

April 2017

The Flame



Page 2

Sunday Services & Forums this Month

Page 7

All-Church Workshop at the Joslyn

Page 17

Visitor Class on April 30th

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

Sunday Services — All are welcome

Sunday, April 2 at 10:30am

“Roots Hold Me Close”

Rev. Frank Rivas

Earth-centered religions, the most recent addition to the acknowledged sources of our faith, expand our understanding of connection and responsibility.

Sunday, April 9 at 10:30am

“A Tough Gratitude”

Rev Frank Rivas

Toward a Buddhist, Taoist, Franciscan, Universalist expression of gratitude.

Sunday, April 16 at 10:30am

“The Truth about Easter”

Rev. Frank Rivas

There’s much about Easter that runs contrary to our experience of life and death, but there is also a truth.

Sunday, April 23 at 10:30am

“Dismantling the Fundamentalist Matrix”

Rev Ed Kelly Jr. (Former Pentecostal preacher)

I will be sharing my story of my journey out of the fear and hate of Fundamentalism, using the image from the 2000 movie “The Matrix,” specifically how my own religious matrix illusions had to be dismantled. I will also address the current religious-political situation and remind you that hope is found in education and remembering the past.

Sunday, April 30 at 10:30am

“The Clock is Ticking”

Kabin Thomas

We have been given a cruel gift called life. The cruelty is knowing it is going to end. Why don't we want to talk about our inevitable end? This sermon explores that question.

Sunday Forums This Month

Each forum is held at 9:30am in the Common Room.

April 2nd: "Project Everlast"

A non-profit organization that works with youth and young adults ages 14 through 24 who have had experience with the foster care system, juvenile justice or are unconnected. Join Schalisha Walker as she explains what Project Everlast does and how people from the community can become involved in volunteering with the organization. She will also talk about some of the barriers that older youth and young adults face when they are preparing to age out of the system and after they have left the system.

April 9th: “The Facts on Climate Change & What YOU CAN DO about It”

Trump’s EPA Administrator Scott Pruitt does NOT believe what 97% of climate scientists say about global warming, but Mary Ruth Stegman does, and she will summarize the facts with a series of excellent slides. She is currently heading OTOC’s Environmental Sustainability Action Team. Elaine Wells, a founding member of the team and long-time environmental activist, will suggest many ways that we can all help to mitigate climate change.

April 16th: “How will State Budget Changes affect our Communities”

At OpenSky Policy Institute, we believe the best choices are informed ones and we work to make sure lawmakers and other leaders have quality data and research to make decisions that help our communities thrive. OpenSky is a non-partisan organization that focuses on tax, budget and education finance policy in Nebraska. Jo Giles, outreach director for OpenSky Policy Institute, will talk about the implications of the 2017 state budget and tax debates and what they could mean for state services such as education and health care, as well as nonprofits and the people they serve.

April 23rd: "Spring into Summer with CUUPS"

Have you ever given a lady a May Basket? Or left one on a door? The practice goes back to Beltaine. Ever wonder what the longest day of the year means to Pagans? Come join the CUUPS group as Kathy Alexander and Mark Tipton explore the origins of these two holidays and what they mean to us today.

April 30th: “Robert’s Rules Made Easy”

Presented by Jaime Alexander with “Resident Parliamentarian” Dave Richardson

Robert’s Rules are used for our congregational and board meetings, sometimes-ah-maybe-not so well. Beginner? Come and learn about procedure, motions and that stuff. Experienced? Come and learn how the chairperson and attendees can work together. My motivation comes from having chaired, in my opinion, the longest, most frustrating congregational meeting ever, and having attended some competitive ones. Our final exam will be our Annual Meeting on Sunday, May 14.

Rev. Elations

Monthly Column from our Minister, Rev. Frank Rivas

I write this April column on the date it's due, 15 March. The temperature is in the 20s, the sky is overcast, and spring seems impossibly distant. Not that this winter has been overly difficult; it hasn't. But, rather, that it promised to leave, yet still lingers.

We human beings know a thing or two about lingering. Which of us, knowing full well that it's time for us to leave, has not held on? We held to our mommies against the terrors of kindergarten, and we hold on still, if with fewer tears.

If we are not careful, we can also linger as a church. Things are just fine, we say to ourselves; why shake them up?

On Saturday, April 29th from 10 to 4 at Joslyn Museum on the Witherspoon stage, the congregation will be invited to participate in a fun, creative workshop entitled "Gather Our Spirit, Dream Our Future." Through the process of appreciative inquiry, we will identify our strengths and envision where these strengths can take us decades into the future. I hope that you will be part of the process. With a clearer sense of our direction, we are more likely to make productive choices along the way.

Of course part of us wants to linger in this moment, for this is a good moment in our community life. But things will change, and we want that change to be in the best possible direction, in the direction of spring.

Blessings,
Frank

Placement of Painting Recap

We appreciate your feedback on the placement of the Tubach painting in our foyer during the month of February. The results were: Fifty-two people voted by placing notecards on the art gallery wall in the Common Room and others by commenting in our Facebook group. Most people were very positive about the painting and fifty people voted to keep it in the foyer where it is hung. Five people commented negatively on the documents hung on either side of the painting. Two people preferred it hung elsewhere.

Thank you for your participation!

Jackie Anderegg, President

Church Events

Teams Meeting

Saturday, April 1 at 2pm in the Whitney Young Classroom. Team leaders, volunteers and anyone interested in church work are invited to attend.

All-Church Celebration: Fiesta

Saturday, April 1 at 6pm in the Common Room. See page 6.

People's Film Festival

Monday, April 3 at 7pm in the Common Room. The movie we'll watch is *The House I Live In*. This documentary shines a harsh light on America's "war on drugs" and its long-term impact on society. Filmmaker Eugene Jarecki captures the stories of dealers, police officers, prison inmates and others affected by the crusade. Details: <https://www.facebook.com/events/262995880790252/>

Examined Life Group

Tuesdays, April 4 and 18 at 7pm in the Merritt Lounge. This is a group determined to become democratic with each participant presenting a topic related to how we assess ourselves personally and as members of society. The ultimate aim is to foster mutual understanding among ourselves and the others attending. We meet the first and third Tuesdays. Interested? Contact Jack at jackheidel@yahoo.com.

CommUnity Night

Friday, April 7 at 5:30pm in the Common Room. All are invited to this potluck event. Come for games, social time and bring something to share.

AHA (Agnostics, Humanists, Atheists) Discussion Group

Thursday, April 13 at 7pm in the Common Room. For those interested in "bring your own dinner," doors open at 6pm. Our series continues with special guest speaker Leslie J. Seymore. She is a long-time ACLU Nebraska board member and is its representative to the ACLU National Board of Directors. Leslie has been invited to tell us what is most concerning about "Trumpism" to our local and national ACLU in the current climate. Also, what can be done to confront those concerns and how we can help.

This talk is pertinent for all social liberals regard-less of theology. The program will include Q&A. Everyone and all viewpoints are welcome. Questions may go to aha@firstuomaha.org.

Women's Alliance

Monday, April 10 at 6:30pm in the Common Room. Women, and those who identify as women, are invited to attend this gathering which will be presented by Susan Whitfield from No More Empty Pots. NMEP is a grass-roots non-profit corporation that connects individuals and groups to improve self-sufficiency, regional food security and economic resilience of urban and rural communities through advocacy and action. Visit their website for more information: www.nmepomaha.org/. Our dinner selection will be chicken breasts in a creamy artichoke sauce, red potatoes, carrots and grilled ciabatta bread. The vegetarian entrée will be a stuffed mushroom. Please email with dietary issues. We ask \$15 which goes to the cost of the dinner, the Merritt Education Fund, the Partner Church scholarship, and various activities at First Unitarian. If this will be your first time attending, please be our guest! You can RSVP by email: Kathryn.lewis.kl@gmail.com or phone: 402-214-2718. Please leave a message. Reservations are needed by April 6.



Young Adult Game Night

Saturday, April 15 at 6:30pm in the Common Room. Join us for games! No RSVP needed. Just come by!

Community Meals

Saturday, April 15, offsite. See page 12.

Spring Carnival

Sunday, April 16. See page 16.

CUUPS Book Study Group:

12 Wild Swans

Sunday, April 16 at 11:30am in the Merritt Lounge. CUUPS will lead a book study on *The 12 Wild Swans: A Journey to the Realm of Magic, Healing and Action*. In this book, renowned leaders in the Wicca movement use a fairy tale to teach about the "reclaiming" model of witchcraft that blends magic and personal growth.

Arts and Crafts Night

Sunday, April 16 at 7pm in the Common Room. Bring your current project and supplies and join us for some artistic fellowship! Contact Kate Godfrey at coachkate@cox.net or 402-880-1327 for details.

The Women's Religious Study Covenant Group

Thursday, April 20 at 1pm in the Merritt Lounge. We will discuss the "Second Step, Look at Your Own World," in *Twelve Steps to a Compassionate Life*. All self-identified women are welcome. If you are interested, please contact Harriet Major at hmajor323@cox.net or 402-391-0248.

People's Film Festival

Monday, April 17 at 7pm in the Common Room. The movie we'll watch is *National Bird* which gives rare insight into the U.S. drone program through the eyes of veterans and survivors, connecting their stories as never seen before in a documentary. Its images haunt the audience and bring a faraway issue close to home. Details: <https://www.facebook.com/events/259129814545199/>

Board Talk Back

Sunday, April 23 at 11:30am in the Common Room. The church board wants to hear from you and will have a table set up in the Common Room to discuss issues that are important to you and the congregation.

Church Events Continued...

Omaha Polyamory Discussion Group

Monday, April 24 at 7pm in the Common Room. We invite any who embrace and support ethical non-monogamy-based loving relationships. We strive to offer a safe place to meet and discuss topics, issues, and hardships we face as polyamorous individuals and families. If you have any questions, please contact Susan at iamdosh@msn.com.

Taoism Discussion Group

Tuesday, April 25 at 6:30pm in the Common Room. Join us to discuss anything and everything related to Taoism! As Taoism is best understood through practice rather than theory, the goal of this group is to provide a participatory space to explore how Taoism is applied in daily life, with an emphasis on experience. With our direct experiences as a reference point, we can then delve into the main texts of Taoism. This group will be led by Geoff Erikson. Contact him at: gerickson03@yahoo.com.

POPs (Parents of Preschoolers)

Friday, April 28 at 5:45pm. 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. Childcare is provided on-site (please RSVP). Please bring a dish to share. 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 or call/text: 402-306-6339).

Gather Our Spirit, Dream Our Future—All Church Workshop

Saturday, April 29. See page 7 for more information.

First Steps: A Class for Visitors

Sunday, April 30 at 11:45am in the Merritt Lounge. New to First U? Have questions? All are welcome to attend this session. See page 17 for details.

CUUPS Beltaine Celebration

Sunday, April 30 in the Common Room. Ritual will start at 7pm; arrive between 6:30 to 6:45pm.

Beltaine is where May Day comes from. Come celebrate the start of summer with us. Potluck to follow and childcare will be provided. Merry meet!

Book Club

Monday, May 1 at 7pm in the Merritt Lounge. Book: *American Amnesia: How the War on Government Led Us to Forget What Made America Prosper* by Jacob S. Hacker and Paul Pierson. Hacker will deliver the final Holland Lecture on May 10.

Recurring Events

Women's Religious Studies Group

This group meets every Thursday, except for the 3rd week of the month at 1pm in the Merritt Lounge. New members welcome. Our book is *The Battle for God* by Karen Armstrong. For information, please contact Rae at raeb1@hotmail.com.

Lunch With the Minister

This group will take a break and be back in September.

Dungeons and Dragons Group Meeting

Meets the 1st and 3rd Sunday of each month in the Whitney Young Room at 12:30pm. All D&D role players are invited. Questions? Contact Roman at RobertmNoriega@gmail.com, 402-769-4260.

Bridge Group

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

Holland Lecture

Wednesday, May 10. See page 8.

Annual Meeting

Sunday, May 14. See page 8.

All-Church Retreat

Scheduled the weekend of June 10-11. Go here: <http://www.firstuomaha.org/retreat>

Ways You Can Get Involved

Listening Circles Forming Now!

Q: What is a Listening Circle?
A: A small group of individuals – friends, visitors, or members of UU who listen and discuss various topics. Both the topics and format of discussion are designed to encourage active listening, which strengthens and deepens relationships. More details on page 15 in this newsletter or see here: <http://www.firstuomaha.org/circles>.

Easter Carnival — April 16, 2017

We need your help for this fun, one-time event! Are you interested in helping with our Easter Carnival? We will have adults stationed at each carnival game on the East lawn. Yes, just like the White House. Contact Jan at dre@firstuomaha.org to sign up or for more info. Thanks!

Garden Help

Volunteers needed this spring to help spread donated mulch on the church grounds. Work in 1-3 hour increments, shorter time commitment when more people show up. Once the grounds are covered, you're off the hook for the season. Thanks! Contact Sharon Conlon, Garden Team Leader sharonconlon@msn.com, 402-332-7086.

Stream & Audio Team

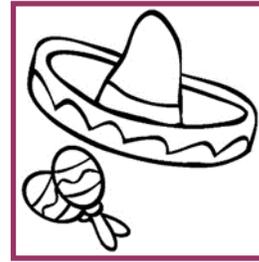
Want to help on Sunday mornings? We need you! Sign up today to help us stream the Sunday morning service online or to run the sound system. Training will be thorough and fun! Contact the church office today at admin@firstuomaha.org.

Forums!

Can you help with our forums? Our Forum Coordinator Denise Allain will be out of town a couple of Sundays and needs a helper please. Could you help? Email her at forum@firstuomaha.org.

For more ways to help or get involved, go to: <http://www.firstuomaha.org/help>

Fiesta!



Join us for an
All Church Stewardship Celebration
in the Common Room

Saturday, April 1st
6:00 – 9:00 p.m.

Taco bar with beef, chicken, and vegetarian/vegan selections.

Cash bar including beer and Margaritas.

Pizza for the kids!

Reservations are required by March 27th

Contact admin@firstuomaha.org or 402-345-3039 ext. 101

Make childcare reservations at childcare@firstuomaha.org

Hosted by First Unitarian Church
and the 2017-2018 Stewardship Team





A First Unitarian Church Workshop

Gather Our Spirit, Dream Our Future

A UU Hootenanny...a creative experience
in moving our church forward!

Sat. April 29
10:00-4:00
Witherspoon Stage
Joslyn Art Museum

RSVP for lunch and
childcare to Cat
402 345-3039 or
admin@firstuuomaha.org

All members, friends, visitors welcome!

Outside Opportunity: OTOC Fundraiser

The OTOC Annual Fundraiser will be held on Saturday, April 1, 6pm to 9:30pm at the Kaneko Center in the Old Market. There will be great food and music (including our own Kyle Knapp) and a silent auction. Ticket are \$20 each. Visit www.otoc.org for more information.

Holland Lecture

Speaker: Jacob Hacker

Topic: American Amnesia: How the War on Government Led Us to Forget What Made America Prosper

Wednesday, May 10 at the Holland Performing Arts Center.

Description:

This lecture in 2017 will cover material in Jacob Hacker's most recent book, *American Amnesia: How the War on Government Led Us to Forget What Made America Prosper*. Like every other prospering democracy, the United States developed a mixed economy that channeled the spirit of capitalism into strong growth and healthy social development. In this bargain, government and business were as much partners as rivals. Public investments in education, science, transportation, and technology laid the foundation for broadly based prosperity. Programs of economic security and progressive taxation provided a floor of protection and business focused on the pursuit of profit—and government addressed needs business could not.

The mixed economy was the most important social innovation of the twentieth century. It spread a previously unimaginable level of broad prosperity. It enabled steep increases in education, health, longevity, and economic security. And yet, extraordinarily, it is anathema to many current economic and political elites. And as the advocates of anti-government free market fundamentalism have gained power, they are hell-bent on scrapping the instrument of nearly a century of unprecedented economic and social progress. In *American Amnesia*, Hacker and Pierson explain how—and why they must be stopped.

More information about the lecture series can be found here:

<http://www.firstuomaha.org/holland-lecture-series>.

Tickets will be available starting April 10 by calling Ticket Omaha.

Save the Date

Church Annual Meeting — The 148th Annual Congregational Meeting of First Unitarian Church of Omaha will take place at the Church on Sunday, May 14 at 12pm.

Eligible voting members* of the church will adopt an operating budget for the 2017-18 church year and elect a President-elect, members of the Board of Trustees, a Trustee of the Trust Fund, and Nominating Committee members, hear select reports from church leaders, vote to approve a new mission statement, vision statement, and a covenant, and reveal our Unitarian of the Year!

Childcare will be provided and your Board of Trustees will host coffee hour following the 10:30am service and provide snacks and drinks to help tide you over during the meeting.

We encourage all members to attend this important church event.

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 Thursday, May 4th 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 14, 2016 and April 14, 2017.*

Our Church Needs a Dream...

Why Are We Creating a Mission, A Vision and a Covenant? We are in a unique position of energy and stability in our church to increase our membership, our programs, our identity and to plan our future with clarity. **Our mission** will convey who we are in Omaha and why we exist, and will serve as a central guide for our ministry, our programs, the use of our building and our budget.

We will create this together in a creative, inclusive, structured, playful workshop. Snacks and lunch will be provided with donations welcome. We will also have child care at the church.

Our vision will be crafted out of our dreaming about our most imaginative presence, our best future, and our best effort. We need your dreaming.

Our covenant will be created based on our best experiences with each other, the best examples of respect and integrity for our diversity and our appreciation for what we share. It will serve as the model of how we deal with each other in all aspects of our community. It will be a reference for all of us and a message to everyone who comes to us.

We will be led in a process called appreciative inquiry by Kirk Witzberger, a leadership expert who is a UU in Iowa City. Our own leaders in the effort are: John Goldner, Jack Round, Caitlin Seguin, Kate Wiig, Jan Wilson, Jennifer Larsen, Geoff Erickson, Kim Dunovan, Rev. Frank Rivas and Jackie Anderegg.

Gather Our Spirit Dream Our Future

(A UU Hootenanny...a creative, fun experience in moving our church forward)

All Members, Friends and Visitors Are Welcome

Sat. April 29th —10am to 4pm on the Witherspoon Stage, Joslyn Museum

RSVP by Friday, April 21 for lunch and childcare to Catharine at 402-345-3039 or admin@firstuuomaha.org.

See the flyer on page 7.

From Jan Wilson, Director of Religious Education

If it's spring, it's time to start planning our traditional Spring Carnival. I am collecting volunteers to supervise our game stations. We will have Easter egg hunts for the little ones and a separate one for the bigger kids. It's always a joy to hear the squeals of laughter as the kids enjoy games and fun activities.

Parents are highly encouraged to stop in for food and fun with other families of small children at our POPS event. Parents of Preschoolers are meeting Fri., March 31 at 5:45pm. Miss Jenny will be providing childcare. She loves to know ahead of time, RSVP to saraheades.hamilton@gmail.com.

Our K-5 classes have planted seeds in preparation for transplanting their seedlings in our children's garden. We have big dreams for many varieties of carrots, green beans, tomatoes and more. Thanks to passionate gardener/Mom/teacher Jody Petrow for her inspiration.

Parking Garage Info at First Unitarian

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

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



If you have any questions or concerns, contact the church office at admin@firstuomaha.org.

Annual Awards and the Nominating Committee

Please suggest names of church members you would like to see recognized for their particular service to the church and to the community. Names will be submitted by filling out the form (go here: <http://www.firstuomaha.org/nominating>) or see next page or by filling out the forms that will be in the Orders of Service the first couple of Sundays in April or by emailing the Nominating Committee.

Email: nominations@firstuomaha.org. All forms and nominations need to be in by Sunday, April 16.

If you or someone you know is interested in holding a position at the church either on the board, the Nominating Committee or Capital Trust please contact the Nominating Committee as soon as possible.

Thank you!

The Nominating Committee: Kim Callaghan, Molly Dewell, Nadine Keith, David Olson, Carol Ramsey, Ben Wallace; Jack Round, Convener

Annual Awards Form 2017

First Unitarian Church would like to take this opportunity to recognize some of our own outstanding volunteers. The Nominating Committee is seeking input from the congregation for recognition in the same general categories as have been used in the past. They are:

Unsung UU Award affirms those UU's whose actions inspire, support, and express Unitarian Universalism but have not been previously recognized. The award is given to a person or group whose lifetime activities have made a significant contribution to the cause of Unitarian Universalism.

Suggested Recipient(s): _____

Reason for Nomination: _____

Keeping the Faith Award was established to recognize people who live by UU principles. It is presented to persons who have worked to keep Unitarian Universalism alive in their community and who touch the lives of congregation and community members in a positive way.

Suggested Recipient(s): _____

Reason for Nomination: _____

Social Justice Award pays tribute to those who witness to the ideals of social justice and responsibility so important to our UU heritage. Two awards are presented: one to an adult and one to a youth (under age 18).

Suggested Recipient(s): _____

Reason for Nomination: _____

Religious Education Award to honor an individual or individuals who have made a significant contribution to religious education.

Suggested Recipient(s): _____

Reason for Nomination: _____

The Heritage Award to recognize an individual or group who have made a significant contribution to preserving, understanding, and celebrating our Unitarian Universalist history.

Suggested Recipient(s): _____

Reason for Nomination: _____

Additionally, at the annual meeting each year, a member of our church receives our **Unitarian of the Year Award** to recognize an individual or individuals who have made a difference in our Congregation over the past year.

Suggested Recipient: _____

Reason for Nomination: _____

Please submit your suggestions by filling in the names and supporting comments in the spaces above and return this form to the church office, drop it in the offering plate on Sunday, or send an email message to nominations@firstuuomaha.org. We would appreciate your response as soon as possible. **Deadline is 4/16.**

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@firstuuomaha.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 (401 Park Ave).

Did you know? You may be reimbursed for money you spend making food for one of our meals or you may choose to donate it.

Our next date to serve is **Saturday, April 15**. We will serve fried chicken, potato salad and will only need a few helpers. If you have questions or would like to sign-up to cook, serve, or clean-up, please contact Diane. Thanks! Diane Withem, dianewithem@gmail.com.

Share the Plate This Month

Each month one-half of the loose currency collected in the offering plate is donated to a cause that advances important principles of Unitarianism. Our Share the Plate recipient for April is **Community Meals**. You can read more about this program on this page.

Change for Change

Each week generous people put change in the collection plate. This change goes to the Sunday School kids who decide what to do with the money. In the past they have helped Community Meals and International Bridges for Justice. The kids are now donating this change to the Neighborhood Ministry Team, which purchases bus tickets and food cards and gives out blessings bags to people who come to the church door from our area. Your change makes a difference! Thank you for your generosity!

MidWest Leadership School

Dates: July 9-15

Location: Luther College, Decorah, Iowa

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.

In exchange for wholehearted commitment to a strenuous schedule, MWLS offers a life-changing and congregation-nourishing opportunity. For more information, go here: <https://www.mwls.org/register>. If you are interested, please contact the church office. Adult spaces are now filled but we have three more youth spots available.



Oak Brook Marriott in Oak Brook, Illinois (Chicago area) on April 28-30, 2017.

Early bird registration until April 5, Children must register before the early bird date. Scholarship requests must be in by the early bird date. Conference discounted rate for a room at the hotel will be available until April 12. Final registration deadline Friday, April 21. Registration will be possible at the door at the regular price with no meals. The hotel restaurant and coffee shop will be available. Go here for more information: <https://www.midamericauua.org/events/regional-assembly>



UUA GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Planning has begun for **General Assembly 2017** at the Ernest N. Morial Convention Center, 900 Convention Center Blvd, New Orleans, LA 70130.

Hotel reservations are available via the GA Housing Reservation System began March 1.

Go here for more information:
<http://www.uua.org/ga>

The Jack-of-all-Trades and Master of Many

Jack W. Perry
December 9, 1927-
February 21, 2017
By Dave Richardson

When a family or a church or a group of friends loses a loved one it is difficult. When the loss is felt so strongly as Jack's was, it is a testament to his character and his sense of humanity. Jack enriched the lives of everyone who knew him. He brought us an abundance of knowledge, laughter and love.

Jack was born in Niagara Falls, NY. His family moved to Canada shortly after his birth. He did not have a conventional childhood. His father's travels as a salesman necessitated a nomadic lifestyle for the family. This combined with his mother's chronic illness made life difficult. Jack noted that because he was constantly changing schools, his early education was sporadic. He dropped out of school at 15. However, he set upon a course to be self-taught, a course he continued for the rest of his life. As a young man, he spent many hours in public libraries reading and learning. Jack devoured books on geography, history, science and yes, *The National Geographic*. He was a voracious reader and a serious thinker. In addition to his wide reading, Jack took a couple of courses at UNO. He was not pursuing a degree, but he pursued the true end of education; wisdom and appreciation of life. I am sure that the younger students learned much from their middle-aged classmate.

As most of you know, in addition to being a voracious reader, he loved spirited debate on a vast array of topics, including political, literary and theological issues. He would discuss with great conviction and earnestness, but no matter how

robust these discussions became, they always ended with Jack's warm grin and genuine respect and affection.

Not long after leaving school at 15, Jack served in the 48th Highlander Regiment of the Canadian Army and later the United States Army. He obtained his GED while stationed at Fort Riley, KS. At a USO Dance in Junction City, KS near Fort Riley, Jack met the love of --his life, Margaret. They married in 1947 and remained married for 69 years. Jack and Margaret moved to Omaha after completing his military service. In Omaha, Jack earned the status of Master Plumber and ran his own plumbing business for many years. He never really retired from plumbing. Jack did plumbing and handyman work well into his 80s, especially for friends and for the church.

In the 1960s Jack and Marge became charter members of the St. Pius X parish in Northwest Omaha. Jack taught CCD classes for the church; he noted that he was not very conventional in his methods, but his students were delighted with his approach, even if some parents and the clergy were not.

Jack joined the First Unitarian Church of Omaha in 1971. He has served in many roles in the church; Board President, Board Secretary, Financial Chair and Chair of Building and Grounds. But these titles don't begin to tell how much Jack has given to his church. In addition to the improvements he made in the building itself, he is also responsible for much of the spirit and sense of community in the church. He rarely missed a social event and often created formal and informal events that reflected his gregarious nature. Jack recently reflected that because of his nomadic early life he was unable to establish lasting friendships. But, he

was determined as a young man to develop his abilities in engaging with others. I have known no one who was better at that than Jack.

Among the family members Jack leaves are his wife Margaret, son Richard Perry and daughter-in-law Janet Perry, daughter Barb Perry Zook and her husband David Zook. Grandchildren include granddaughter Nicole Price and husband Zach and grandson, Michael Zook. Great-grandchildren include Jazlyn age 7, McKenlee age 2 ½, Bailey age 6, and Alayna age 5, and several cousins, nieces and nephews. Additionally, he leaves many loving friends in the First Unitarian Church community.



Listening Circles Now Forming!

What is a Listening Circle?

A small group of individuals – friends, visitors, or members of UU who listen and discuss various topics. Both the topics and format of discussion are designed to encourage active listening, which strengthens and deepens relationships.

What Can Listening Circles Do For Me and Our Community?

A listening circle develops and enhances relationships of participants, builds trust, strengthens listening skills, and develops a safe space for everyone. These skills and relationships will improve all First UU activities as we grow and connect with one another.

What Kind of Topics Will We Discuss?

Both challenging and fun topics are explored. Currently we have prepared these topics: play, living simply, justice, forgiveness, expectations, endings, confronting evil, aloneness, and addictions.

How Often and For How Long Do Groups Meet?

Groups will meet twice a month for an hour to an hour and a half either at church or in homes.

What Does a Meeting Look Like?

A clear format is used for listening circles to ensure everyone is heard. We read several quotes on a single topic, followed by a short period of contemplation, and then discuss the quotes in three rounds.

- Round 1: Each member shares impressions without response.
- Round 2: Discussion. Follow up on ideas expressed, question, and expand.
- Round 3: Final thoughts shared by each individual. Did your viewpoint change from the conversation?

What if I Want to Facilitate One Meeting or More?

Great! The set format for listening circles makes guiding easy. Facilitators do as much or as little as they would like and have the opportunity to receive a vast amount of support. Minimally, just bring the topic of the day. Before your first meeting, you will receive a quick 5-10 minute one-on-one orientation, a manual with suggestions and topics, become a part of an on-line facilitator's community, and have the option of attending a group training meeting.

What Do You Expect of Me if I Join?

We ask that you be committed to attending and let the facilitator know if you cannot. We ask participants to listen and share deeply, be aware how much time they are taking to share, welcome new members, avoid cross talk, avoid judging, avoid giving feedback, avoid "fixing" people, and keep stories shared confidential.

We Want You!

We would like to grow and learn with you in small groups. We hope this will bring together people who may not normally interact with one another, and we hope to strengthen our community. Please email listeningcircles@firstuomaha.org or go to <http://www.firstuomaha.org/circles> to fill out the online form.



Easter Egg Hunt

Fun for Kids

Carnival Games

Some Bunny is Coming to the Easter Carnival!

10:30-11:30 AM

Sun. April 16

First Steps

A class for visitors

Sunday, April 30 at 11:45am in the Merritt Lounge

You are invited to join us as we gather together to get acquainted with the basics of Unitarian Universalism and our vibrant community. There are many ways to connect with the church and we look forward to discussing the unique opportunities offered by First Unitarian Church. Questions? Want to know more? Contact Carrie at coordinator@firstuomaha.org



Team Leaders!

The Church Annual Meeting happens Sunday, May 14. Team reports are due to the office by Monday, April 10 at noon.

Please send your report to admin@firstuomaha.org with "Annual Report" in the subject line of your email.

Here's the format for a team report:

<Team Name>

Leader(s):

Members: <list all of your members. This is a record for our archives.>

Activities & Projects – 2016-2017:

<list all of your team's activities in a brief narrative or bulleted format. Be complete but concise. This is a record for our archives.>

Help us celebrate your efforts this church year and document your team and its projects and successes for archives. If you have questions, please contact the office. See last year's annual reports by [clicking here](#) or contact the church office.

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

Early Service Pianist

Stan Harper

Choir Director

William Miller

choirdirector@firstuomaha.org**Choir Accompanist**

Elizabeth Kelly

Minister Emeritus

Ronald Knapp

Nursery Coordinator

Jenny Hastings

childcare@firstuomaha.org**Custodian**

Bobby Medrano

Nominating CommitteeKim Callaghan, Molly Dewell,
Nadine Keith, Dave Olson, Carol
Ramsey, Ben Wallace**THE FLAME**

Deadlines are the 15th of each month.

Word limit: 200. Send submissions to

admin@firstuomaha.org.Editor/Designer: Cat DixonProofers: Lana Hammel,

Scott Kemper, Lois Norris,

Debbie Hunsberger

Flame Mailing Team:

Debbie Hunsberger, Lois Norris,

Linda Hruska, Kim Callaghan,

Lisa Calhoun

First Unitarian Churchwww.firstuomaha.org

402-345-3039

Meet Our Leaders

Board MembersJackie Anderegg (President), Alan Vovolka (President-Elect), Sheri Conner,
Joe Schaaf (Secretary), Linda Parker, Kabin Thomas, Floyd Prine, Cy Leiseboard@firstuomaha.org**Trustees of the Capital Trust**

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

Committee on Ministry

Skip Ciulla, Jack Round, Donna Tubach-Davis

Ministry Team Council

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

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

Archives—Dave Richardson

Black Lives Matter—Rene Harper

Caring—Louise Jeffrey

Chalice Guild—Kay Lynn Goldner

Community Meals—Diane Withem

Fellowship—Judith Wright, Nadine Keith & Nellie Chenoweth

Finance—Walt Jesteadt

Fundraising—Donna Neff

Hope in Action—Kim Dunovan

Hospitality Teams—Carolyn McNamara

House and Grounds—Pierce Carpenter

Membership—Caitlin & Tom Seguin

Neighborhood Ministry—Royal Carleton

Office—Carolyn McNamara

Omaha Together One Community—Janet West

Partner Church—Janet West

Religious Education—Sheri Conner

Social Justice—Lori Schaaf

Women's Alliance—Nellie Chenoweth

Worship Arts Team—Megan Gustafson

Young Adult Group—Open

YRUU—Adam Sagert and Caroline Miller

Church Events

Teams Meeting

Saturday, April 1 at 2pm in the Whitney Young Classroom.

All-Church Celebration: Fiesta

Saturday, April 1 at 6pm in the Common Room. See page 6.

People's Film Festival

Monday, April 3 at 7pm in the Common Room. See page 4 for details.

Examined Life Group

Tuesday, April 4 and 18 at 7pm in the Merritt Lounge. See page 4 for details.

CommUnity Night

Friday, April 7 at 5:30pm in the Common Room. See page 4.

AHA Meeting (Agnostics, Humanists, Atheists)

Thursday, April 13 at 7pm. See page 4.

Women's Alliance

Monday, April 10 at 6:30pm in the Common Room. See page 4.

Board Meeting

Tuesday, April 11 at 7pm in the Common Room

Flame Deadline

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

Community Meals

Saturday, April 15, offsite. See page 12 for details.

Young Adult Game Night

Saturday, April 15 at 6:30pm in the Common Room. See page 4 for information.

CUUPS Book Study Group

Sunday, April 16 at 11:30am in the Merritt Lounge. See page 4 for information.

Arts & Crafts Night

Sunday, April 16 at 7pm in the Common Room. See page 4 for information.

People's Film Festival

Monday, April 17 at 7pm in the Common Room. See page 4 for details.

The Women's Religious Study Covenant Group

Thursday, April 20 at 1pm in the Merritt Lounge. See page 4.

Board Talk Back

Sunday, April 23 at 11:00am in the Common Room. See page 5 for information.

Polyamory Discussion Group

Monday, April 24 at 7pm in the Common Room. See page 5 for details

Taoism Discussion Group

Tuesday, April 25 at 6:30pm in the Common Room. See page 5 for details.

POPs (Parents of Preschoolers)

Friday, April 28 at 5:45pm in the Common Room. See page 5.

Gather Our Spirit, Dream Our Future—All Church Workshop

Saturday, April 29. See page 7 for more information.

First Steps: A Class for Visitors

Sunday, April 30 at 11:45am in the Merritt Lounge. See page 5.

CUUPS Beltaine Celebration

Sunday, April 30 in the Common Room. See page 5.

Book Club

Monday, May 1 at 7pm in the Merritt Lounge. See page 5 for details.

Recurring...

YRUU Meetings

Wednesdays at 7pm in the Common Room.

Choir Rehearsal

Wednesdays at 7pm in the Sanctuary.

Lunch with the Minister

This group will not meet in this month. We'll start back up again in September.

Women's Religious Studies Group

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

Dungeons & Dragons Group

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

Bridge Group

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

Future Events...

Holland Lecture

Wednesday, May 10 at the Holland Performing Arts Center. See page 8 for details.

Annual Meeting

Sunday, May 14. See page 8.

All-Church Retreat

Scheduled the weekend of June 10-11.

Go here for details: [http://](http://www.firstuomaha.org/retreat)

www.firstuomaha.org/retreat

The
Holland
Lecture Series

Dr. Jacob Hacker

*How the War on Government
Led Us To Forget What
Made America Prosper*



SAVE THE DATE: Wednesday, May 10 • 7:30 pm
Holland Performing Arts Center

**Tickets available
April 10.
See page 8 for
details.**

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

www.firstuomaha.org