds are managed) have legal requirements to report certain internal events as affecting “principal” and “income” in specific ways that can exaggerate (or obfuscate) variations from year to year in the amount that is made available for current church expenses, a flat 4% annually is recommended as a maximum to be delivered to the board for the budget. This percentage is below historic yields so it should preserve the fund while preventing budget shortages or bonanzas. This change also frees the trustees of the trust fund to invest for the long-term without micro-managing for income in one church year or the next.

Another proposed change is to allow the trustees of the trust fund to accept and manage other church money, under the treasurer’s and board’s control, that has not generally been invested as profitably as the trust fund has been. This other money would be tracked separately and made available when needed. The decision to move other church money into or out of trust fund control would be made by the church board. The objective here is to improve management of church money overall.

For those of you who want further explanation of the details, or who have opinions about these changes, please attend the special informational meeting on Sunday, May 6 at noon in the Sanctuary. There is also a link to a marked-up copy of the Capital Trust Agreement and an explanation of the changes on the church website: www.firstuomaha.org/captrust.



Farewell Rev. Frank Reception

Our beloved minister, Rev. Frank Rivas, will be retiring at the end of May.

Please join us in the common room for a coffee and cake reception in his honor, immediately after his last service on

Sunday, May 27.

Come and share your fond memories and best wishes with Frank and Anne as they begin this next stage of their lives.

If you cannot attend, please consider sharing your thoughts with a note or a card.

What's in a Name Tag?

By Carrie Helmberger, Membership Coordinator

Have you ever wondered, “Why do we wear these name tags and why are there so many different versions of them?”

Let me shed a little light on these burning questions for you.

- We wear nametags because, let's be honest, a lot of times we see people week after week and we don't always remember their names. A nametag helps take away a little of the pressure, making it easier to do that whole face-with-name recognition thing.
- Black plastic nametags (with pin backs)-- belong to our members who have been a part of the church the longest.
- Blue metallic nametags (with magnetic backs)--belong to our long -term members who just wanted a pretty blue name tag, to our more recent members, those who have just joined, or those of us who have lost our original name tag and needed a replacement*
- Visitors who fill out the yellow information sheet are greeted at their second visit with a white, paper name-tag because members want to get to know them and make them feel welcomed. We want them to feel as if they belong, because they do!
- After a visitor has been with us for a while (8 or more visits), they will see that their plain white nametag now has a pretty blue stripe. This indicates that they are further interested in what our church has to offer. The blue stripe mirrors the blue cup at coffee hour, indicating the visitor feels safe enough at First Unitarian to stick around. It also means the visitors have been attending service long enough that their faces will be familiar to our members.

*By the way members, can fill out a nametag request form, and with a \$12 fee you too can have a blue magnetic nametag of your own! Please contact the office at admin@firstuomaha.org today.

Why Do We Have Pink Attendance Sheets?

You have probably seen the note in the Order of Worship announcements that says: Please sign in on the pink sheets in each pew. The information gathered will not only help us count attendance at each service but will let us know that someone has not been seen lately and may need assistance. These pink sheets were first introduced as a way to track the attendance at each of the services. We take attendance so we know how many friends, members and visitors are here on Sundays.

Attendance helps us determine how many orders of worships to print. Plus, if we notice that someone is missing for a few weeks, we can reach out and make sure that person is okay. The office and its volunteers appreciate that folks have been signing in on the pink sheets. Thank you!



MAY 12TH 7PM

DUELING SOPRANOS RECITAL

\$20 Tickets Go Towards General Budget of Church

Listen to four of our favorite First UU vocal sopranos and violinist perform some of the funniest, romantic, and most thrilling classical selections with Victory Sedlacek accompanying. Carolyn McNamara will provide refreshments befitting the occasion, as the lovely benefactress of the group. Babysitting Provided with RSVP. Reserve or buy tickets by emailing auction@firstuuomaha.org or by going to the auction website.

MARIA WALLACE

—

PEG PIDGEON

—

MARIE SEDLACEK

—

KATRINA SCHMIDT

—

NOLAN DEVRIES

—

VICTORY SEDLACEK

3114 Harney Street
Omaha, NE 68131

www.auctria.com/auction/2017HHAuction

May 12th 7pm

OMAHA GIVES!

a 24-hour charitable challenge

AND SO CAN YOU!!!

Wednesday, May 23th 12 am-12 pm

A 24-hour, online, charitable challenge to benefit metro-area nonprofits.
YOU can participate in Omaha Gives! with a minimum gift of only \$10.

First Unitarian Church of Omaha will be participating, with all proceeds supporting our **Midtown Helping Hands** program (formerly called Neighborhood Ministry).

This program provides support to the many people who come to our church door each week asking for emergency help (food, bus ticket, toiletries, etc). This particular church program was selected to appeal broadly to Omaha residents and because it is not budget supported. To learn more about Midtown Helping Hands, please contact the church office. *(Note, you may use Omaha Gives! to support church programs other than Helping Hands, but you will need to contact the church office to specify the program you want credited. Please do not pay your pledge this way, however.)*

**Please go online on May 23 to support First Unitarian Church's
Midtown Helping Hands team, and encourage your friends to join us!**

**Direct link to Midtown Helping Hands (First Unitarian Church)
Omaha Gives! profile:**

[https://www.omahagives.org/index.php?
section=organizations&action=overview&fwID=1540](https://www.omahagives.org/index.php?section=organizations&action=overview&fwID=1540)

Thank you!

Hope in Action

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

WHO IS SERVED?

Church members, friends, regular attendees and their spouses are eligible for assistance from Hope in Action.

WHO CAN HELP?

Everyone! Hope in Action is an opportunity for everyone in our church community to support each other by sharing knowledge, skills and resources.

Hope in Action will use church communications, including the enews, to let our church community know when help is needed to respond to a request for support. And we will report back to the church community about how we were able to respond. All communication will be done in a manner that maintains the degree of confidentiality requested by the person seeking assistance.

WHAT SUPPORT CAN BE EXPECTED?

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

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

HOW TO ASK FOR SUPPORT

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

Here are the ways you can ask for support from Hope in Action. You may send an email to hopeinaction@firstuomaha.org or use the Hope in Action link on the church website. Or, you may simply complete a Caring Card, located in the church pews and place it in the offering plate.

WHO DECIDES WHAT SUPPORT WILL BE OFFERED?

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

COMMUNITY MEALS

Every Saturday, churches in our area join together to cook a meal, serve their neighbors and bring a sense of community to our neighborhood at First Baptist Church. Our church has committed to the following Saturday for Community Meals: **Sept. 22nd**. Please mark your calendar and contact me if you are interested in helping. 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.

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 blessing bags to people who come to the church door from our area. Your change makes a difference! Thank you for your generosity!

SHARE THE PLATE

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. Our Share the Plate recipient for May is **PFLAG** (Parents, Families and Friends of Lesbians and Gays), the United States' largest organization for parents, families, friends, and allies united with people who are lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer (LGBTQ). By meeting people where they are and collaborating with others, PFLAG realizes its vision through: - Support for families, allies and people who are LGBTQ - Education for ourselves and others about the unique issues and challenges facing people who are LGBTQ - Advocacy in our communities to change attitudes and create policies and laws that achieve full equality for people who are LGBTQ. For more information, please visit: <http://www.pflag-omaha.org/>.

WAYS TO HELP

The YES Meal Prep for May is on Friday, 5/18. We will serve taco salad and fruit. Help is needed in the kitchen from 9am to noon. Can you help? Sign up by emailing Kim: kjcallaghan@hotmail.com. If you can't come to help prep the meal, you can still make a difference. We need donations of personal care products such as tampons, shampoo, soap, and deodorant please. You can arrange to drop those items off. Contact Kim for more details.

Ways You Can Get Involved

Sunday Morning & YOU

Do you enjoy the EMR and the Choir? Do you want to join the EMR or Choir but don't sing or cannot play an instrument? Did you know that YOU could still be a key player? How? Join the Sound Team. If you can use a laptop or a smart phone, you can help with the sound system! Contact the church office today to find out how you can get involved. Help us make Sunday mornings sound even better. We need you! Email: admin@firstuomaha.org.

Pride Parade 2018!

Pride Parade in June Pride is right around the corner! We are looking for several enthusiastic individuals, couples and families to work on organizing our efforts. Please email if you are interested in being a part of the planning committee. We need your help to make it happen. Contact Peg at sjconnect@firstuomaha.org. See page 16 for more information.

Midwest Leadership School

MidWest Leadership School is a week-long intensive program in leadership and group dynamics. Led by lay and ordained staff with a deep understanding of UU congregations,

MWLS:

- develops both youth and adults into congregational leaders,
- provides leadership tools and skills
- deepens Unitarian Universalist identity.

This is an extremely intense week of workshops, discussions, intimate small groups, worship preparation, personal theological exploration and growth. For more information, go to <https://www.mwls.org/>.

Dates: July 15-21, 2018.

Location: Luther College in Decorah Iowa.

Interested? Email admin@firstuomaha.org. Thank you!



Parking at Church

Parking is directly west of the church in the surface parking lot or on the street. If you are able to park in the Midtown Crossing garage to the west of our parking lot, it would leave our small parking lot for visitors and those who need to park closer to the building. You may park in the Midtown Crossing Parking Garage to the west of the church lot. The entrance to the parking garage is on Farnam Street. Have your ticket validated downstairs in the Common Room. Find the ticket-validating machine on the south side of the Common Room on the bookcase. **You must have your ticket validated for free parking.** Questions? Contact the church office at admin@firstuomaha.org.

General Assembly 2018

June 20-24



General Assembly 2018 will take place at the Kansas City Convention Center, 301 W 13th St, Kansas City, MO 64105

See this site for all the information and pricing: <https://www.uua.org/ga/registration>.

If you plan to attend please contact the [church office](#).

Gratitude Team Seeks Suggestions

The church has instituted the creation of a Gratitude Team whose purpose will be to insure that members of our church community are appropriately recognized for their time and effort in helping our community reach its stated Mission and Goals. Initial team members are Joe Schaaf, Mike McAtee and Nadine Keith. If you have suggestions of individuals who should be recognized contact team members or email names to: gratitude@firstuomaha.org.

A Note from Jan

By Jan Wilson, Director of Religious Education

Dear Parents,

Our gatherings are joyful times where we are secure in the knowledge that our children are receiving a rich and varied religious education, where they are allowed to flourish in love and acceptance. Our RE teachers offer their amazing gifts of time and talent. We have just one issue to improve the Sunday experience.

Will you join with me in supporting the needs of our RE teachers, our school-age students and our church community? I will be describing when to collect kids from the upstairs classroom and what is needed from parents in the area of supervision after Sunday school.

After the Sunday service, parents are free to attend coffee hour and to allow kids to play after Sunday school in the upstairs classroom. As DRE, it is advisable and important for me to welcome new parents at coffee hour. Our dedicated RE teachers also feel the need to get to know adults and to socialize. For this reason, I am asking parents of school-age kids to collect their children around 11:45am to noon after the service. If you are busy with other responsibilities, such as hospitality for instance, please ask another adult to gather and supervise your child for you.

Nursery children have a paid professional on hand until 12:30. There is no change in guidelines for nursery parents.

I am grateful for the opportunity to know you and your whole family. You lift me up. Thank you so much for your support.

Jan

P.S. On the next page we have our Summer Camp flyer. Please be sure your kids are signed up by May 15th. Contact me at 402-990-2200 with questions.



“Soul Matters” Is Coming to the First Unitarian Church of Omaha!

By Mike McAtee, Soul Matters Team Leader

I’m happy and super excited to announce that the Ministry Team Council agreed at its April meeting to adopt the “Soul Matters Sharing Circle” program beginning with the 2018-2019 church year! The Soul Matters Sharing Circle is a network of UU congregations who have adopted the Soul Matters’ small group curriculum. As with other small group programs, its main goal is to foster circles of trust and deep listening. However, Soul Matters adds five unique [components](#). One of the most important of these is that the Soul Matters small groups “*are designed as a companion program to a congregation’s worship and religious education ministries.*”

I invite you to go to the Souls Matters website (<https://www.soulmatterssharingcircle.com>) to learn more about the program and the extensive resources it provides. If you like what you see and want to help get this program off the ground and successfully established please contact any member of the Souls Matters Team (Mike McAtee, Tom Seguin, Katrina Schmidt) directly or email us at soulmatters@firstuomaha.org.

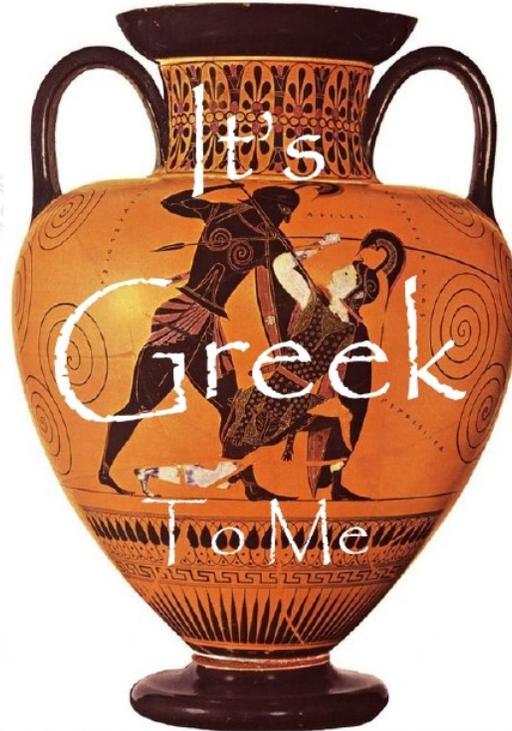
A field trip every day

Summer Art Camp, 2018

Art, Theater, Literature
Philosophy
Architecture

Government
Athletics
Language

So much of
our thinking comes to us from the
Ancient Greeks
First Unitarian Church



Mon. thru Fri. 9:00-3:30

June 11-15

Contact Jan: dre@firstuomaha.org

For kids who have finished grades K-6

Why I Am A Member of First Unitarian Church

By Chris Krull

At times the light within me goes out and needs to be rekindled. First U is a place where I find sparks.

I like to think of it as looking out over your lawn on a warm summer evening when the fireflies are out. Sometimes the sparks are near, sometimes farther away, but if I wait, one will be close.

My family has found community and support at church. I feel intellectually and spiritually challenged. My wife, Jeri Thurber, has found support as she works to better the world. My daughter has made friends and learned about the world's religions.

I don't want my church experience to be only comfortable, to be only people who think like I do, and First U has the ability to fill that role.

I am grateful for First U and all those who help me work toward being a better man.

Why I Am A Member of First Unitarian Church

By Mike McAtee

In my short time here, I have come to understand that membership means different things to different people but for me the most important meaning of membership is that I get to be part of something bigger than myself. I get to be part of a loving, supportive, open, thoughtful, and engaged religious community where I can grow spiritually and help others to do the same. I get to gather with like-minded people in our beautiful sanctuary to consider life's important questions through thoughtful and soul feeding sermons. I get to participate in a myriad of small groups where my spiritual concerns are truly listened to and where diversity of opinion is not just respected but encouraged.

While being a member here certainly has its benefits, membership to me also means I have certain responsibilities. I have the responsibility to do my best to uphold the principles upon which our community is based. I have the responsibility to be honest with myself and my fellow members and to share of myself in both time and talent even if that means stepping out of my comfort zone.

Pride Parade 2018 — GET INVOLVED!

Pride Parade in June Pride is right around the corner! We are looking for several enthusiastic individuals, couples and families to work on organizing our efforts. Second Unitarian will most likely participate with us this year, so we can double our strength! Please email if you are interested in being a part of the planning committee. We need your help to make it happen. Contact Peg at sjconnect@firstuomaha.org.

Thank you!! We are looking forward to another strong year of support! For more info about this year's events, go to: <http://heartlandpride.org/events/>.



New to Our Church?

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

The First Steps Class will take place on **Sunday, June 17 at 11:45am** in the Whitney Young Classroom (downstairs on the west side of the church by the nursery).

If you are interested, RSVP to Carrie at coordinator@firstuomaha.org or stop by the Welcome & Engagement Table (in the Common Room downstairs) on the 17th and we'll get you to the right room. Grab a cup of coffee and we will see you there!



New Member Celebration

Sunday, June 3rd at 6pm in the Common Room. New members will be celebrated at this special invitation-only event. Are you interested in joining the church? Please contact Carrie, Membership Coordinator, at coordinator@firstuomaha.org today!

Learn more about church membership at our website: www.firstuomaha.org/membership.

Minister

Frank Rivas

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

Jan Wilson

dre@firstuomaha.org**Membership Coordinator**

Carrie Helmberger

coordinator@firstuomaha.org**Church Administrator**

Catharine Dixon

admin@firstuomaha.org**Organist**

Pat Will

Choir Director

William Miller

choirdirector@firstuomaha.org**Choir Accompanist**

J. Gawf

EMR Director

Stan Harper

Minister Emeritus

Ronald Knapp

Nursery Coordinator

Jenny Hastings

childcare@firstuomaha.org**Nursery Aide**

Gale Callaghan

Custodian

Bobby Medrano

Nominating CommitteeMolly Dewell, Dave Olson,
Kathy Oliver, Carol Ramsey,
Marie Sedlacek, Ben Wallace**THE FLAME**

Deadlines are the 15th of each month.

Word limit: 200. Send submissions to

admin@firstuomaha.org.

Editor/Designer: Cat Dixon

Proofers: Lana Hammel,
Scott Kemper, Lois Norris,
Debbie Hunsberger

Flame Mailing Team:

Debbie Hunsberger, Lois Norris,
Linda Hruska, Kim Callaghan**First Unitarian Church**www.firstuomaha.org

402-345-3039

Meet Our Leaders

Board Members

Alan Vovolka (President), Maria Wallace (President-Elect), Catherine Plumlee (Secretary), Geoff Erickson, Linda Parker, Floyd Prine, Joe Schaaf, Donna Tubach-Davis

Email: board@firstuomaha.org**Trustees of the Capital Trust**

Evelyn Whitehill (2018), Ellen Shurson (2019), Daniel Byrd (2020)

Committee on Ministry

Bruce Godfrey, Collin Hatcher, Carol Ramsey, Donna Tubach-Davis

Ministry Team Council

Rev. Frank Rivas, Nellie Chenoweth, Dave Richardson, Maria Wallace

Email: mtc@firstuomaha.org**Ministry Teams and Team Leaders**

AHA—Sheri Conner

Archives/Heritage Task Force—Dave Richardson & Janet West

Baby Welcoming Team—Becca Hatcher, Katrina Schmidt, & Sara Switzer

Black Lives Matter—Rene Harper

Caring—Louise Jeffrey

Chalice Guild—Kay Lynn Goldner

Community Meals—Diane Withem

CUUPS—Steve Switzer

Early Morning Risers—Mary Kay Peters & Sarah Copeland

Fellowship Team—Judith Wright, Nadine Keith & Nellie Chenoweth

Finance Team—Walt Jesteadt

Forums—Bebe McCammond

Garden—Sharon Conlon

Fundraising Team—Donna Neff & Katrina Schmidt

Hope in Action—Kim Dunovan

Hospitality Teams—Carolyn McNamara

House and Grounds Team—Pierce Carpenter

Listening Circles—Katrina Schmidt

Membership Team—Mike McAtee & Janet West

Midtown Helping Hands—open

Office Team—Carolyn McNamara

Omaha Together One Community—Janet West

Partner Church Team—Janet West

Recycling Coordinator—Jeri Thurber

Social Justice Coordinator—Peg Pidgeon

Stewardship Team—Mary Kay Peters & Peg Pidgeon

Wayside Pulpit—Kim Dunovan

Women's Alliance—Catherine Plumlee

Worship Arts Team—Maria Wallace

Young Adult Group—Taylor & Jessica Eman

YRUU—Geoff Erickson & Carolyn Miller

Comment Box

At the beginning of March, church staff placed a comment box along with comment cards in the foyer. We want to hear from you! Please be sure to include your name, your phone number and the best time to reach you. All comments will be reviewed by the staff and given to the appropriate team/committee. Please give us two weeks to respond to your comment.

Thank you!

Church Events

Compassionate Communication Group

1st & 3rd Tuesdays, 7-8:30pm. See page 4.

3F Book Bonanza

Wednesday, May 2 at 7pm in the Merritt Lounge. See page 4.

CommUnity Night

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

Young Adult Discussion Group

Sunday, May 6 at 11:45am in the Whitney Young Room. See page 4.

Informational Session on the Capital Trust Changes

Sunday, May 6 at 12pm in the Sanctuary. See page 4.

Private Recital

Sunday, May 6 at 4pm.

People's Film Festival

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

Board Meeting

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

Lunch with the Minister

Thursday, May 10 at noon in the Common Room. See page 4.

AHA "Atheists, Humanists, Agnostics!" Meeting

Thursday, May 10 in the Common Room. See page 4.

Private Wedding

Saturday, May 12 at 3pm.

Dueling Sopranos Concert (H&H Auction Event)

Saturday, May 12 at 7pm in the Sanctuary. See page 10 for details.

Women's Alliance

Monday, May 14 at 6:30pm in the Common Room. See page 4.

Election Day — Church as Polling Place

Tuesday, May 15, 8am to 8pm.

Flame Deadline

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

Women's Religious Studies

Covenant Group
Thursday, May 17 at 1pm in the Merritt Lounge.

Young Adult Game Night

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

Private Wedding

Saturday, May 19 at 2pm.

Annual Meeting

Sunday, May 20 at noon in the Sanctuary. See page 6.

Private Recital

Sunday, May 20 at 4pm.

People's Film Festival

Monday, May 21 at 7pm in the Common Room. See page 4.

Book Club

Monday, May 21 at 7pm in the Merritt Lounge. See page 5.

Omaha Gives! 2018

Wednesday, May 23—all day. See page 11.

Taoism Discussion Group

Tuesday, May 22 at 6:30pm in the Common Room. See page 5 for details.

Private Wedding

Saturday, May 26 at 3:30pm.

Private Graduation Party

Saturday, May 26 at 7pm.

Reception for Rev. Frank Rivas

Sunday, May 27 at 11:30am in the Common Room. See page 8.

Church Office Closed 5/28-6/7

Recurring...

Dungeons and Dragons Group Meeting (NOW MEETS OFFSITE)

We meet at Kitty Brougham's house: 2002 Deer Park Blvd on the odd-numbered Sundays at noon.

Bridge Group

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

YRUU (Youth Group) Meeting

Wednesdays at 7pm in the Common Room. Last meeting 5/16.

Choir Rehearsals

Wednesdays at 7pm in the Sanctuary. See page 5.

Women's Religious Studies Group

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

Insight Meditation

Every Thursday, 5pm to 5:50pm in the Whitney Young Classroom. See page 5.

Dharma Chautauqua

Thursdays at 6pm in the Whitney Young Classroom. See page 5.

Future Events...

UU Summer Camp

June 11-15. Contact Jan at dre@firstuomaha.org for info. See page 15.

POPS: Parents of Preschoolers

Saturday, June 16 at 5:45pm in the Common Room. See page 5.

First Steps: A Class for Visitors

Sunday, June 17 at 11:45am in the Whitney Young Room. See 17.

Pride Parade 2018

Saturday, June 30. See page 16 for details how to get involved.

Vocal Recital: Fundraiser for Black Lives Matter

Sunday, July 1 at 2pm in the Sanctuary. See page 5.

Social Media & First U

Find our public Facebook page here: <https://www.facebook.com/firstuomaha/>

Find our closed Facebook group here:

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

You must ask to join the group before you can see the posts.

Find us on Twitter here:

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

Be sure to like the church and follow us!



First Unitarian Church of Omaha
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