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Unitarian Universalist
Society of Geneva



Pioneer Newsletter

February - March 2018



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From the Pulpit

the Rev. Dr. Lindsay Bates

Four months left. That feels quite odd. This church year is $\frac{2}{3}$ over, the Pledge Drive for 2018-19 is organizing, the Interim Ministry Task Force is preparing for the upcoming rituals we UUs employ to match Interim Ministers with Congregations. Within three months, we will know who the 2018-19 Interim will be. I'll be preparing files of "minister stuff" to share with my colleague as soon as they have finished the tasks of ending their current ministries, just as I am now working on the tasks of ending mine.

It's starting to hit me at odd moments, far more frequently than earlier in the year, that I really am leaving. In some ways it feels as

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though I'm already gone.

Colleagues had warned me about the "lame duck" period, when planning is starting for a congregation I will no longer be serving. I'm supposed to stay far away from that planning. Be available as a resource if needed, sure. But mostly get out of the way, and experience a weird combination of success, wistfulness, and - I'm not sure of the exact word here - disappointment? invisibility? grief? - when the planning goes forward quite smoothly without me.

I guess I'm ok, really, with being unnecessary for various meetings. But I enjoy working with you in all those groups. In all honesty, I won't miss the meetings after I've officially retired. But I am going to miss all of you, the people I've worked with and planned with and argued with and created with over all these years. As the church has grown, the folks I've been able to get to know best (aside from those I meet and walk with in pastoral care) are those who have worked with me in our shared ministries - the Council and Board members, the Worship and MOM and MAD teams, Finance, Personnel, and the Membership, now Welcoming, Team. I'm going to miss those connections.

A number of you have asked if I will be **completely** gone and we will never see each other again. Well, yes and no. It all depends.

The "Ministry of Absence" required as we go forward on our separate paths does feel a bit like a death. But it isn't. It is only the necessary ending of our chapter together so that you (and I) can proceed freely into the new chapters of our lives. But it's also an opportunity for all of us to discover new possibilities that

we would not have found together. I will no longer be part of UUSG's routines and adventures. But when a church thrives in its transition time, goes forward effectively and well into its next ministry, it's not unusual for the previous minister to be invited back occasionally to join in the celebrations.

I know you are stronger, more creative, more generous, more capable, more determined, than some of you seem to believe. Have faith in yourselves and in one another and in the community of faith and action that is UUSG. The better you do, the stronger you become, the more generously and completely you continue to live our UUSG Covenant and Mission with one another and out into the world, the more likely it is our paths (if you so choose) will cross again. I'm confident we will see each other again.

Peace ~ Lindsay



Circles of Life

Our church community has lost another long-time member - Susan Justice. Susan married Ray Van Overberghe here in 1984 and they became active friends, Susan officially joining UUSG in 2002. She was badly injured in a fall two years ago, shortly before Ray's death. She died at Delnor Hospital on Feb. 15. Her memorial service will be held at Yurs Funeral Home in Geneva, on Saturday, March 10, at 4pm (visitation from 1 to 4). Humanist Celebrant and long-time friend Howard Katz will officiate.

We send our loving condolences to Doris Lipman and all the family - Brad, Tim, Samantha, and Omar and Abigail, too - on the recent death of Doris's father. It's terribly hard to say goodbye to someone who has always been there and been so greatly loved. Hugs to you all.

UUSG member Eleanor Lukazewski, who died in December, was adamant that she did not want a memorial service. Honoring her wishes, a small group of her closest friends gathered in January to celebrate her life. Page Paris has sent this note out to Eleanor's larger circle:

Many of you have requested an idea about a contribution for Eleanor. So many of us know how devoted she was to the Austin Scholarship Program at Third Unitarian Church. She was not only a founding member but remained interested in the program. You can send donations to

*Third Unitarian Church
c/o Scholarship Committee
in Memory of Eleanor Lukazewski
301 N. Mayfield Avenue
Chicago Il 60644*

(Write "In memory of Eleanor Lukazewski" on the memo line.)



Our House

We're planning two projects this summer and we'll need volunteers to help. One project involves replacing the floor boards on the porches of the Pioneer House. The other project involves repairing the brick foundation under the Pioneer House. We're in the planning phase now and we're targeting sometime this summer to complete them. The Facilities Team will send out more information about these two projects in the coming months.

If you're interested in helping us preserve our historic site, improve our meeting space, or enhance our classrooms, please contact [Kevin O'Neill](#).



UUSG Music

Warming up our winter have been wonderful singers and musicians, including the soaring vocals of Cynthia Spiegel, who returned to lead the UUSG Choir, its spirited songs including a stunning solo by Parvaneh Shidnia-Smith with flute embellishment by Katie Baar.

The mood switched to folk music anthems by the multi-instrumentalist UUSG Political Band featuring Tracey McFadden, Andy Montgomery, Steve Nink and Tracy and John Rosenkrans, with a special appearance by Chung Liang on ukulele. The music shone with some updated lyrics and gorgeous harmonies.

Managing to inspire hope was a powerful mix of message and music delivered by the YRUU students at their service. Taking part were Alex & Stephan Cordogan, Amber Dotson, Salome Fogleman, Maddy Glazier, Jane Holish, Collin Klein, Ellie Montgomery, Emily Plass, Kenna Powell, Anna Rosenkrans, Zoe Steele and Quinn Welsh. They featured both well-prepared ensemble performances and vocal soloists, joined by pianist and guitarist Tom Zimmerman.

Our gifted keyboardists included Geoff Pynn, Dean Malambri and Sandra Anderson-Cordogan.

Looking ahead, we'll be treated to music by Parvaneh and Jessica Littlefield, joined by the UUSG Jazz Combo featuring Liam Johnson, Geoff Pynn, Tracy Rosenkrans, Paul Sargent and Michael Townley. The RE music students, directed by Sandra, will be showcased; and Cynthia will bring back the UUSG Choir.

Be a part of the joy of music – there is a place for you in our Music Ministry! Students, amateurs, professionals, adults & youth. Please contact Music Director Tracy Rosenkrans at music@uusg.org today!



Pledge Drive News

The 2018-19 Pledge Drive is nearly upon us. We will be faced with a challenge the likes of which many of us have not yet experienced. It will be our first year without our Senior minister, the Reverend Dr. Lindsay Bates. This will be a time when we need to roll up our sleeves and remind ourselves, "We Can Do It!"

The Pledge Drive officially begins on March 17, and you will soon be receiving the Pledge Drive Brochure in the mail. The Pledge Drive will run for three weeks and end on April 7, the day of our Annual Day of Service. You can help shorten the Pledge Drive by submitting your form (written, or online) promptly. A member of the Pledge Drive team will also reach out to listen to your Joys and Concerns.

Our church family is as strong as ever. We are ready to face the changes before us. Pledging your support for UUSG demonstrates your commitment to our present and our future. As a community, "We Can Do It!"



Women's Circle

Members of the Planning Team for Women's Circle thank the 35 women who joined us for our February session! Facilitator Deb Brod guided women of all ages to explore their creativity and the importance of giving their "inner muse" an opportunity to enhance their many creative interests. We had lively discussions, shared multiple perspectives and new ideas, and suggested ways to overcome the life barriers to creativity.

The goal of the UUSG Women's Circle is to extend our learning and communication, and enhance the opportunities for women within the church to come together around our individual spiritual growth.

Guided by our UU Seven Principles, we come together in a variety of ways that help us explore our spiritual directions using programs and activities that are thoughtful and energizing.

Women's Circle continues to grow, and explores many avenues to spiritual connection and community building. The next sessions of our third year together explore Earth-Centered and Pagan spirituality as we welcome Spring (March 24) and celebrate and honor the Earth and our meditative and creative practices (April 28).

Thank you to all those who have participated this year and those who have helped organize, facilitate, and support our explorations! We invite you all to join us this spring!



Worship Planning Team Report

Spring is around the corner, and as many are aware, so is change at UUSG. While we plan to celebrate the retirement of our Senior Minister, the Rev. Dr. Lindsay Bates, we are also planning and preparing for her absence.

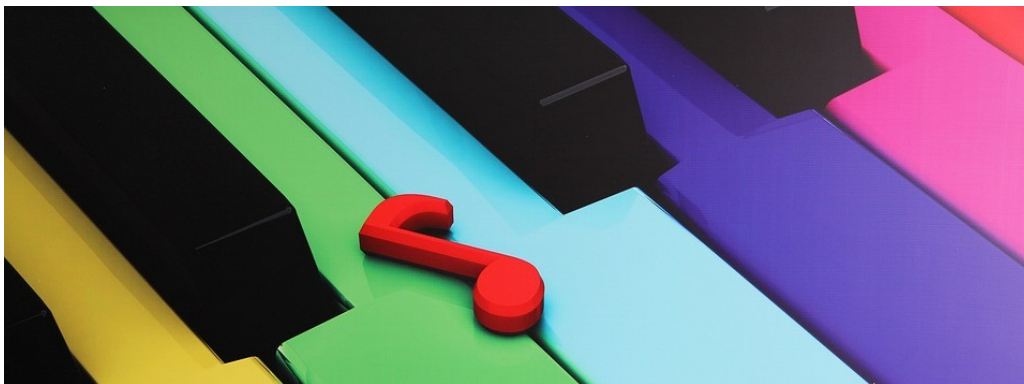
Are you aware that our energetic and dedicated small group is busy organizing our summer schedule of guest speakers and wonderful worship services? We have great ideas for topics, new guests, favorite repeat speakers, and a lively For All Ages segment, not to mention talented musical guests and surprises!

We will have nursery care for the youngest family members and even have ideas for more activities for the older kids so families can continue to participate and enjoy the summer service. We know that families often take a vacation from church during the summer months — but we hope that this exciting program of new faces and beloved UUSG members and friends will keep you coming to church during the first few months of our new life 'after Lindsay.'



LAST CALL for the Celebration of Naming & Dedication!

If you would like your child(ren) to be part of this year's service on March 25, we need to know no later than Sunday, March 4! Email Rev. Lindsay: minister@uusg.org.



Piano Party!

Tom Zimmerman, Cynthia Spiegel, Aaron Fogleman, and Geoff Pynn are hosting a piano party on Friday, April 13, at 7:00pm at Tom's house ([814 S. Fourth St., St. Charles](#)). All skill levels are welcome, from Tom and Geoff (whom you know from their playing at church) to Cynthia (who used to play, but has forgotten how) to Aaron (a rusty, would-be intermediate) to beginners. Please bring your own sheet music and play whatever you like, whenever you like during the course of the evening. (It is not a recital or concert). Also, please bring a dessert or munchie and a drink. Please R.S.V.P. to one of the following:

Tom (tzimmer@fnal.gov; 630-677-0451),
Aaron (aaronfogleman@niu.edu; 630-879-1803),
Cynthia (cynthiaspiegel@gmail.com; 630-262-1126),
Geoff (geoffrey.pynn@gmail.com; 630-326-9133).

Thank you!



Get Involved With Interweave - Sunday, March 25

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 12:30, after second service on Sunday March 25, (this is a change from our usual third Sunday) to plan upcoming activities and discuss current community events. For information please contact Lynn Steele at interweave.leader@uusg.org.



The Snowfall Project

Three new developments in the snowfall campaign:

1. Our Communications Team is onboard and we will begin to more effectively transmit our intention and success.
2. One of the main long term goals of this campaign is to have climate change brought back into public discussion. This was exhibited at the congressional candidate forum in Batavia last Thursday night. A question about climate change was presented to all 6 of candidates present. For 2 years I've attended large public gatherings about policy and this is the first time I've ever heard action on climate change directly addressed. Usually the best you can hope for is a nod to the environment such as "we all want clean air and water." Which is true, but does nothing to advance anything. And is easily lost in the dozens of other things we must also do. So for almost 20 minutes, a room of about 350 people listened as the candidates tried to answer the question: "Will you take action to end new investments in fossil fuels?" And during the whole time, no one's head exploded. It is possible for the community to discuss this, but we have to ask.
3. I've been working with the First United Methodist Church in West Chicago as they are forming their plans to have a more active green outreach program. The Snowfall Campaign is on the agenda for their next meeting. Turns out this is for all of the UMC in Northern Illinois. True, a lot of people are going to wonder what the heck the Snowfall Campaign is, but it certainly appears reasonable to expect that this has legs.

And finally, from the Day of Service description -

"We are creating invitations to contemplate nature and sharing this with our congregation, other congregations, the larger community and the staff of our elected officials."

The Day of Service event will be an introduction and practice in this process. Everything will be supplied. We just need you to write a few lines (copy to be supplied if you don't want to bring your own) and sign the card.

Action to protect the environment and end climate change.
Tell your children and grandchildren, that when you had the chance, you did something to help prevent the end of civilization.

Warning Side Effects: mystical experiences have been reported. Turns out, Emerson and Thoreau were really on to something."

For more information, please check out uusg.org/green-sanctuary or Realm, or send an email to Bill Koehl at greensanctuary@uusg.org.



March Friday Flick: *Culture of Fear*

This month we offer 2 short documentaries on fear in our society today. Whether conservative or progressive, we are inundated with stories and messages that play on our emotions.

A Virus Called Fear

Rational fear can be a valuable cerebral response. It can protect us from harm and render a positive influence on some of our most consequential decisions. But it can also be used as a weapon and strangle our ability to interpret the world around us from a clear perspective. Are we born with fear? Or is it a mechanism we develop over time based on our experiences? There's no doubt that a healthy amount of fear is essential in sharpening our survival instincts, but it can also lead to unfounded paranoia, irrational superstitions and a destructive us-versus-them mindset.

Culture of Fear

This documentary looks at the epidemic of fear in our society, from child predators to immigrants and from flu pandemic to terrorism. It features interviews with Dr. Noam Chomsky, a renowned linguist, human behaviorist, and political activist; US House Representative Dennis Kucinich, once US presidential candidate; and other experts offering an in-depth exploration of the culture of fear. Culture of Fear is a term used by certain scholars, writers, journalists and politicians who believe that some in society incite fear in the general public to achieve political goals.

Please plan on joining us Friday, March 23, at 7pm in the Common Room to continue our series of films on topics of Social Justice.



Internet Safety: What Can Save You From Social Media Oriented Crimes

Sunday, April 8, 2018. 1-2:30pm in the Common Room
Presented by Detective Sarah Sullivan, Geneva Police Department

All UUSG Junior High and High School students, parents, teachers, advisors, and LRE Team Leaders are invited to attend this informative session regarding some of today's real concerns for our teens.

Detective Sullivan is passionate in bringing awareness to protection our children from cyber-bullying, sexting, internet identity theft, and other social media oriented acts. She will share recommendations for teens and parents that can support avoiding becoming a victim, and also, what to do if you do become one.

[Register in Realm](#). For more information please contact Hal Schulman, Emergency Response Team Leader, at 630-886-8641 or ertleader@uusg.org.

Please note that the material presented is not suitable for youth younger than 7th grade



Fox River Valley Initiative Event

The Fox River Valley Initiative program, "Exercise in Democracy" will allow all 9 Illinois States Attorney General candidates to be on the podium. One of these lucky candidates will win, all of them will say - who are these people?! And more important - what do they want?! We want Social Justice! This is how you get it. Many SAGs have famously grown a backbone and are standing up to nefarious political winds, and are capable of having a dramatic input into actions in our states. UUSG will have a contingent - all are invited.

Sunday, March 11, 4-5:15pm, Maine East High School Auditorium, Park Ridge. Check out the [flyer](#). If you are interested in carpooling with others from UUSG, [sign up here](#).



Memorial Stones

If you would like to remember a loved one with a carved stone in our Memorial Garden, please give a completed [order form](#) to Christine by April 15. The Memorial Garden Dedication Service will be held May 27, at 2pm.



Commit to Knit

The Commit to Knitters put together a peace pod. We shipped out 4 shawls, 8 scarves, 5 hats, 4 Peace Pals, 1 adult sweater, 1 toddler cover-up, and 1 baby blanket. Want to get involved? Please join us in making scarves, shawls, baby blankets and bibs, toys, sleeping mats, and other items. Yarn, patterns, needles, and assistance are available on request.

For assistance, instruction, and/or encouragement, please contact Jamie Carroll at knitting@uusg.org.



Thinking About Your Garden?

New2U has a limited supply of Garden Glitter strands to brighten up your outdoor spaces. Hang these sparkling strands of beads and mirrors from a limb, and enjoy the dancing reflections. Includes some vintage beads and baubles. Great housewarming gifts. Only 6 strands left (first come, first served for choice). Contact info at [New2U](#).



Bible Study for UUs

For UUs who simply want to learn more about the Bible as literature, "Bible Study for UUs" is on the third Monday of each month from 7 to 8:30pm. Our next meeting will be on March 19. We'll be discussing Acts.

For future planning, in April we'll be discussing Exodus in April. In May, we'll be discussing ["The Triumph of Christianity: How a Forbidden Religion Swept the World" by Bart Ehrman.](#)

For more info, please contact Jim Frazier at biblestudy@uusg.org.



Join the Security Team!

The Emergency Response Team (ERT) is expanding to better ensure we all have a safe worship experience. We are seeking volunteers to implement an internal Security Team that would be "on duty" on Sunday mornings. Training would be provided to ready us to handle an unplanned situation dealing with disruptive, threatening, and violent types of behavior. If you are willing to be part of a rotating pool of people, please contact Hal Schulman at ertleader@uusg.org. A professional background/degree in a related field is not required.



Women's Retreat Informational Meeting

Please join us at 12:30 in the Alcott room on March 4th for a Women's Retreat meeting! Whether you are interested in learning more about the Annual UUSG Women's Retreat, commenting on our last one, or contributing ideas for our next one in January 2019, please do come by. We'll be in the Alcott room, outside Lindsay's office, so bring your lunch if you like. If you can't make the meeting, feel free to send comments to our Planning Committee Chairwoman, Rachel Harbold, at womensretreat@uusg.org.



UU Summer Camp: July 1-7, 2018

Consider joining fellow UUs this summer in the Missouri Ozarks at the annual Midwest Unitarian Universalist Summer Assembly (MUUSA). The weeklong camp offers many workshops and activities for families, couples, and singles of all ages. This year Reverend Nic Cable will lead the daily Morning Celebration service on this year's theme: "Living Between Worlds." Registration begins this month; get all the details at muusa.org.


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