



Second Unitarian Church of Omaha

Second Thoughts

What's going on at 2U this month?

August 2nd - Religious Growth & Learning Committee

August 7th - Fellowship Committee

August 8th - Retirees' Group p.12

August 12th - Religious Education Brunch p.8

August 14th - OTOC Summer Training p.12

August 16th - Meditation Group

August 19th - Open Arms Trans Social Group

August 20th - Social Justice Committee

August 21st - Library Committee

August 22nd - Blackstone book club

Summer breaks

- Writing for Spiritual Growth will not meet in August.
- Teen Movie Night will resume in September

First Hour schedule for August

- **August 6th** - TBA
- **August 13th** - *Permaculture -- An Ecosystem Approach to Urban Neighborhood Management* presented by Gus von Roenn from the August Share the Plate recipient Omaha Permaculture.
- **August 20th** - TBA
- **August 27th** - TBA

First Hour runs from 9 a.m. to 10 a.m. in the Sanctuary on Sunday morning. Childcare is provided.

UPCOMING SERVICES

Our Six UU Sources

August 6th: *Lughnasadh*

August 13th: *Jonah Through the Belly of the Whale*

August 20th: *Orma's Orphans*

August 27th: *The Great Way*

See page 15 for more details.

Join Us This Sunday!

Worship Services

10:30 a.m.

SUMMERTIME

Dear Friends,

I write this in the midst of one of the very hot spells we've been having. We're under a heat advisory, so I am giving certain plants extra water and even moving some into the shade. For me, when it's this hot, I find myself oddly constrained. Instead of feeling free to run around in the natural world, I find myself moving between my car and buildings, all places that are air-conditioned. I don't even want to sit outside when it's this hot and humid! Then the summer becomes, instead of a time of freedom and release, a time of restriction.

Realizing that, I am determined to overcome it. So, a couple of weeks ago in the midst of another super-hot time, I went to a place I've been meaning to visit – the Fontenelle Forest. I did not know what to expect and found such a treasure! Including the fact that it was 15-20 degrees cooler in the woods there! What an amazing resource for this community – the Raptor Rehabilitation program, 26 miles of trails, places for canoeing and kayaking, plus excellent exhibits in the main building.

Inspired by my visit to Fontenelle, I have been thinking about restriction and freedom. Right now, I'm feeling restricted in many ways, not just by the heat. I'm feeling restricted by what is happening with our country, as we narrow the policy paths we are taking, away from care for our environment and away from justice in all its many forms, away from the health and welfare of our citizens. It's as if we are that water circling down the bathtub drain: the more horrid and foolish and dangerous policies we seek, the narrower and tighter and faster our path downward.

I'm feeling restricted by the ongoing evidence I see of how our Unitarian Universalist Association – which is not just the UUA staff, but ALL our congregations – WE are the UUA! – operates as a white supremacy institution. The testimony, witness and lived experiences of colleagues and laypeople of color are enough evidence. And that evidence is supported by other patterns: of hiring, of worship choices, of our own history as a faith.

I am seeking, as I did with the Forest, a way to live in this time of restrictions. A way not just to promote change, though that is necessary. But also a time and place of respite, of just being, a place of renewal and refreshment where everything feels 15-20 degrees cooler! I'm looking at my spiritual practices to see how they can be shaped more towards freedom, refreshment, renewal. I need that to go on through the heat!

May you also find your Forest this summer – including perhaps the wonderful Fontenelle Forest! Your Forest of freedom, the upward breath, the opening heart, the refreshment of spirit.

So may it be; blessed be,

Cyndi

Social Justice

The Social Justice Committee continues to work on many fronts to live out the mission of Second Unitarian Church and to contribute towards achieving the Developmental Goals set out by the Minister and the Board.

Here are the actions from the July 16, 2017 meeting:

- Jim P. has agreed to become co-chair of social justice and in a few months assume the position of chair. (Editorial note: Woo hoo!!).
- As follow-up to OTOC core team training, Kelly P., Jim P. and Cheri C. will organize a plan, create a handout and contact a cross section of church members to be on the core team (starting with the group that attended 1:1 training in May and/or attended the SJ retreat in February).
- Jim, Kelly & Cheri will work on turnout for the OTOC 1:1 training on Aug 14. Signups will be done after services on July 30th, Aug 6th and Aug 13th. They will also contact Rev. Cyndi about credentialing 1:1s during announcements so people will understand if they get calls inviting them to 1:1 conversation.
- Approved an updated Share the Plate (STP) form. Cheri will update and send to Jaime to posting on website. Will also ensure that same forms are posted under Governance and Forms categories.
- In an effort to solicit more STP nominations, Jim will create a half page form to include in the order of service explaining STP and how to get started in making a nomination. Will also post list of past recipients on SJ webpage.
- Amended the ACLU-Nebraska STP application to clarify that funds will be going to the Foundation which is a 502(c)3. Cheri will send corrected form to Jaime and board.
- Approved Omaha Permaculture as the August recipient of STP.
- Set the date for the next movie night for September 24th, 5:15 potluck; 6 p.m. movie. Jim will pursue the movie "13th" about the end of slavery amendment.

FROM THE DIRECTOR OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

As many of you know, my family and I went to Hawaii for vacation. We are very blessed by the circumstances at this point in our lives to be able to do this... and I'd like to share with you one of the revelations that happened while we were there.

We went to the Big Island. The locals remind us of folks from the midwest. Kind and gentle. Suspicious of strangers (justifiably - we also encountered rude tourists). This is the one with the active volcano. There are actually five volcanoes on the island, four of which are considered active. But only one is spewing lava. A high percentage (I'm guessing 40-60%) of the land is covered by prior black volcanic lava flow, and nothing grows there... yet.

But in the areas where there is rain, and the rock has broken down into a more organic material (specifically around the Kona and Hilo areas), you find a lush, rich landscape. You know the kind I'm talking about: foliage to the edge of the road. Green everywhere you look.

And I was surprised. It reminded Kitty and I of Omaha so much.

"Lush" was never a word I used to describe, let alone associate with Omaha. Hilly? Why not. Hot? Definitely. Humid? You betcha! But "lush?"

One local, upon finding that we had stayed in Hilo, commented, "Oh Hilo gets so much rainfall! It's so lush! My brother in law has to mow sometimes once a week!"

That's when I realized that where we live is a very lush, fertile part of the world. I could often mow more than once a week. We were gone for 11 days: enough time for the weeds to take over our flower beds. Trimming up bushes and cleaning out weeds and saplings? That definitely needs to be done. Now, that's what I call lush. And exhausting! Thank goodness for winter!



JEFF & KITTY IN FRONT OF
A BANYON TREE

Sometimes we need to get away to get a new perspective on our home.

That holds for anything, really. Sometimes we need a new perspective on an issue. Or a new approach to a work problem. That's when stepping away and doing something new may help us find that spark, that magic that holds a solution. You don't need to go to the ends of the earth to find it or take vacation days, either. Try hiking at a state park or walking a city park you've never visited. Eat at a restaurant that serves a cuisine you have no experience with and let the staff guide you. Take a glassblowing or other art/craft class. Volunteer in/with a community you know nothing about.* And see what things grow out of that lush environment.

Now I just wish I could get a monkeypod tree surviving this far north... wish me luck!

With the light of learning-
Molly Kliment-Jenkins
DRE



*** Of course I had to drop in a quick promo for volunteering in the RE classrooms here: it's a great way to reconnect with laughter and our young selves and get ourselves into a new environment!**



MONKEYPOD TREE

From the Office Administrator You've Got Mail!



I am starting a new process with the mailboxes in the church office. In order to help committee chairs stay up-to-date, I will be putting red “you have mail” cards on the mailboxes to indicate there is something new in the committee’s box. Likewise, if you have something to add to a committee mailbox - such as a check request that needs to be approved - please use a red card to mark that you have added mail to the box!

And speaking of committee chairs...

Did your committee update its chair person?! Please send those updates to me. I can’t send you updates and announcements if I don’t know who needs to get that info!

New Access Codes Available Beginning August 20th From Buildings & Grounds

Church leaders and staff will be issued new building access codes beginning Sundays, August 20th and 27th before and after the services. Weather permitting, a member of the Building & Grounds Committee will be seated on the bench by the front door issuing the codes.

These codes allow access to the front and lower level doors. If you are unable to get your code on these two Sundays, please contact the Office Administrator.

The old codes will be deactivated on September 11th.

JULY SERVICE ATTENDANCE

<i>Attendance</i>	
Date	Number in Worship
7/02	58
7/09	58
7/16	49
7/23	79
7/30	55

Planks & Slivers

The Board update Planks and Slivers will return next month.

Treasurer's Report of 2016-17 Operating Budget by Vicki P., Treasurer

In June we closed the 2016 -17 fiscal year by spending more than we brought in. Thanks to everyone who promptly paid their full pledge we ended the year with a surplus!

June's income included payment from Omaha Gives sponsoring organization.

	June 2017	Year to Date
Income	\$16,771.99	\$212,614.98 (99% of budget)
Expense	20,464.40	203,755.03 (94% of budget)
Net Over/Short	-\$3,692.41	+\$8,859.95

Income came from Stewardship Campaign Pledges (\$10,303.67); New Pledges from Current Members (\$30.00); New Pledges from New Members (\$1,063.33); Fundraising (\$4,375.00); Other Income (\$22.64); Offering (\$977.35).

Expenses were from Salaries and Benefits (\$5,313.73); Minister's Compensation (\$9,016.54); Administrative Expenses (\$309.96); General Expenses (\$2,330.29); and Committee Expenses (\$3,493.88).

If you would like to see more detailed financial reports, you can join the Finance Committee, contact me at 402-334-0678, or email: treasurer@2uomaha.org



What was your religious education like when you were young?

Rigid? Boring?

Nonexistent?

Inspiring? Exciting? Fun?

Now what is it you want for the youth of Second Unitarian?

Join us for a delicious brunch and idea sharing.

Come tell us what you envision! Don't have any ideas- hear others' thoughts!

Weigh in on this year's curriculum.

Find out what fun events will be going on this year!

When: 10 a.m. August 5th

Where: Second Unitarian Church

Who: Anyone can join us! - You don't need to be a parent or teacher to attend.

Don't worry - you aren't being asked to join a committee – although you are certainly welcome to join!

Omaha Gives Recap



We received our check from our fundraiser from Omaha Gives! We raised \$3,729.53 from donations, and then won \$535 in an hourly drawing from Omaha Gives. This gave us a grand total of \$4264.53!

While this is less than last year, individual donors actually gave more than last year! (Last year we had a \$3500 gift match to reach the \$7000. We did not have a match this year.)

Thank you to everyone who donated!

Eclipse Field Trip

Dear Friends,

It seems we do have folks who want to make an eclipse trip together, as I mentioned on Sunday. Several people suggested possible destinations – thank you, Russ and Phil P and Chris and Lynn A! What seems to be the best choice in terms of privacy, closeness, natural beauty and being right in the middle of the path of totality is a property owned by Tom Peterson's stepbrother, Andrew Case. It is a large property where we can view the eclipse from an elevated deck or sit out in an open field. Andrew generously has agreed to allow us to be there for the eclipse!

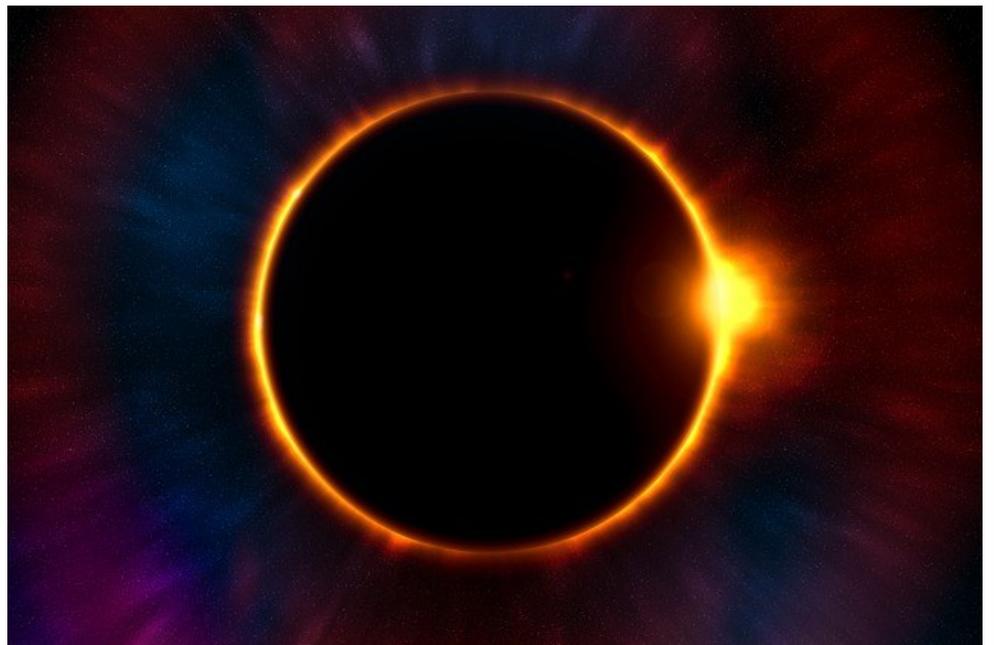
The address is in the town of Steinauer, but the property is rural. I will have detailed directions on that morning or you can ask Tom for them beforehand. Tom says it is a 90 minute drive.

Why don't we meet at the church at 9:15 a.m. on Monday, August 21st and leave by 9:30, in a caravan. That should get us there at 11 a.m. The eclipse will begin at 11:30 a.m. (that's when we can start to use our glasses!). Totality will begin at 1:03 p.m. and last for 2 minutes and 37 seconds. AMAZING THINGS WILL HAPPEN THEN.

We can all bring lunches, drinks, blankets and chairs to suit ourselves. If you want to bring food/drink to share with others – that would be great, but not necessary. **I WILL PROVIDE THE MAGIC SAFETY GLASSES FOR ALL – NASA APPROVED!**

As I will be gone on leave right up until that day, I will ask Tom to field questions between now and then and make any additional plans as needed. I realize that folks may choose to go elsewhere and enjoy other celebrations – that's great! I hope to see you on Monday morning, August 21st. This will be a truly magickal experience – not to be missed! Let's recognize and express our reverence and wonder together for the gigantic web of all existence!

~ Reverend Cyndi



1/52

What if you could make a difference in just one Sunday?

1/52 of this year's church services.

Volunteer to help out in Religious Education

But I'm not a parent! We want to broaden the interaction of our adults with our kids while allowing parents more opportunity to attend services upstairs. After all, parents need to be spiritually fulfilled and recharged too!

I don't know how to relate to kids! You aren't being asked to be hip, or cool, or chill. You are just asked to be yourself!

I'm not a teacher! No you are not! And we aren't asking you to be one. The lessons are planned; the materials are selected and laid out. The instructions for activities are right there for you. What you are being asked to do is join in! Make something new. Laugh along! Ask questions and be amazed by the answers!

I don't actually like kids! They are all whiny and noisy and messy! Uh – huh. And ALL old people smell funny, wear polyester and stand on their lawns with rakes while yelling at people to stay off their lawns.

You could begin to get to know someone you might never have talked to.

You could inspire.

You could BE inspired!

You could learn.

You could be taught.

Contact Molly to make a difference!

August Share the Plate Omaha Permaculture

Permaculture is a sustainable way of living in which you enhance the productivity of your land to potentially develop an edible landscape. It is an ecological design system for sustainability in all aspects of human endeavor. It teaches us how to build natural homes, grow our own food, restore diminished landscapes and ecosystems, catch rainwater, build communities and much more. The essence of permaculture lies in design.

The main goals of Omaha Permaculture are:

- Beautifying unused city land with edible plants and flowers.
- Providing access to affordable, nutritious food for lower-income residents in the Omaha area.
- Saving seeds * especially native varieties * and propagating plants to create free-forage areas throughout Omaha and surrounding areas.
- Creating a replicable model for growing food crops with minimal input and minimal labor * aka permaculture *.

Omaha Permaculture creates community gardens while working on sustainable land management that:



Omaha permaculture

- Reduces mowing maintenance and absorbs more storm water
- Reduces dumping
- Provides edible landscapes for people and wildlife
- Replants forests
- And builds park benches for the community to enjoy on Omaha's most forgotten and blighted properties.

You can find out more about Omaha Permaculture at omahapermaculture.org

If you know of a worthy charitable organization that you would like to nominate for Share the Plate please complete the nomination form. [Here is a fillable PDF form for Share the Plate.](#) If you'd like help completing the form, contact Cheri Cody, Carol Johnson, or Pat Caffrey.

PRIVACY POLICY FOR CHURCH PUBLICATIONS

Church policy states: *Respect for the privacy of members, friends, and visitors is a primary consideration. When newsletter submissions contain personal information (phone number, street address, email address, etc.), it is the author's responsibility to get the subject's permission to publish this information.* Since many of our communications are transmitted electronically and information therein may more easily be re-transmitted, it's essential that any personal information be approved for inclusion.

In general, it's preferable to omit personal information, but in those cases where it's necessary (such as a location for an offsite meeting), those who submit articles should ask for permission to publish the personal information. An alternative is "Please call or email the church office for contact information." Contact the Office Administrator for more information. **Regarding published photographs:** If you do not want your photo published (including in the newsletter or on the website), please inform the Office Administrator in writing. Thanks!

Omaha Together One Community (OTOC) Happenings

Our church is a proud member of Omaha Together One Community, the local congregation-based community organization to make Omaha a better place to live.

- **Omaha City Budget Hearing** - Everyone is invited to attend the hearing for Omaha's City Budget, **Tuesday, August 8th, 7 p.m., at the City County Building, 1819 Farnam.** OTOC's (Omaha Together One Community) Housing Action Team will testify in support of increased funding to demolish condemned and abandoned structures. These buildings are dangerous for children and reduce neighborhood property values. While the mayor and city council have supported OTOC's budget requests in the past, this year the mayor's proposal is to reduce the amount from the city and find private funding.
- **Building Relationships To Strengthen Our Democracy**

OTOC's Summer Training focuses on how we can strengthen our democracy by building strong public relationships in our congregations, communities and organizations. Learn how to engage in effective individual meetings, develop a team of collaborators, and build the power needed to act effectively. Everyone is invited participate.

August 14th: How to have effective one on one discussions

Where: Augustana Lutheran Church, 3726 Lafayette Ave

Time: 7 p.m. - 8:30

This series builds on information presented in the previous month. But you are welcome to attend as many as your schedule allows. For more information contact Vicki P.

Retirees' Group

What's the Big Deal About the Eclipse? Retirees Group, August 8th

Please join us Tuesday, August 8th at 1 p.m. in the church sanctuary for a presentation about the upcoming total eclipse. Russ Alberts will present information on how an eclipse occurs, what to expect with the upcoming eclipse, how to safely watch (including a demonstration) and other astronomically valuable information. Bring your questions!

Retirees Group meets monthly for socialization and learning. All are welcome—you don't have to be retired to attend!



Gender Revolt!

A Celebration of Queer Cinema

Second Unitarian is proud to be a promotional partner with Film Streams on *Gender Revolt!: A Celebration of Queer Cinema* (August 26th – September 27th), a collaborative repertory series presented with UNO Women's and Gender Studies Program. This series is generously supported by Sam Walker.

From the bawdy Pre-Code era when homosexuality was implied in the sensational stories of wayward souls, to the innuendo-heavy mid-century melodramas of directors like Douglas Sirk, to the New Queer Cinema movement of the late 80s and 90s, and arriving at a current climate where an LGBTQ story can win the Best Picture Oscar, the movies have been one of the most visible spaces for representations of queer lives and experiences. In ten films, Gender Revolt! will attempt to highlight this heritage. Find out more at filmstreams.org

August 26th & 30th - Orlando

1992 (PG-13) Directed by Sally Potter.
Commanded by his queen, a young nobleman (Tilda Swinton) ceases to age, queering generations of British history. UK/Russia/Italy/ France/Netherlands; 94 min.

September 9th & 13th - Female Trouble

1974 (NC-17) Directed by John Waters.
The iconic Divine plays a crazed mass murderer in this classic from the godfather of transgressive trash. USA; 87 min.

September 19th, 7 pm

Collaborative Screening: Pariah

2011 (R) Directed by Dee Rees.

A Brooklyn teenager juggles conflicting identities, jeopardizes friendship and family, and risks heartbreak in a desperate search for sexual expression. USA; 86 min.

Post-film panel with national scholars on film and queer and intersectional identities.

August 28th - The Celluloid Closet

1995 (R) Directed by Rob Epstein & Jeffrey Friedman.

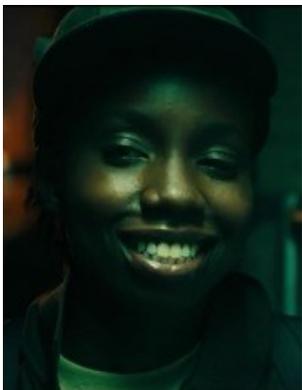
Inspired by LGBTQ activist Vito Russo's book, this documentary chronicles Hollywood's somewhat-secret queer past. France/UK/Germany/USA; 102 min.



September 16th & 20th - Portrait of Jason

1967 Directed by Shirley Clarke.

A landmark experimental documentary cobbled from a night of marathon drinking with self-proclaimed hustler and master raconteur Jason Holliday. USA; 105 min.



September 23rd & 27th - Carol 2015 (R)

Directed by Todd Haynes.

Voted the greatest LGBT film ever in a BFI poll, this 1950s-set story of desire and denial stars Cate Blanchett and Rooney Mara. USA; 118 min.

September 2nd & 6th - All About My Mother 1999 (R)

Directed by Pedro Almodóvar.

A masterpiece from a director known for bending gender and sexuality as well as genre. Spain/France; 101 min.

September 12th, 7 pm - Sing-along & Collaborative Screening: Hedwig and the Angry Inch 2001 (R)

Directed by John Cameron Mitchell.

Sing along to the story of a gender fluid “slip of a girl-boy” punk-rocker from East Berlin as their band tours the U.S. following the lover/band-mate who stole their songs. Canada; 92 min.

Post-film discussion with Dr. Jay Irwin.



September 26th, 7 pm - Filmmaker Screening: The Watermelon Woman 1996

Directed by Cheryl Dunye.

Coincidence and simulacra abound as a gay, black 20-something searches for the 1930s actress who portrayed the Watermelon Woman. USA; 81 min.

With director Cheryl Dunye in person!



September 5th - Kiki 2016 Directed by Sara Jordenö.

A documentary on a group of LGBTQ youth who form a safe space around the art of voguing. Sweden/USA; 94 min.



Second Unitarian Church

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ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

OUR SIX UU SOURCES

August 6th: *Lughnasadh* - It is the first of three harvest festivals. It is a time of joy and tension. It is a time of gratitude. Please come with an open heart and be willing to journey with us as we look back at what we planted this Spring and prepare for the winter months to come.

August 13th: *Journey Through the Belly of a Whale* - There are times, I expect, when we are far too serious in our approaches to our religious inheritance. Far too serious, that is, when a sense of humor might open up for us new pathways to understanding. The story of Jonah is a case in point.

August 20th: *Orma's Orphans* - David and Carla Crosser-Harrington are retired school-teachers from Shenandoah, Iowa. They've had a long-standing relationship with Reverend Orma Mavimbela, an Anglican Priest in Swaziland. Orma operates a feeding center for Swazi HIV orphans. David and Carla will present information on their partnership and their various trips to Swaziland to help Orma's Orphans in person.

August 27th: *The Great Way* - 4th Source: Jewish and Christian teachings which call us to respond to God's love by loving our neighbors as ourselves. In Jerusalem the week before his death, Jesus preached his Great Commandment, which includes loving our neighbors as ourselves. This was truly a radical statement for its time! But what does it mean **now** and why should we care, especially those of us who are non-Christians?