



Unitarian Universalist  
Society of Geneva



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# Pioneer Newsletter

## August - September 2017

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### From the Pulpit

the Rev. Dr. Lindsay Bates

Summer is ending, and once again I'm both horrified and amazed at how quickly these few summer weeks have passed. So many changes to be proud of - young people, many of them infants when I first met them, are off to places like London and Berkeley, joining the Peace Corps, building their careers, joyfully committing to new families. And changes to ponder quietly - like the number of households who were raising young children when my ministry here began, now downsizing, moving into senior communities, traveling across

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country to spend time with the children of the children who grew up in our church. The time - not just the 12 weeks of summer but the many weeks of these past 39 years - flows more and more swiftly.

I'm acutely aware, of course, of time's passage. This 2017-18 church year will be a liminal year, a transition between chapters of our lives together and separately as I prepare to move into retirement and a new ministry of Reiki with cancer patients, survivors, and caregivers, and you prepare to work with an Interim Minister who will guide you in the process of finding the next settled minister to serve UUSG.

Liminal times tend to be emotionally challenging. Forty years is a long time for a congregation and a minister to be together! I'll be letting go of the duties and the privileges of the parish ministry and saying goodbye (at least for a while, as I'll be staying out of the way while your new minister gets settled in) to all of you who have been my community for my entire professional life.

But there will also be a lot of positive energy - excitement, enthusiasm, silliness (see McFadden, Tracey, et al...), deep exploration of who you are, who you want to be, what you want to retain, what it's time to release. The process of selecting our own clergy is a sacred rite in our free church congregational tradition. Each and every one of you will have an important part to play in the upcoming ministerial search. Some of the work will be challenging. Much of it will be fun! All of it will

strengthen you as a community, as you remember/rediscover that in fact the minister is \*not\* the church. You are.

I'm planning to have a very good year with all of you, and my goal is to leave a strong UUSG community deeply committed to preserving its Covenant, to living out the best of our UU Principles, to taking care of one another and also to taking care of the world. Let's spend the next ten months of our formal time together in grand style, celebrating and rejoicing, reminiscing and looking eagerly ahead, and serving the world that does indeed need each one of us to go out there and be peace!

Blessed Be, friends, and amen ~

Lindsay



### **board blog - Gail Tattersfield**

Unsung Heroes - The last time I was asked to write the UUSG Board Blog, I listed many many reasons why I love our old and dear church. This blog will share appreciation for those "behind the scenes" folks who may get little credit, but who do jobs most of us barely notice. Lately we hear and read so much "bad" news, let's look at some "good" news as I share stories of those who perform acts of kindness and generosity.

George's presence at UUSG is very obvious in one job he loves...most

Sundays, being the lead greeter and "head bell ringer." Getting to connect to fellow members, newcomers, and especially the children, makes him feel great. Plus, he takes his job as co-chair with Glenda very seriously as they work to fill every request made of the WOW team.

Speaking of the WOW team, shout outs are due to those particular folks who do double duty for fellow church members...Molly, Kurt, Jamie, Jenny, Betty, and Glenda are a few of those willing participants.

Some of the less visible members do so much at UUSG...Jamie seems always to be working and organizing at our Social Hours, as well as keeping the pew pockets full of tissues, brochures, and offering envelopes.

Patrick is mostly an outside guy. He repaints the letters in our Memorial Garden as well as doing clean up work in that special area of our property. And speaking of the outside of UUSG, Tom and Ron planned the project that will bring us a badly needed new gutter system (our old home needs special gutters and so doing that project meant a special creative approach).

Jan came up with the fund raising effort "New to UU" and ran that project that raised \$3,000!

When they were so badly needed last year, Jenny and Jodi managed to keep the LRE program going through some difficult times. Then Bill and Jenny stepped up to continue leadership for this coming year.

Our sanctuary has seen a lovely facelift. Sherri coordinated the purchase and installation of the handsome and sturdy new carpet and managed to get the wood floors repainted with only slight inconvenience to our church calendar. Plus, Sherri has created the variety of beautiful designs for the curtain at the front of the church...appropriate for each season.

Thanks to Andy for designing the postcards we use for our annual church Picnic as well as the Day of Service reminders. Andy is amazing at the design of other UUSG publication too.

Whenever we have a Memorial Service, Jeanne and Vohny have been there to coordinate, set up, serve, and clean up afterwards. Sometimes it can be a big job as our Common Room fills with guests. Special notice to Dave and Renee who jump in for coffee duty on many Sundays...especially during the summer months.

Kevin and Lisa are an amazing team as they organize the Day of Service volunteer opportunities, as well as direct the Annual Pledge Drive.

Appreciation goes to folks like Bill, Jim, Bob, William and Jean and musical teams who step in to add spice to our Sunday services.

There are many others who work oh so quietly behind the scenes. Remember to stop and thank those you notice.

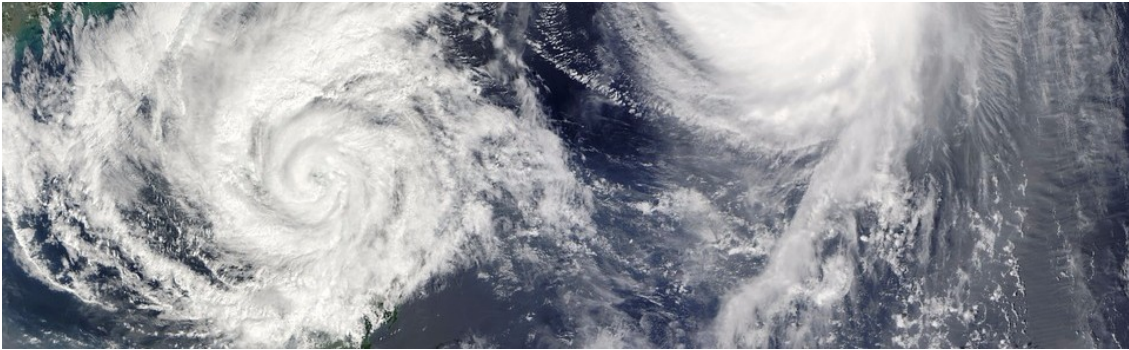
In conjunction with our 175th UUSG "birthday," Kathy and Jill are

coordinating several events to celebrate the milestone. Karen honors our history with unique displays in the Heritage showcase.

The listings here only scratch the surface when it comes to noting our giving volunteers: the LRE teachers, the garden tenders, church greeters, "For All Ages" readers, Worship Associates, Women's Circle Organizers, Board and Counsel folks, and team members of all sorts. We just could not do without you. Thank you for all you do to promote practical goodness and acts of kindness.

Gail Tattersfield

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## Hurricane Harvey Recovery Fund

**Hurricane Harvey Recovery Fund** at <https://giving.uua.org/harvey-floods>. On Friday night, August 25, Hurricane Harvey made landfall as a Category 4 Storm and brought with it deadly winds and rain to an area of the United States millions call home. Much of the Texas Gulf Coast has been impacted and communities in Louisiana and across the state of Texas are still coping with more days of rain. We're holding all of those affected in our hearts and prayers and we are in touch with local Unitarian Universalists so we can meet the needs as they arise. To do this, the Unitarian Universalist Association (UUA) has joined with the Unitarian Universalist Service Committee (UUSC) on a recovery and relief fund.

Please give as generously as you are able. Half of all funds raised will go to at-risk populations served by UUSC partners and the other half of the funds will support Unitarian Universalist congregations and members of those congregations most affected by the storm. Those funds will be administered by a group of leaders in the UUA's Southern Region, which includes the states across the southeast from Texas to South Carolina, and from most of Virginia to Florida.

Using their eye-to-eye partnership model, UUSC will work with and support local grassroots community partners on the ground in Texas serving at-risk populations who may not be able to access relief services and who are traditionally left out of mainstream response efforts. UUSC and their partners will work to bolster locally led relief efforts that are serving immigrant families, in particular young mothers and their children.



As the storm passes and recovery begins, UUSC will continue to get updates and work with partners to ensure their needs are met. Your donation to this fund is much appreciated. Thank you.

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### **Homecoming Picnic!**

Join us for the 11th Annual UUSG Picnic on Sunday, September 10, 1pm-4pm at The Wheeler Park Pavilion in Geneva. There will be food, games, music and fun for everyone! Fried chicken will be provided. Please sign up and let us know what you will bring to share: dessert, salad, a hot dish, or drinks.

Questions about the event? Contact Jamie Carroll at [picnic@uusg.org](mailto:picnic@uusg.org).

Questions about signing up? Contact our Congregational Administrator, Christine Imielski, at [office@uusg.org](mailto:office@uusg.org).

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## **We're Relaunching New2U!**

New2U is back for another go-around, and we're hoping to surpass our previous fundraising effort (we raised \$3,000 in 18 months). To do that, we need your help; and in addition, please encourage fellow congregants, family, and friends to also participate in this great program.

New2U is a fundraising vehicle for UUSG. It is an on-line marketplace where sellers can list gently used (or new) items, and buyers can get great deals. And the monies support UUSG.

When participating in N2U, everyone wins! Sellers get rid of superfluous items and get a tax receipt for monies donated; buyers get great deals on great stuff and know they are supporting an amazing organization; and UUSG gets the funds. Win. Win. Win.

We are collecting listings from now until September 7, -- so clean out your garage, basement, attic and spare bedroom -- and send them to us by clicking on the [New2U icon](#) on UUSG's home page.

And then, if you want to get great deals on great stuff (and support UUSG), check out the catalog which will launch on-line on Homecoming Sunday, September 10.

The success of this program depends on enthusiastic sellers and buyers, so thanks in advance for your support. If you have questions, you can contact us at [new2u@uusg.org](mailto:new2u@uusg.org).

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## Music at UUSG

Our summer musicians have treated us to four-hand piano reveries played beautifully by Mary Phillips and Sandra Anderson-Cordogan. And lovely music for the celebration of the life of George Hickman was performed by vocalist Cynthia Spiegel, violinist Elena Spiegel, and pianist Dean Malambri, with a specially recorded video by pianist Lynn Fisher McCanne offering one of George's favorites.

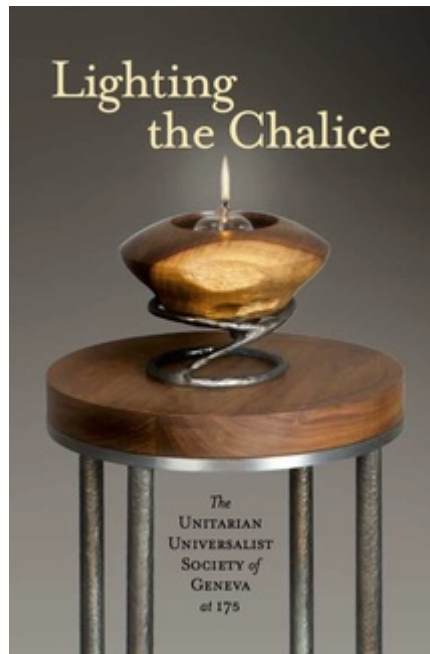
A powerful selection of songs was made memorable by The Montgomery Family Band with Ellie, David, Jake, Max and Andy and – in her debut – Jenny. The congregation enthusiastically welcomed the return of singer-songwriter Kristin McFadden, who will start her Masters of Popular Music degree at Goldsmiths, University of London, in September. She teamed up with her dad, Tracey, on guitar. He also penned special lyrics for "This Little Light of Mine" as a tribute to the Rev. Dr. Lindsay Bates. Tom Zimmerman lent his talent at the keyboard.

In coming weeks, we can look forward to a joy-filled Homecoming service featuring the "Happy To Be Home Band" with Andy Montgomery, Liam Johnson, Tracy Rosenkrans, and John Rosenkrans; talented instrumentalist Meredith Vandre; and gifted pianists Sandra Anderson-Cordogan, Geoff Pynn, and Lynn Fisher McCanne.

There is a place for you in our Music Ministry. Please contact Music Director Tracy Rosenkrans at [music@uusg.org](mailto:music@uusg.org) today!

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## **UUSG Book Release Party!**

The 175th Anniversary Committee cordially invites you to help celebrate the beginning of our church year with a special Book Release Party on Sunday, September 17, at 7:00pm! The newly created "Lighting the Chalice," edited by our own Don Brod with contributions from our Heritage Team and others, will be available for purchase - with the authors present to personally sign each copy. The party will be similar to the fantastic celebration we enjoyed in June, with bubbly, wine, beer, lemonade, delicious handmade munchies, and - of course - there will be cake! RSVP at [uusg.org/book-release](http://uusg.org/book-release).

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## **Interim Ministry Forum**

Save the Date: Sunday, September 24, Interim Ministry Forum

The UUSG Board of Directors recommends that the church engage in

interim ministry for the period of 2018-2020. Therefore, you are invited to a Forum at 12:30pm on Sunday, September 24, in the sanctuary, to learn about the purpose, the process, and the timeline.

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### Get Involved With Interweave

Interweave is a local group of LGBTQ members, friends and allies who meet once a month to have time together for discussions and special events. We will meet at 12:30pm after second service on Sunday September 17, to plan our fall activities and discuss current events. For information please contact Lynn Steele at [interweave.leader@uusg.org](mailto:interweave.leader@uusg.org).



### Friday Flicks

Join us, September 22, at 7pm for "This is Crazy: Criminalizing Mental Illness."

Today, more than 2.4 million Americans are incarcerated in prisons and

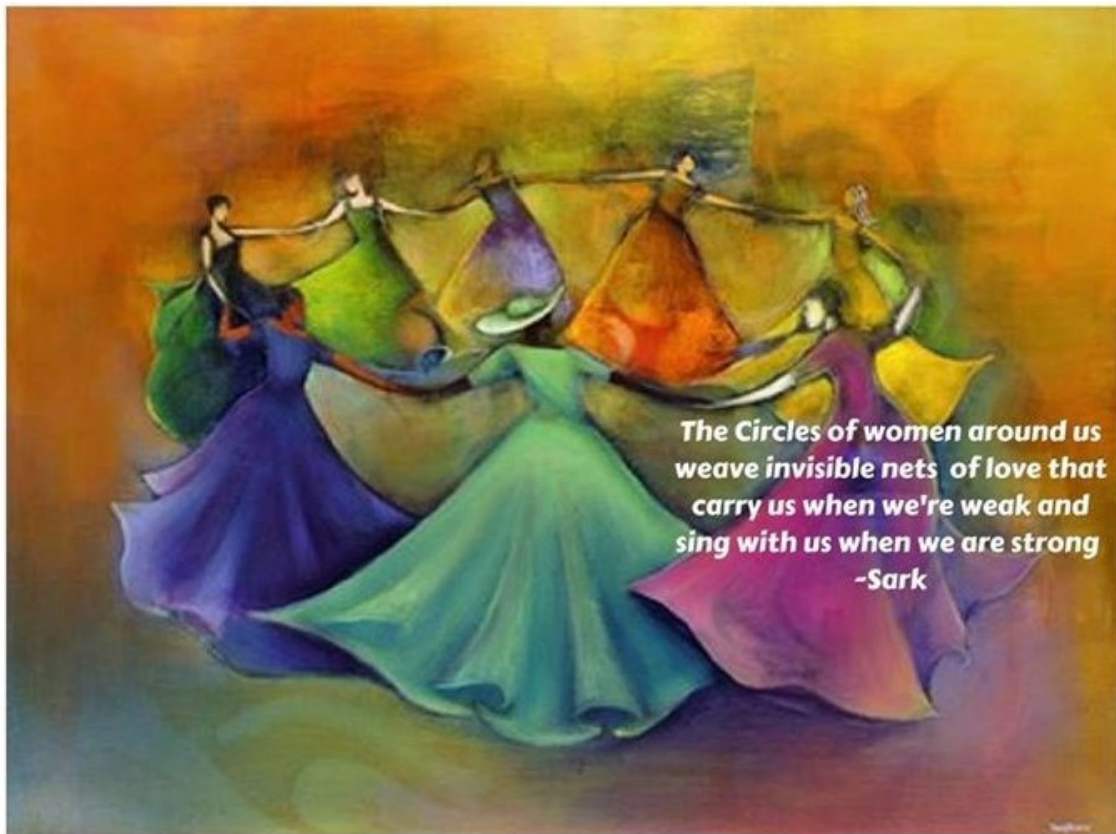
jails. 1.26 million of those inmates, more than half of the entire prison population in the United States, suffer from some form of mental illness.

Consisting of 3 short documentaries, "This Is Crazy: Criminalizing Mental Illness" highlights the stories of individuals with mental illnesses who have found themselves in a dysfunctional prison system rather than getting proper care. The incarceration of those with a mental illness causes great harm to the individual and perpetuates a cycle that is damaging to the community, all while pending tax-payer money.

Through personal interviews with community leaders, city officials, and formerly incarcerated individuals with a mental illness, this series seeks to bring attention to the injustice of criminalizing mental health and offers alternative community solutions.

There will be a discussion of the jail diversion project in Kane County, sponsored by the Fox River Valley Initiative, after the movie.

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### **Women's Circle September 23: Taize Revisited -The Power of Meditative Chant**

The experience of singing a repetitive chant together as a group can be a powerful experience, even if you just sit and listen. Cynthia Spiegel will guide us in a variety of short meditative pieces from different cultures. They aren't hard to learn, nor are they hard to sing. The beauty is in doing it together. You won't want to miss this! We all loved it when we first sang

with Cynthia, and she is back by popular demand. No singing experience is required. Please see [uusg.org/womens-circle](http://uusg.org/womens-circle) to register.

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### **Youth Outlook Drop-In Center Is Back!**

After taking the summer off to do some outreach to the local middle and high schools, the bi-monthly Thursday drop-in center for LGBT youth opens September 28, at 6:30pm. Through July and August, the drop-in center volunteers worked to create new outreach materials and developed a new list of contacts, focused on Tri-City middle school social workers and counselors who would be the most likely professionals to make referrals for youth seeking support.

In its first year, the drop-in center served a mix of LGBT youth, with a high percentage of trans and gender non-binary students. In the coming year, all LGBT youth are welcome.

Adults volunteers who would like to assist with running the drop-in center may want to consider the upcoming November volunteer training, scheduled for November 4, 11, and 18. For further information or to receive an application, see the Youth Outlook website [youth-outlook.org](http://youth-outlook.org), or contact the executive director, Nancy Mullen, at [nancy.mullen@youth-outlook.org](mailto:nancy.mullen@youth-outlook.org).

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## **Pathway to Membership**

"Can't the Welcoming Team come up with a better approach?"

"I can't commit to three Sunday afternoons in a row!"

"We'd love to come, but we're just so busy!!"

Well, we can and we have! We're going to try something different this fall. The Welcoming Team will offer a one-day "Pathway to Membership" program, 1-4pm, on Sunday, October 15, in the Common Room. Newcomers can experience "the best of" our former New UUs Orientation combined with the required elements of the Membership Preparation Class in a single three-hour session. If at the end of the afternoon you feel ready to sign the Membership Book, you can do so on the spot!

Have you already attended New UUs but just haven't been able to find time to come to a separate MPC? "Oldcomers" are welcome to join us at the midpoint (about 2:30pm) and participate in the second half only. There is no obligation to join at the end of the day, but the invitation will be offered.

We'll kick things off at 12:30pm with a light lunch. Childcare will be provided upon advance request. Watch for more details in the next Pioneer and listen for pulpit announcements as the date approaches. Questions? Please stop by the Welcome Center in the Common Room between services. [Please RSVP here.](#) Stay tuned!



## **Going Green with the Mini-Pioneer**



Beginning on Sunday, September 3, we will be projecting the Mini-Pioneer Order of Worship and Announcements in the Sanctuary instead of providing hard copies. The Mini will continue to be available online at our [website \(uusg.org\)](http://uusg.org). Thanks for helping us reduce our paper use and costs associated with printing!

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## **LRE Registration is Now Open!**

[Click here to register.](#)

We have a terrific year in store. Last year, our program focused on what it means to be a Unitarian Universalist. This year, we'll turn our attention outward to learn about faiths followed by our neighbors and around the world. More information on our program is available [here](#).

### **Details on the Registration Process**

All children and youth from nursery through senior high must be registered to participate.

To register, you'll need to follow three steps:

1. Read the [LRE Participation Agreement](#).
2. Complete the online registration form for each child that you wish to register. Please be sure to enter your contact and emergency contact information for the first child. Please use the electronic form if you can as it helps reduce the workload for our volunteers and avoid errors. Paper forms are available in the form rack between the Common Room and Nursery for anyone who may not be able to use the electronic form.
3. Once your child's registration is processed (usually a within few days), you will receive an invitation to connect to Realm. Please log in and complete your Realm profile using [these instructions](#).

### **What the heck is Realm?**

It's our new church management system that allows you to communicate with others in our church community, see details of events, and generally stay on top of what's going on at church. Our teachers and advisors will be

using Realm to communicate important information during the year, so please be sure to [follow the directions](#) to log in once you receive your invitation e-mail. If you don't receive the e-mail or have any difficulty logging in, please contact [LRE@uusg.org](mailto:LRE@uusg.org).

That's it! We hope this process is simple and relatively painless. Questions? If you would like to volunteer as a teacher or if you have any questions please don't hesitate to contact LRE Team Leaders Jennifer Klein and Bill Pokorny by e-mailing [LRE@uusg.org](mailto:LRE@uusg.org).

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### **Harvest Dinner**

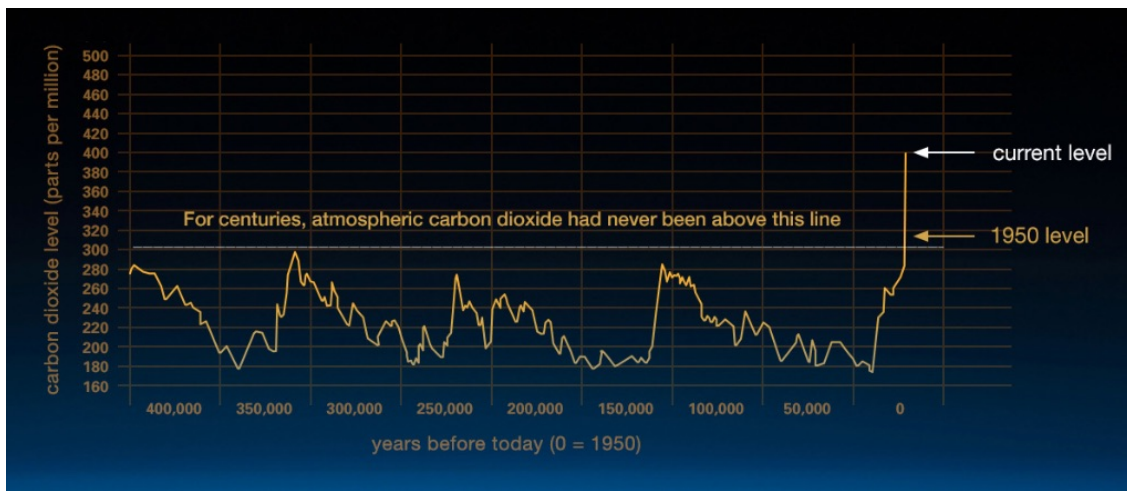
Save the date: Saturday, October 21, at 6pm

Location: the Common Room

Dinner preceded by 1/2 hour presentation by Dan Huntsha of Faith in Place ([faithinplace.org](http://faithinplace.org)).

Who is Faith in Place? Since 1999, Faith in Place has worked with over 1,000 houses of worship throughout Illinois to protect our common land, water, and air. With outreach staff working across the state and offices located in Chicago, Lake County, and Central Illinois, Faith in Place inspires faithful people to care for the Earth through our four program areas: Energy & Climate Change, Sustainable Food & Land Use, Water Preservation, and Advocacy.

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## Green Sanctuary News

Presentation by Raymond Wiggers: Climate Change: What Can We Do About It?

Location and Date: September 17, at 2pm, The Town and County Public Library, 320 E. North Street, Elburn. For more information, call the library at (630) 365-2244.

About Raymond Wiggers ([naturalhistoryman.org](http://naturalhistoryman.org)): His positions have included those of geologist and field inspector for the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency, Illinois State Museum curator, National Park Service ranger, noted public lecturer and natural history tour guide, and professor on the faculties of Barat College of DePaul University and Lake Forest College. A practiced professor, his presentations are informal, insightful and fun.



## Facilities Update!

On the outside of the sanctuary new gutters have been installed. These gutters will do a much better job of preserving our historic building. A big thanks to Ron Craig, Tom Lichtenheld, and Oury Roofing, who devised a unique system to hold half-round gutters firmly in place. Please note that, while the brackets and gutters are strong, they are not meant to hold the weight of a ladder, so ladders should NEVER be braced directly against the gutters.

On the inside of the sanctuary, the two chairs behind the pulpit have been reupholstered. The chairs now match the fabric on the pew cushions. Thanks to Sherri Casterline for donating her time and the funds to update the chairs, and to Larry Mathias and Sherri Casterline for transporting them to the upholstery shop.

In the kitchen, Hal Schulman installed a ground fault (GFI) outlet on the south wall. This addresses one of the recommendations made during the building inspection last winter.

Also, the carpets have been cleaned.

Upcoming projects include: painting the upper trim on the sanctuary, and installing window well covers on the north side of Pioneer House. The Facilities Team has many handyman projects to complete, so if you are able to replace a door or paint a wall, then please contact the [Facilities Team](#) and let us know. It takes a village to maintain a 175 year old building.

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## Becoming Involved in Deportation Defense Efforts

Almost on a daily, if not weekly basis, the New York Times and other news organizations cover deplorable events effecting immigrants and refugees.

Most recently, Trump pardoned a known sadist, Phoenix's sheriff, Joe Arpaio. He has been accused numerous times of flouting the law by continuing racial profiling and forcing undocumented people, including pregnant women, to endure days in outdoor tents during excessive heat. The Dreamer/DACA plan is under attack and at risk for being dismantled. This will make it very difficult for students of undocumented parents, who brought them over to the United States as young children, to get a college education. His administration is trying to expand ICE's capacity for deportation by arresting immigrants in jails, no matter the severity of their arrest. A few years ago, thousands of children crossed the border without their parents in hopes that they may be embraced by the United States and avoid the violence in their country. Now these children, who have lived in group homes and are approaching adulthood, will automatically go to an adult prison when they turn 18. Then there's Charlottesville, a deeply disturbing barometer showing the rise, embrace and expression of racial hatred.

Is it any surprise that undocumented immigrants are faced with hard choices? Should they stay, hide or go? Because of this nationwide witch hunt, immigrant reporting of crime is way down. The New York Times reports human interest stories describing increased stress and fear as undocumented persons isolate themselves in their home instead of participating in communities. This can only increase mental health difficulties, poverty, increase of drug and alcohol use, child abuse, etc.

Many people at UUSG feel deeply troubled by the rise of hate. We want to make a difference locally and beyond, but how? In response, the Social Justice Team invited Cinthya Rodriguez from the Chicago Religious Leadership Network of Latin America (CRLN). She will do a presentation: "Becoming Involved in Deportation Defense Efforts." Cinthya will show how we can be trained in rapid response, attend court watch, create ordinances, and involve ourselves with other local, more established groups. The hope is that we will discern the best way to focus our efforts against hate.

Ms. Rodriguez will join UUSG on Sunday, October 1, 12:30-2:30pm. If you are planning on attending, [please sign up here](#).

In peace,  
Parvaneh Shidnia-Smith

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## The Office Report

September is going to be a busy month at UUSG!

- Homecoming Sunday is September 10, and we move back to two services at 9:30am and 11:15am. This is also the weekend of Geneva's Festival of the Vine, so make sure to leave extra time to find parking near UUSG.
- The 11th Annual Picnic is a great opportunity to reconnect with the UUSG community, and with 68 people already signed up, you won't want to miss it!
- Church School classes also begin on the 10th, so take the opportunity now to register your child(ren) so we have all the necessary information to start the year off smoothly.
- Next up is the book release party on the 17th, with all the authors available to sign copies!
- And in case you missed it, the 2016-2017 Annual Report was emailed to UUSG Members and Friends this week.

See you soon!

~Christine  
Congregational Administrator



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