



# *Second Thoughts*

The Newsletter of Second Unitarian Church of Omaha



**November 2005**

## Fundraising Auction

The Fundraising Taskforce is finalizing plans and preparations for the church's fundraising auction. The first activity planned to "Mind the Gap" in our operating budget, the auction will be Saturday, November 19 at 7:00 pm. Its goal is to raise \$5000 to \$7000 for church operating expenses and community projects.

The auction will include both a silent auction event where goods and services donated by members and friends will be offered, and a live auction segment where a guest "celebrity" will entertain and assist. Wine tasting, other beverages, deserts, and refreshments will be offered.

Exciting and fun donations to the auction are still coming in and so far, include: Tom and Stephanie Peterson's Champaign Flight in a Hot Air Balloon; Mary Anne Chisholm's metal sculpture; a catered party for 30 at the church; a portrait by renowned local artist, Richard Hart; guitar lessons from Bill MacMillan; tennis lessons; golf lessons; an historical re-enactment by Darrel Draper; math tutoring; a 1-hour massage; a Wilton birthday cake by Jennie White; a Chanukah dinner for 8 by Ronnie Kahn; palm reading for entertainment by Nancy Heinemeyer; beginning watercolor class by Judy Maniscalco; and a variety of other talents and crafts.

You can help the auction be a huge success by putting up flyers, telling your friends about it, and attending the event with them. There will be bargains to be had, and a good time is guaranteed!

Contact Denise Macmillan

for more information.

Information on First Hour & Sunday Programming can be found on the back of the calendar insert

## Second Unitarian Church of Omaha

3012 South 119th Street

Omaha, NE 68144

(402) 334-0537

[www.secondunitarianomaha.org](http://www.secondunitarianomaha.org)

[info@secondunitarianomaha.org](mailto:info@secondunitarianomaha.org)

First Hour 9:15 a.m.

Sunday Worship 10:30 a.m.

Children's Religious Education 10:30 a.m.

Nursery care 10:30 a.m.

### Staff

**Minister: Rev. Dr. Joshua Snyder**

Office hours:

M, W 10:00 a.m.- 5:00 p.m.

T, Th 12:00 p.m.- 5:00 p.m.

**Director of Religious Education: Jennifer Faber**

Office hours:

M,W,Th 9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.

**Office Administrator: Isis Prentice**

(402) 334-0537

[info@secondunitarianomaha.org](mailto:info@secondunitarianomaha.org)

Office Administrator currently has no office hours.

### Board of Trustees

Chair: Steve Powell

Vice Chair: David Martin

Secretary: Vicki Pratt

Gwen Eurich

Chris Peters

Rick Bell

Russ Alberts

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

[info@secondunitarianomaha.org](mailto:info@secondunitarianomaha.org)

**Deadline for submissions is the 15th of each month**

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## Josh's Journal

Thanksgiving has always been one of my favorite holidays of the year. For one the food! I love the energy and community at our annual Thanksgiving Brunch. But I also love the spirit of the holiday itself. It is a time to remember what we are thankful for, to count our blessings in an intentional way, to be mindful of the people, places and things in our lives that give it meaning and make it a joy to be alive. In that sense it stands in contrast to the more consumer-oriented holidays of the month ahead.

Of course we don't need a holiday to reflect upon what is happening in our lives for which we should be grateful. The holiday is just a reminder, a bell of mindfulness as Thich Nhat Hanh might say. For me, what reminds me to be thankful for the things I have are my books. An odd thing to say for sure, but it is true! Given enough time and money I could find and purchase enough books to

ensure that I, and generations to come, would have plenty of reading material for the rest of my life. In my student days when I would move from apartment to apartment, my Dad was usually the one who had to move the books (which at the time was half of all I owned in the world!). If you have ever tried to move books in boxes you know it feels a little like moving rocks. So my Dad would often complain about this task, asking, “So how many of these things have you actually read anyway?” Truth—not many, but I thought that I might need them as time went by.

Time has gone by, and my attitude towards buying books has not changed, but reading them has. Sometime last year, I remember my Dad’s words that came at me sort of like an admonition: “How many of these damn things have you read, anyway?!” Not as many as I would have liked. So I started to devote less time to buying and more time to reading. Less time dreaming of how I could consume more, and sit down to actually appreciate the things that I have. And may I say I am so glad that I did. Just enjoying the things in my life that are already there, the things that I have in some cases been carrying around with me for years, can be even more enjoyable than dreaming about what could be. It makes me think, what other things in my life have I been carrying around, dreaming about getting more of or improving, but have not really sat down to appreciate in a very long time? What is that thing for you?

At this time of giving thanks, let us remember what we already have, and praise life so that we may have it abundantly.

May You Be Blessed Always,  
Rev. Josh Snyder

## Planks and Slivers

*by Steve Powell  
President of the Board of Trustees*

The new church year has begun with a burst of activity and enthusiasm. We welcomed Jenny Faber as our new DRE. She brings us experience as a teacher and a true love of children. We wish you tremendous success, Jenny.

Our wonderful office administrator, Isis Prentice, has resigned to accept a career position at Bellevue University. We wish her all the best, and gratefully acknowledge her many and hopefully, continuing contributions, to our church.

Our robust RE enrollment and nursery use is pushing us to the limit of our available space making the need more urgent for us to develop and implement plans that either expand our present facilities or allow us to find larger accommodations at another location. We’ll be exploring seriously these options this year.

It is deeply satisfying to welcome new members. We’ve made many new friends in the past year, and some of them recently signed the membership book—a simple act that symbolizes so much hope and faith for the future. I hope each new member finds our church worthy of a life-long relationship in seeking spiritual growth and community among other truth-seekers and practitioners of a liberal faith.

Chris Peters and I recently attended the Prairie Star District’s fall leadership meeting at the Unitarian Church in Overland Park, KS. When you get leaders of other Unitarian congregations together, it becomes evident that we are blessed with a truly great community at Second Unitarian. We have a great minister and a warm, supportive and cooperative group of volunteers and church members who work together to achieve our ideals. I believe we are making true progress in fulfilling our mission.

# Always Learning

A monthly message from the Director of Religious  
Education  
by Jenny Faber

Looking to broaden my understanding of children and spiritual development, I have been studying *Nurturing Children and Youth: A Developmental Guidebook* by Tracey L. Hurd.

Babies are undeniably spiritual. The processes of developing inside the womb, being born, and growing into a little person are nothing less than magical. Being in the room soon after the births of my nephews leaves me with no doubt that a strong, spiritual element is present when a child is born. Looking into the new baby's eyes I wonder who they are and who they will become. It is as if we have been waiting to meet someone for a very long time and they are finally here. Birth is a new beginning and yet it impresses a sense of the ancient upon us as well.

As we welcome the new baby into our lives, we encounter a sensation of the sacredness of the time. We can often pinpoint when the baby was conceived, watch it develop and grow in the womb, and be present for the birth, but we are scientifically undecided as to when the spiritual aspect enters. As infants grow older and exude more personality and sense of self, our sense of contact with them as spiritual beings becomes more apparent. As a religious educator, I have many questions. What are the spiritual needs of infants and young toddlers? How do we recognize their spirituality in tangible terms? I would like to share with you some neat tidbits from the book that helped me to better understand the spiritual aspects of infants and early toddlers.

Newborn infants show facial expressions of happiness, sadness, surprise, interest, and fun. The classic work of ethnologist Irenaus Eibl-Eibesfeldt shows that the roots of social behavior may be in-

nate. He notes that infants born without sight will smile even though they've never seen a smile, and infants born with neither sight nor hearing will laugh during play, although they have never seen or heard someone laugh. Social connection through self expression is an essential part of being human.

As her needs for food, comfort, and sleep are met, the infant learns to trust her environment. She bonds with the people who care for her. Over time she forms attachments arising out of predictable, repeated experiences of love and care. Consistency and quality caregiving are critical to the infant's ability to form healthy attachments. Research has shown repeatedly that gender and sexual orientation are not determinants of a quality relationship between infants and their caregivers....Positive attachments between adults and infants or toddlers depend on love, care, and commitment.

Psychologist Erik Erikson asserts that learning to trust is the essential task of the first two years of life. The infant and toddler gain moral understanding by watching how those they trust react to them. The seed of understanding fairness, justice, and shame is planted during this time. According to psychologist Carol Gilligan, very early experiences of inequality, mutuality, and love form the basis for the ethics of justice and care.

Faith researcher James Fowler says the infant is born with potential but without the ability to act on it. Through early experiences of trust, the infant and emerging toddler becomes more actively part of a context of shared human faith. The child's faith emerges from the lived understanding that the caregiver will nurture and care for him unconditionally. Trust, courage, hope, and love are fused. The infant develops what Fowler calls *undifferentiated faith*, a trust in the mutuality of coexistence and care.

The book goes on to suggest many ways to offer support to an infant or young toddler.

- Gently respond to physical needs for food and

care (including the need to be held and loved).

- Provide consistent care so trust can develop.
- Provide appropriate toys, even for very young infants.
- Provide outlets for toddlers' needs to explore their world physically and safely.
- Recognize that each child has a unique temperament and adapt the environment accordingly.
- Celebrate initiatives and accomplishments.
- Engage in early talking games, such as repeating sounds made by the infant and supplying approximates of words (for example, the toddler says "babababa" and the caregiver responds by imitating and then saying, "Bottle, you're saying bottle").
- Label physical experiences with words (such as "Look at you crawling!").
- Create predictable signals and routines (like dimming the lights before naptime).
- Keep elements of the environment familiar when presenting the infant or toddler with new stimuli.
- Allow for both closeness and autonomy as the developing child indicates.
- Respect the wide range of differences in infant and toddler development.
- Provide unconditional love.
- Welcome the whole child as an individual and as a member of the family.

It is my hope that as people read over these suggestions, they develop a sense of pride in what they have been doing well and look to enrich future relationships with new ideas. I look forward to bringing you more information about the spiritual growth of our children in the coming months.

Take care,  
Jenny

"We are all shaped and fashioned by what  
we love."

- Johann Wolfgang von Goethe

## Gene's Excellent Adventure or How I Spent My Summer Vacation

*by Gene Kopecky*

Saturday, July 23, 2005, 6:05 AM: After two years of planning, I am finally on my way to Midwest Leadership School (MLS) in Beloit, WI. I have been to many leadership schools in my 31 years with OPPD, but none of them compared with or could prepare me for the experience of MLS. The week of July 23-30, 2005 was without a doubt one of the most intense, exasperating, thrilling, sleepless, joyous and spiritual weeks of my life.

MLS is a cooperative undertaking of the Prairie Star, Central Midwest and Heartland Districts of the UUA. The mission of MLS is to develop leadership skills framed by the principles and purposes of Unitarian Universalism in members and leaders of congregations within the three sponsoring districts.

The staff had us hopping as soon as we checked in on the 23<sup>rd</sup>; we had an MLS orientation session, met our "randomly" selected Leadership Group, held a community meeting, met our Credo Group and held a Worship Service. It was only 10 PM. All this and a 7 hour road trip—not bad for the first day.

In preparation for Midwest Leadership School all students were required to take a Myers-Briggs Type Indicator Survey. The results of the survey are used by the staff to "randomly" select your leadership and worship service groups. I won't go into detail about Myers-Briggs except to say the staff used the results to put together groups with the widest possible range of personality types they could manage. Needless to say, the students had no idea we were being set up. The objective was to see if we could actually take what we were being taught in class and use it.

Each day started with breakfast from 7 to 8

AM. This was followed by classes until noon, then lunch and student “free” time until 3 PM. Classes were again held from 3 to 5 PM, followed by dinner, student “free” time, Worship from 7 to 7:45 PM, Credo Groups from 7:45 to 9:15 PM and Day’s End from 9:15 until whenever. Doesn’t sound too bad does it?—especially with all that student “free” time. No problem. The only things we needed to worry about were leadership group projects, personal Credo Group questions, reading assignments and the 24 hours they gave us to plan a worship service with 3 or 4 other people who also had no idea what they are doing.

From the time Melanie Landa, Romy Klessen, Dan Hislip, Madeiria Myrieckes and I were selected on the 26<sup>th</sup> to give the worship service on the 27<sup>th</sup>, we went non-stop for the next 24 hours. Of my four fellow group members, three were congregation presidents and the other, a treasurer. They are four of the most amazing people I have ever met. In just 24 hours Dan conceived our worship service of light and wrote the closing words; Melanie designed our worship space of light; Madeiria wrote a Homily on light; and Romy, well all Romy did was just pull out her Apple Pad and fold-up keyboard and write a new Hymn, “Walk in the Light,” by combining the words from one hymn with music from another. I lifted and carried as necessary.

Creating that worship service is an experience I will never forget. Every time I think about it, I just get happy, very happy, and when I think about that intense, exasperating, thrilling, sleepless, joyous and spiritual July week, I get HAPPY, VERY HAPPY.

I want to thank each and every member of Second Unitarian for the opportunity to attend the 2005 Midwest Leadership School because all of you make me HAPPY, VERY HAPPY.

Thank You,  
Gene

## Family Enrichment Ministry Report

by Laura Shennum

Come join us for a **Pancake Breakfast** before Church on Sunday, November 6, from 8:30am to 10am! We will provide the energy packed food to get you through the sermon! The cost is \$2.50 for children, \$4.00 for adults, \$10.00 max per family.

Look for upcoming information on a family service project we will be hosting in the month of November! We hope to go out to a local nature trail and help clean-up the environment.

The FEM first hour topic in December will be "Simplyfying the Holidays." Please join us for a discussion on how to take the hustle and bustle out of the holiday season.

Finally, new child care policies were passed out in September, which also included policies concerning supervision of children under the age of 16 years. As we are approaching our first adult only event in November with the Silent Auction, keep in mind children will not be allowed to accompany parents and child care will not be available. This policy will be enforced at the Silent Auction. If you need a list of available babysitters, please feel free to contact Laura Shennum

or Pam Curtiss-Smith( for more information.

## Book Club

by Gwen Eurich

Plan on joining book club members for a discussion of Willa Cather's classic novel My Antonia. We will meet on Tuesday, November 23, at 7:30 p.m, at the Maple Crest Care Center, located at 2824 North 66 Avenue.



## Caring Committee

*By Kathy Bell*

The Caring Committee is under new leadership as of this month. **Dodie Robison** is chairwoman of the committee and **Marilyn Krabbe** is co-chair. Other committee members include **Nancy Heine-meyer**, **Norma Koelling**, and **Kathy Bell**. The committee gladly welcomes new members. Please contact Dodie or Marilyn if you would like to join us.

## Attendance in September

*by Richard Koelling and the Membership Committee*

If you've noticed that there seem to be fewer seats available – especially when you get to church a tad late – it's easily explained. There are more people coming to church this fall.

In September our average attendance was 85.

Sept. 4: Water Communion ...96

Sept. 11: Coming Together, Working Apart...77

Sept. 18: A Skeptics Path to Religion...91

Sept. 25: Long Time Coming; Women's Suffrage...75

This was about 10% above the average attendance in September 2004, and much of the change comes from the increased number of visitors.

We've also added several new members this summer, including:

nellie sudavicius macCallum  
Dale and Jayme Wratchford  
Justin and Dorothy Dean  
Julie Carda and Wendell Nekoranec  
David and Carol Johnson  
Sajda Qureshi  
Philip and Yim Graner  
Isis Prentice

## WELCOME!

Check out the Second Unitarian Church  
calendar online at

[www.secondunitarianomaha.org](http://www.secondunitarianomaha.org)

Click on "Upcoming Events"

# Litter & Recycling

by Clyde Anderson, Co-Chair

## Green Sanctuary Project

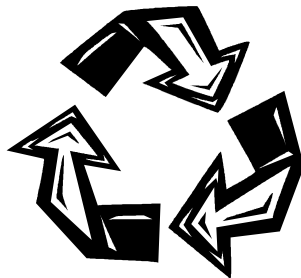
About 15 years ago Mary Anna and I attended a John Denver concert at Ak-Sar-Ben. At the end of the concert, Denver, a noted conservationist, challenged the audience – “If everyone here today would just pickup one piece of litter on their way home, think how much nicer our community would be.”

As we drove back home along 72<sup>nd</sup> St. we noticed litter everywhere. What a filthy city we live in! The following weekend daughters Kerry and Kelly and I took our garden cart and walked south along 72<sup>nd</sup> St. from our corner at Burt picking up litter. The cart was full before we reached Cass!

Today when we take neighborhood walks we take along a plastic bag and pick up litter, especially recyclables which we put in our green recycling bins. It's incredible how much we pick up in a few short blocks. I wish people wouldn't litter, but perhaps a few will be more careful when they see other citizens cleaning up after them.

In addition to picking up litter around our church and in your neighborhoods, you can help our church recycling program by using the paper recycling bin in the foyer and the bins for aluminum, plastics and glass located to the left of the refrigerator in the kitchen area. The rules for what can be recycled are the same as for Omaha's solid waste management program. For details see <http://www.wasteline.org/>. Since the City's waste collection doesn't serve churches, volunteers take the recyclables home for placement in their green bins.

The church also provides bins in the foyer for recycling your clean second-hand clothes for



Siena/Francis House and empty computer printer cartridges.

Thanks for your support. If you have additional ideas for recycling, please contact Mary Bamesberger or Clyde Anderson

## Offerings from the Minister

### Newcomer Session

Are you new to Second Unitarian Church and/or Universalism? Then you are cordially invited to the monthly newcomer session. Our meeting this month will be on Sunday **November 6<sup>th</sup>** immediately following coffee hour. This is a good way to learn more about Unitarian Universalism, Second

Unitarian Church, to ask questions, and how to become a member. *Please note: these sessions are also open to all current members of the Church who would like to meet all the new faces you see on Sunday morning!* The sessions begin at 12 PM after coffee hour in the minister's office. No reservations are needed, and the Membership Committee provides childcare and lunch. Call Rev. Snyder for more information.

### Meditation

The Meditation Group will be meeting twice this month at the usual schedule. We practice in the back of the sanctuary on **November 3<sup>rd</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> at 7 PM**. In addition to our half hour of meditation practice, we also have a discussion of our spiritual practice, and share ideas and insights on a whole host of spiritual topics. Everyone is welcome regardless of experience or meditation tradition, and newcomers are especially welcomed! This is an excellent way to begin a spiritual practice or nurture a fledgling one.



# Building and Grounds Report

by Nancy VanderSluis

## NEW ART

If you haven't already noticed, please check out the new glass and metal art works displayed in the north windows of the sanctuary, behind the pulpit.

These three beautiful pieces were designed, created and donated by Mary Anne Chisholm and embody our Unitarianism by depicting the flaming chalice. In addition, Mary Anne has also repaired her vandalized metal and glass sculpture in the front garden near the entry and it's more beautiful than ever. We thank you, Mary Anne, for sharing your talent to enrich us with art that depicts our inclusive community.

## KEYS. KEYS. WHO'S GOT THE KEYS?

We are trying to determine what has happened to all of the keys we have made over the years. Each year, we make yet MORE duplicate keys for the front door, failing to retrieve keys from those who no longer need them. The number of missing keys is at a point where security could be a concern. If you have a key, please let me know so we can document where keys currently reside.

Thank you!

# Once upon a time....

by Craig Piquette

Not so long ago, in a democracy very nearby, there was a little church that wanted to be more active in the community and to spread the word that the people not live in fear of hell fire and damnation. The people of the church devised a plan to attract more people to the church by creating new programs and becoming more involved in community projects. They thought if they increased their visibility, more people in the democracy would take notice of them. As part of the plan, the accountants for the church told the people that in order to create new programs and enhance visibility, the members would have to contribute more money. Everyone thought that was a good plan.

However, the leaders of the democracy, living in a world far, far away thought it would be a good idea to bring hell fire and damnation to a country whose leader they did not like. The economy tanked and the people of the little church could not raise enough money to carry out their plans. Undaunted, the leaders of the church devised a plan to hold a fun event that would attract interest from the greater community and help raise money to meet the needs of the little church. They called that event the 'Minding the Gap Fundraiser' and scheduled it for Saturday, November 19<sup>th</sup>.

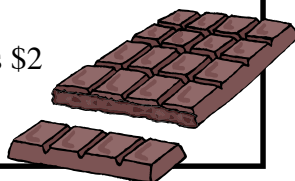
They planned to auction a number of items and services and even invited a 'celebrity' auctioneer. They encouraged everyone to come to this great event and to bring their checkbook. Because everyone knew it would be so much fun, people came from miles around and laughed and had a good time. Everyone was happy to spend their money because they knew it was for a good cause and in the end, the little church raised enough money to carry out the plans to create more programs and increase its visibility in the community. The little church grew, the leaders of the democracy were defeated in the next election and

## FOR SALE

in the foyer after service each Sunday



Fair Trade, Organic  
Coffee \$10  
Tea \$5  
Chocolate Bars \$2



everyone lived happily ever after.

Not the end.....

## See Chicago!

*by Sarah Greene*

The congregation of Countryside Church Unitarian Universalist invites you to join us for a weekend getaway to the city of Chicago, **June 2 – 4, 2006**. For the two nights of your stay, you'll be hosted by members of Countryside's friendly and welcoming congregation in the northwest suburbs. Your weekend includes hearty dinners with entertainment, breakfast at your host's home, and a full-day visit to the city.

The highlight of the weekend is the city's celebrated architecture. Countryside has arranged for our guests to enjoy two of the best architecture tours the city has to offer. See the soaring towers of the downtown area, acclaimed landmarks, and the new Millennium Park, which features the work of world-renowned architects, planners, artists, and designers.

After a busy Saturday in the city, you'll appreciate the peaceful setting of Countryside's award-winning building and prairie garden. For details on this unique opportunity, email [ccuu@ccuu.org](mailto:ccuu@ccuu.org) or call 847-359-8440, extension 1.

**There is NO skateboarding, rollerblading, or bicycling allowed on Church property.**

**Thank you**

**NO  
SKATEBOARDING  
ROLLER BLADING  
OR  
BICYCLING**

## Trea\$urer's Gems

### INCOME:

Pledge Income:

Budgeted Pledge Income: \$113,000 less \$2,400 in prepaid pledges or \$111,700. We needed to be taking in \$9,308.33 per month.

Here is monthly actual year to date:

July: \$11,401.60

Aug: \$8,246.60

Sept: \$9,004.60



Pledge Income: Sept. ran just \$303.73 short of what we need to take in per month. Pledges from previous year : As of the end of Sept. we have \$1,340. This income was not budgeted and goes along ways in addressing the budget shortfall of \$1,549!

Offering: Sept was \$329.55.

Rent: is \$280.00 for Sept. Beyt Shalom rents our church and Isis rents the church for dance.

### EXPENSES

Denominational Dues: Wrote a check to Prairie Star District for 4 months of dues in the amount of \$753.67. Year-to-date we have paid \$1,967.47. I paid the UUA July and Aug dues.

OTOC: Paid the \$650.00 budgeted. This is the first year this has come out of the operating budget verses from the Social Justice Committee.

Hurricane Relief: A total of \$957.50 has been raised and paid out.

Overall, we had a negative cash flow for this month of \$437.19. Year to date (starting in July) we have taken in \$4,462.57 more in than we have spent.

### QUOTE OF THE DAY

“The brain is like a muscle. When we think well, we feel good.” - Dr. Carl Sagan (1934 - 1996), American astronomer and scientist

This is JoAnne “Cash Register” Draper  
“Ka-ching!”

**Second Unitarian Church**  
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## **THANKSGIVING BRUNCH**

Please join the Second Unitarian Church family for the Annual Thanksgiving Brunch on Sunday, November 20, 2005 after the service. The Fellowship Committee will provide the turkey, bread, and beverages. Please bring a dish to share (serving 12) and a hearty appetite to enjoy Thanksgiving favorites from the best cooks in town! The cost is \$4 per adult, \$2 per child, with a maximum charge of \$10 per family.

Contact Janet Nichols or Mary Ann Powell for more information.  
We hope to see you there!

