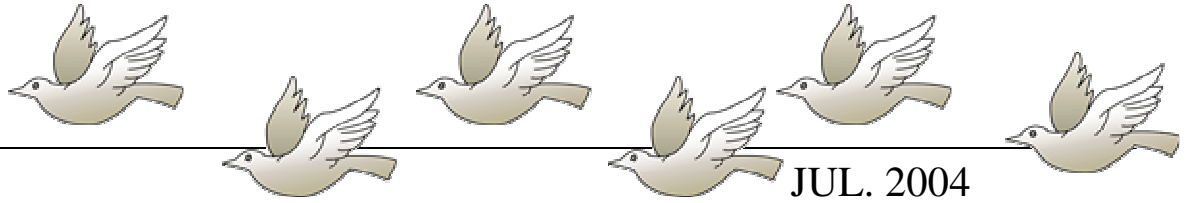


Second Thoughts

The Newsletter of Second Unitarian Church of Omaha



JUL. 2004

WORSHIP SERVICES

(No first hour programming in July or August.)

July 4

Worship: *"Democratic Governance"*
Board Members

July 11

Worship: *"Centering and Peace of Mind"*
Mary Ellen Keeley

July 18

Worship: *"God Is Bigger Than One Religion:
Why the World Needs More Unitarians Now"*
David Martin

July 25

Worship: *"How Can We Learn From History?"*
Vicki Grunwald

August 1

Worship: *"Nebraska: A Spiritual Geography"*
Jodi Polaha Jones



Planks and Slivers

By Bill MacMillan, Board Chair

The Board of Trustees would like to give special recognition to Holly Batchelder for her tremendous support for our church. Her energy, intelligence and enthusiasm really made a difference in providing Second Unitarian Universalist with a sound organized office and helped us appear organized and efficient in our many visible activities in the church. She will be missed, and she goes to her new career with our gratitude and blessings.

The Personnel Committee has initiated a search for a replacement office administrator and will be accepting applicants until June 20.

The new board had its first meeting this month. We were joined by outgoing board members, who have graciously volunteered their time and experience to help us get a good start. During this transition meeting, we elected officers, discussed our upcoming challenges and agenda for the year, and tentatively scheduled some events that will start next fall.

I was chosen to sit as chair for our Board. I am flattered at the choice and aware of the very large shoes that Clyde has left to be filled. Fortunately, Steve Powell was elected as Vice-Chair and will help support our efforts in the coming year. Let's also have a round of applause for Rick Bell. Rick has consented, with enthusiasm, to accept the position of Board Secretary.

Right after elections, the committee liaisons were selected:

Second Unitarian Church of Omaha
3012 South 119th Street
Omaha, NE 68144
Office: (402) 334-0537

Email: info@secondunitarianomaha.org
Web site: www.secondunitarianomaha.org

Sunday Worship - 10:30 a.m.
Children's Religious Education - 10:30 a.m.

Staff

Rev. Dr. Joshua Snyder, Minister

Minister's hours:

Mon, Wed 10:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m.
Tues, Thurs 12:00 p.m.-5:00 p.m.

Rose Joshi, Director of Religious Education

Rose's office hours Aug-May:

Mon, Fri 11:30 a.m.-2:00 p.m.
Tues, Wed 9:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m.
Sun 9:30 a.m.-12:30 pm

Holly Batchelder, Office Administrator
(402) 334-0537

secuuch@radiks.net

Office hours:

Mon - Thurs 11:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m.
Fri 7:00 a.m.-11:00 a.m.

Board of Trustees

President: Bill MacMillan

Vice Pres: Steve Powell

Secretary: Rick Bell

Bill Hay
Sara Seaman
Gwen Eurich

Second Thoughts is published monthly. Items for publication may be submitted to the church office or sent to the church email address:

info@secondunitarianomaha.org

Deadline for submissions is the 15th of each month

Rick Bell: Adult Spiritual Education, Social Justice, and Nominating
Steve Powell: Membership, Finance, Caring
Gwen Eurich: Library, Religious Education, Anti-Abuse Policy
Bill MacMillan: Long-Range Planning, Fellowship, Personnel
Sara Seaman: Building and Grounds, Music and Worship, Choir
Bill Hay: Denominational Affairs, Welcoming Congregation, Technology

To help us achieve our goals as a congregation, the Long Range Planning committee will present its strategic plan early next fall for congregational approval. Given approval, the board is looking forward to the fresh mandate and new mission statement that will really energize us. Our focus will be on implementing the vision.

Other assorted tasks were addressed in our meeting. These included updating the standing rules that govern board and other church procedures and we want to finalize the excellent work the previous board accomplished in authoring a draft abuse-prevention policy for the church.

Finally, we began to schedule the upcoming events for the board. We will begin the year with a retreat, scheduled tentatively for early September, to review a draft of the Long Range plan and to formulate our goals for the year, discussing how we can be most effective.

It will be a good year.



Social Justice Committee *By Rachel Yamamoto, Chair*

I want to say thank you to Vicki Pratt for two years of leadership as the Chair of Social Justice Committee. She has brought passion and energy to the position, and I hope I can live up to her standards in the coming two years as the new chair of the committee.

Omaha Together One Community

OTOC has sent us its annual commitment letter, asking us to pledge our commitment as a congregation for the next fiscal year. OTOC is an active organization that continues to empower people through institutional voices to stand up for their interests in the local community. This marks the first year that the annual OTOC dues will be coming partially from the general budget. The rest will continue to be made up through sales of Peace Coffee. Thank you to the entire church for its support of OTOC!

Paint-a-Thon

The time is getting near for our annual Paint-A-Thon. This is an opportunity to help the elderly and disabled maintain their homes, and have some fun as well! The paint-a-thon will be held Friday, August 20, and Saturday, August 21. We will prep the house on Friday so that we will be able to go in and get all of the painting completed on Saturday. We need your help! If painting is not your thing, you could provide food or drinks for those who are working on the house. You can sign up for only one day or one hour if that is all you are able to do! There's a sign-up sheet in the back of the church. If you have any questions, call or e-mail Melissa Konecky:

Welcoming Congregation

Second Unitarian Universalist officially participated in the Pride Parade on June 19, thanks to the efforts of the Welcoming Committee. This is our first official event as a Welcoming Congregation. The booth was shared with First Unitarian Church's OUUT group, and our portion of the cost was covered 100% by private donations.

Green Sanctuary

The Green Sanctuary program builds an awareness of environmental issues and asks for commitment to personal lifestyle changes as well as commitment to reducing environmental impacts from the church building, grounds, and events inside the facility. Examples are to recycle aluminum cans, glass, paper, and plastic; compost yard waste and kitchen scraps; conserve energy and water; reduce use of products that contain phosphates; use unbleached coffee filters; car pool; and purchase fair trade products. A Green Sanctuary committee is being formed to coordinate planning and actions for our congregation to be sanctioned as a Green Sanctuary. Members of this umbrella committee will be liaisons from most of our existing committees. You don't have to wait for the official Green Sanctuary kick-off to start your own personal commitment. You can start now by recycling your Order of Service and bringing your own coffee mug (and taking it home to wash in phosphate-free biodegradable detergent).

Unitarian Universalists take pride in their tradition of social activism and community outreach. We keep that tradition alive at Second Unitarian. You are invited to attend our meeting on Sunday, July 11, following service. Everyone is welcome to learn more about progress on current goals, bring up any concern, make us aware of a social justice issue, or participate in any activity.



Great American Bake-Off to Benefit Homeless

First Unitarian invites everyone to their bake sale Saturday, July 17, from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. All proceeds will help feed the hungry in America. In addition to desserts and breads, there will be a wide variety of used cookbooks for sale.

They also appreciate our help in providing baked goods or cookbooks to sell.

Treasurer's Gems:

Pledge income at the end of May was \$83,750. We are short year to date by \$3,333. Of that amount, \$2,890 of this can be accounted for by pledges that never came in, plus decreases in pledges.

We budgeted \$95,000 for pledge income this fiscal year. We need to be taking in \$7,916 per month.

Here are the actual results for the last few months:

Jan: \$7,045

Feb: \$8,757*

Mar: \$8,999.50*

Apr: \$6,748

May: \$6,600

In the month of May we spent \$981.17 more than we took in. For the year we are ahead by \$4,507.90.

I would encourage all to finish up your pledge commitments, especially with the summer coming up. If you aren't sure how much you have left, please shoot me an email and I will get that to you. My email address is jooxley@aol.com.

We received a check from Albertsons for \$108.92. This is from our church fundraiser program. Offering is running ahead of budget by \$1,147.63.

For people who have sent me a form to pay your pledges through electronic bank transfer, this will start in July. Keep those checks, cash, coins coming in! June is the final month of the fiscal year.

This is JoAnne "Cash Register" Draper saying "Kaching!"

Religious Education in July

This month our children can participate in a special experience when Colleen Sylvester presents a program based on renowned primatologist Dr. Jane Goodall's *Roots and Shoots* program. The program's mission is "To foster respect and compassion for all living things, to promote understanding of all cultures and beliefs, and to inspire each individual to take action to make the world a better place for people, animals and the environment."

The summer RE program is Sunday mornings from

10:30 a.m. - 11:30 a.m. for nursery - "graduating" 6th grade children.

Questions: Karen Snyder



5th Annual RE CHURCH FAMILY PICNIC

September 11, 2004
Saturday
5:00 p.m. - 8:30 p.m.

All Members and Friends of 2U are invited to join the Religious Education Committee in kicking off the new church year with a potluck dinner, games and music.

Bring a picnic blanket or chair, drinks and a side dish or dessert to share. Main dishes will be provided by RE committee members.

On Giving
By Craig Piquette

The Finance Committee has worked hard in the past to achieve the financial goals of the pledge drive that supports the church. This will remain an important goal for this committee in the future but not the only one.

The three-legged stool of financial support for any institution is one of pledged income, fund-raisers and investment income. We currently have a small memorial fund that has grown through generous contributions in the name of members who are no longer with us. That money is in a small interest bearing account. This year the Finance Committee will form a task force, charged with drafting an Endowment Fund Policy that will guide investment of the memorial funds so they can grow quicker than they will in the current account. We would like to get as much input from church members as possible on that policy and we are seeking volunteers who would be willing to make a commitment to helping the Task Force write it. Al Harrison has agreed to coordinate this effort and we encourage all interested parties to contact him. Even if you know nothing about investing, you should consider joining this task force. We guarantee it will be a learning experience.

Another project that Finance will be working on this year is fund-raising efforts for the church. We will continue Karin Brown's efforts to find ways of raising money through the things we do on a regular basis like shopping at Albertson's and recycling our printer cartridges. We all hope she can help us find more of these opportunities so, if you know any, please inform her or any other member of the Finance Committee.

Anyone who attends Second Unitarian knows that we are often bombarded with requests for monetary support of activities sponsored by one committee or another. These fund-raisers are important because they contribute directly or indirectly to the church. However, these fund-raisers often require a few hardy volunteers to run and maintain and often compete with each other. Finance is forming a task force to examine our fund-raising activities to determine if a more coordinated effort would be more

effective. We would like to put the FUN back in fund-raising and create one or two events that the whole church could get behind and raise money for all our special needs throughout the year. Together we could have a fun event that helps support worthy causes. We will be working with various committees including Fellowship, Adult Spiritual Education and Social Justice to help design such an event.

Finance Committee has set some ambitious goals for the coming year and we need the help of everyone to meet them. Please consider volunteering to help our task forces establish a firm financial foundation for Second Unitarian. We need your ideas, your hands and your heart to make this a reality.

You give but little when you give of your possessions. It is when you give of yourself that you truly give.
Kahlil Gibran



Caring Committee
By Kathy Bell

UU and YOU

Denominational Affairs Committee

By Gene Kopecky

New Member Profile

By Lorraine Duggin

On May 17, 2004, UUA President Rev. William G. Sinkford legally married Julie and Hillary Goodridge. The Goodridges were the lead plaintiffs in the landmark case Goodridge vs. the Massachusetts Dept. of Health which gave same sex couples the freedom to legally marry in Massachusetts. It is notable that the first **legal** same sex marriage was performed by a Unitarian Universalist Minister.

Our faith's social witness power is much greater than its membership numbers would lead one to believe. As such, this aspect of our faith should be a source of great pride to all UUs. We have stood at the forefront of almost all the great social issues facing America for the last 300 years: free religion, anti-slavery, the suffrage movement, civil rights, women's rights and GLBT rights.

If you want to become more involved in this powerful social witness you can contact the "Unitarian Universalist Association of Congregations Washington Office for Advocacy" at <http://www.uua.org/uuawo/new/>. Add your voice to thousands of other UUs on the great issues of our time.

As Rev. Lynn Unger of Second Unitarian Church in Chicago said, "Even for the majority of folks who never attend a GA or district meeting it makes a real difference to know that we participate in that larger structure, and that we live out our UU values within a wider context."

Ours is a great faith; be proud.



Rev. Snyder's Vacation and Study Leave

During the months of July and August, if you have an emergency and need to contact Rev. Snyder, please notify the Board Chair, Bill MacMillan or Cheri Cody of Ministerial Relations Committee or the church office.

Rev. Snyder will resume office hours on September 1, 2004.

Sunday Worship and First Hour Information
July 2004

There are no first hours during the summer months.

J U L Y 4	Worship <i>"Democratic Governance,"</i> Board Members
J U L Y 1 1	Worship <i>"Centering and Peace of Mind,"</i> Mary Ellen Keeley
J U L Y 1 8	Worship <i>"God Is Bigger Than One Religion: Why the World Needs More Unitarians Now,"</i> David Martin
J U L Y 2 5	Worship <i>"How Can We Learn From History?,"</i> Vicki Grunwald
A U G U S T 1	Worship <i>"Nebraska: A Spiritual Geography,"</i> Jodi Polaha Jones

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