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Unitarian Universalist  
Society of Geneva



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# Pioneer Newsletter

## January - February 2017

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### [UUSG Calendar](#)



### **From the Pulpit** the Rev. Dr. Lindsay Bates

Over the past couple of months, we've been dealing with our own version of "A Series of Unfortunate Events" here at UUSG. If you've missed the excitement, congratulations! and count your blessings. Every community, including healthy ones, will face conflicts, confusions and misunderstandings, and UUSG is no different. "Not as agreeing in opinion" is, after all, part of our Covenant. Fortunately, we're well on our way to getting issues resolved,

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problems corrected, and misunderstandings cleared up.

Thank you to those who have been and are still working mostly behind the scenes long and patiently to get things back on track.

One ongoing issue that keeps appearing is that people aren't sure where to go when they have a concern, a question, or a problem within the community. We do in fact have a structure, and when it's used appropriately, it can defuse and heal trouble before trouble gets out of hand.

**First**, ideally, we hope each member of our UUSG community will be willing to go directly to any other member of the community – clergy, staff, Board, Council leaders, other members of the community – and be willing to say “I have a concern, and you – your project, your team, your comments, etc. – are involved. Could we sit down together and talk?”

If that doesn't work, then

**Second**, everyone should know that MOM – our Ministry on Ministries team – exists to help connect individuals or groups having problems (including but not restricted to failed communications, lack of clarity around roles or expectations, concerns about policies or events or behaviors witnessed, conflicts of any kind) with the individuals or groups who can help get those problems solved. MOM is a neutral, unbiased group, part of whose job is to make sure that the clergy hear clearly what

people are saying to us! Sometimes MOM will facilitate meetings, sometimes MOM just passes along important information and follows up to see that it's handled appropriately. This can take time, and it does require patience. But it works.

MOM members are Bev Coe, Sean Hruby, Patrick McGleam, Ellie Radvanovsky, Pat Ward, Molly MacKay Zacker, Board Liaison Gail Tattersfield, and our clergy, Rev. Lindsay and Rev. Scott. You can approach any one of them, or ask to talk with the whole group. You can ask a member to hold your name in confidence while taking a concern to the group on your behalf. MOM generally meets on the first Sunday of the month after the second service.

And ***Third***, any member of the community can approach any member of the Board of Directors and ask that your concern be addressed. If it's an issue of policies in particular, the Board is likely to be the best place to start. Board members are President Jean Pierce, VPs Nancy Christensen and Eric Jonke, Secretary Pat Vary, Treasurer Bob Swanson, Directors Kathy Cornell, David Moore and Gail Tattersfield, and our two ministers ex officio. The Board meets on the second Tuesday of the month at 7 PM. Talk with Jean Pierce to find out if your issue is best responded to by an individual conversation or a place on the agenda.

Of course, things won't always work

out the way everyone wants them to – that’s also inevitable in even the healthiest communities. Sometimes you’ll be told, “Sorry, but no,” along with an explanation. Sometimes information you may want is confidential (the workings of the Personnel Committee, the Board’s Executive Sessions). Sometimes what is being requested isn’t permitted by policy, law or common sense. Some issues are decided by vote, and sometimes we don’t get the outcome we wanted or expected.

But even when we don’t agree, we do promise to listen, to take concerns seriously, to trust and be trustworthy, to work together and to do what we can to overcome divisions and establish real harmony. It’s all part of “aiding each other in our moral and religious improvement,” being associated together “as seekers after truth and goodness.”

Remember the words of our Universalist ancestor, Hosea Ballou:

*If we agree in love, there is no disagreement that can do us any injury, but if we do not, no other agreement can do us any good.*

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**Scott's REgards**  
the Rev. Scott Talbot Lewis

Sources say that near half a million people were in attendance for the Women's March on D.C. on January 21st. Across the country and around the world additional marchers may have numbered in the millions. Estimates from the organizers of the Chicago event have set attendance at a quarter of a million. A number of you were in The Loop on Saturday and most of us were there in spirit.

The myth of American exceptionalism dies hard. For me it's always a delicate balance between harsh reality and the beauty of the American ideal that we are all equal under the law. We all have different reactions to disappointment. Some people feel sorrowful and disheartened; I just feel mad. Mad that the forces that divide us momentarily have the upper-hand. Unity and community won't come easy in the forthcoming days, but have they ever? It takes talent and patience to keep the conversation going. It takes grit and tenacity to attain greater goals, and once reached, still loftier ones will be the inspiration to future generations.

Equally alive in my soul is the dream of Unitarian Universalist exceptionalism. Most religions retain some sort of exclusivity: "Be like us"; "Think like us"; "Do like us" and sometimes even "Do as we say!" We say "Come as you are!" Every community has shifting dynamics of power and individuals who think they have the privilege of telling others how it must be. Historically UUs have said "NO" to that way of behaving and complications result. Our luminaries, many of whom are counted among the luminaries of our nation, had the ability to work in solidarity for the greater good, and not always harmoniously.

Come as you are and stay to create something lasting, beautiful and exemplary. That takes patience, largess and magnanimity, but we can do it!

Recently, I shared my belief that the Unitarian Universalist Society of Geneva has an aspirational covenant. Rev. Conant and his contemporaries framed that abiding agreement of what our church should strive for, but perhaps never attain. Our 175th year is a grand opportunity for us to take stock of how we're doing. Ours is a legacy of high-mindedness and vision; let's resolve to stay true to our ideals.

With joy, love and gratitude,

Rev. Scott



## boardblog

The Board Blog will return next month!

Questions or comments? Contact the [Board of Directors](#).



## December and January Music at UUSG

Music has given wings to the turn of the year at UUSG. Bringing a special glow to Christmas Eve were Ruth Cavanaugh leading the UUSG Choir, joined by violinists Wendy Evans-Glazier and Stella Childs, cellist Larry Glazier, bassist Tracy Rosenkrans, keyboardist and arranger John Rosenkrans, and pianist Lynn Fisher McCanne. And Christmas Day beautifully underscored a celebration of family with selections by violinist

Alexander Cordogan and cellist Stephan Cordogan, joined by their mother, pianist Sandra Anderson-Cordogan.

A wonderfully interactive Taize-style service was led by gifted vocalist Cynthia Spiegel, complemented by the musical talents of Geoff Pynn, Ruth Cavanaugh, and Meredith Vandre. Also shining at the keyboard - pianist Dean Malambri.

Looking ahead, we'll be treated to the UUSG Choir, led by Cynthia Spiegel; and a valentine from the Conant Love Bandits Band featuring Tracey McFadden, Andy Montgomery, Tracy Rosenkrans, John Rosenkrans, and Liam Johnson.

There's nothing else like the eclectic presentation of music, musicians, talents, and collaboration at UUSG. To share your own special gift, offer suggestions, or express your appreciation of our work, please reach out to Music Director Tracy Rosenkrans at [music@uusg.org](mailto:music@uusg.org).



### **Commit to Knit**

We're feeling the love -- are you? Our wonderfully talented and conscientious group recently donated dozens of items earmarked for women and children around the world through the non-profit [knitting4peace.org](http://knitting4peace.org). We also created two scarves and a lap blanket for fellow church members, as requested by the W.O.W. team. Please join us in spirit while we work from home and also in person when we meet between services on the first Sunday of each month. Our next gathering

will be in the Common Room on Sunday, February 5. Questions and suggestions may be directed to Katherine Lyons at [knitting@uusg.org](mailto:knitting@uusg.org)



### Heritage Room Display Case

The 175th Anniversary Committee and the Heritage Team call your attention to the changing displays in the glass display case in the Heritage Room also known as the entrance foyer at 110 S. Second. As we move through events commemorating UUSG's 175th Anniversary during 2017, we are exhibiting historical church documents, photos and artifacts. If the current display gives you ideas about other things you'd like to see, contact Kathy Cornell, Pat Ward or Karen Moore.





## Women's March Memories

Our Favorite Memories from the Women's March, Saturday, January 21, 2017

Compiled by: Julia Friesen, Andrea Gruszecki, Sharon Hansen, Cathy Kern, Kathy McFadden, Glenda Peck, Jean Pierce, Bill Scown, Jeannie Scown, Cynthia Spiegel, Pam Verner

- \* "This is not a moment, it's a MOVEMENT."
- \* Seeing a white man hold up on his shoulders a young black girl was very symbolic to me.
- \* White woman wearing "Black Lives Matter" T-shirt.
- \* Marching with men and women of all ages, shapes, and sizes with the most creative signage ever and chanting, "No hate, No fear. Immigrants are welcome here."
- \* The number of young people, male and female, willing to give their time and energy to stand for diversity, justice, and equality.
- \* The crowd of 250,000 was so inspiring. They were upbeat, kind, and concerned about one another. There was no violence.
- \* Seeing the platform at the Geneva station covered with a sea of women in pink hats.
- \* The clapping of the women on the train as we stopped to pick up crowds from each stop until we were so full we had to go express.
- \* The incredible energy of the train set the tone of the day. Everyone was so friendly. Not one grouchy moment. True diversity of the crowd represented all of us in America, and all were welcomed and included. Police officers were friendly and welcoming and train conductors were helpful and supportive.
- \* Even the male conductor sported a "Nasty Woman" badge.
- \* The sun peeked out behind the clouds as I embarked on the train and remained bright and warming - brought light to the day - to the cause.

\* Looking into the eyes of another marcher - a man - while he responded to a woman's chant of "My body. My choice." He and other men responded with "Her body. Her choice." I was brought to tears hearing him say, "Her body. Her choice."

\* I spoke about the march with a young man today. He told me that he had to work that day. But he wore a pint t-shirt to support us. We are an even bigger majority than we know.

\* The absolute lack of testosterone ~ Everyone was kind, helpful, and loving.

\* The signs - creative and blunt; e.g. a uterus giving the finger!

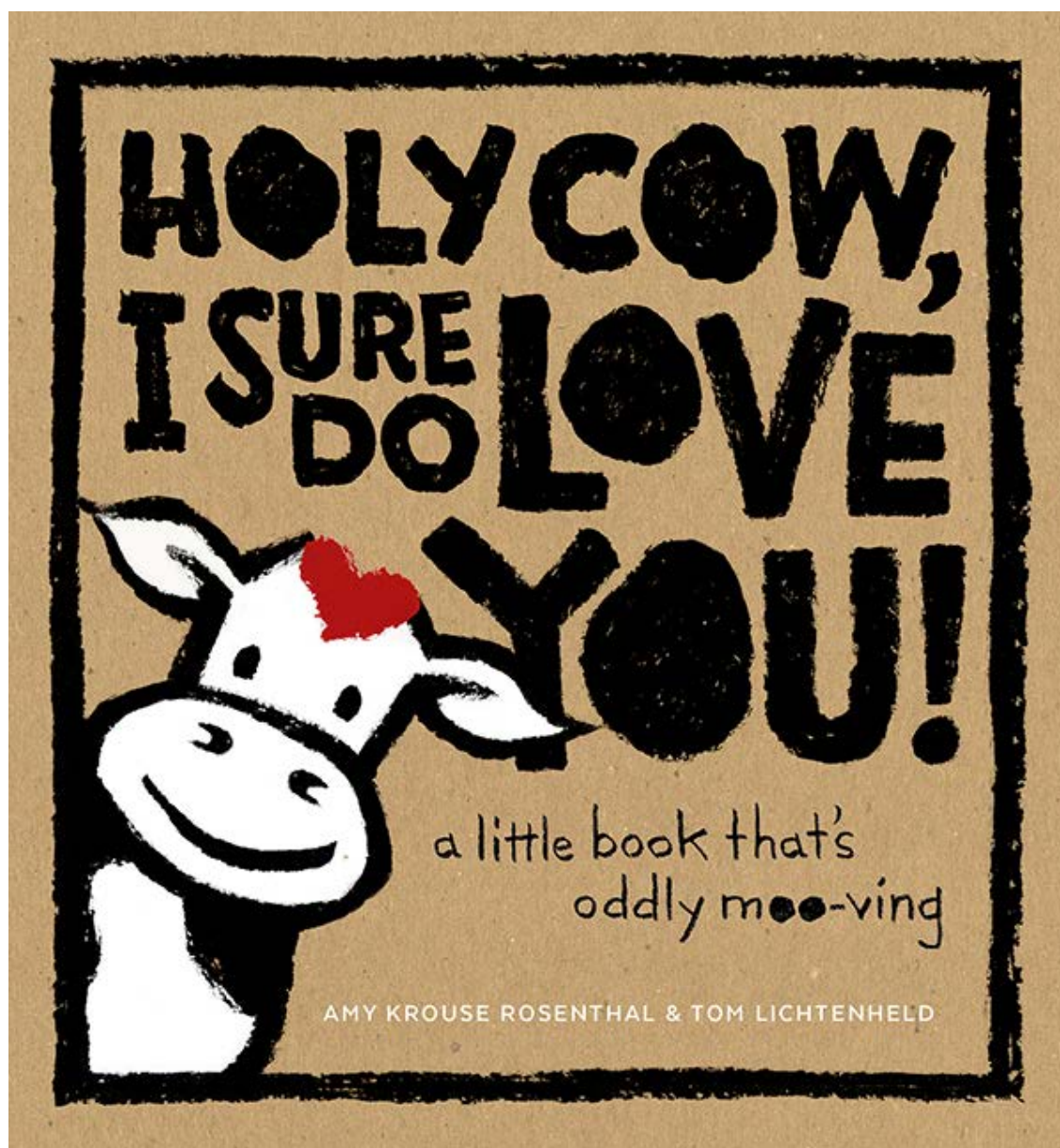
\* To know we are not alone is so inspiring.

\* On Sunday, the Social Justice Team doubled in size. Brainstorming gave birth to an Action Alert initiative:

- In February, the Standing on the Side of Love bulletin board will be devoted to vetted actions Beyond Our Walls.

- When Issues Specialists learn of upcoming votes, issues-based demonstrations, etc. they will forward the information to Chair Bill Scown, who will ask Jean Pierce to post it on the bulletin board and Christine to post it on a web page devoted to advocacy opportunities.

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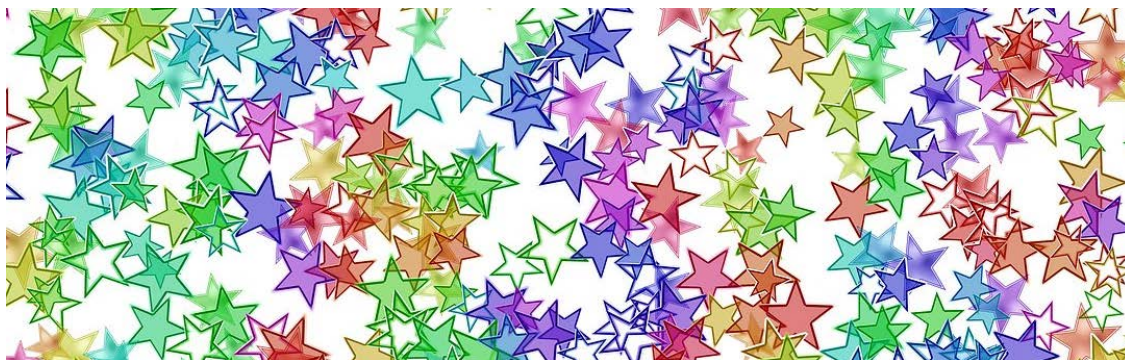


### What's New at New2U

New2U has some great new listings, like an Echo Dot, a TV sound bar, a Wonder Woman doll . . . and a couple of special offerings:

**Historic Prints.** In celebration of our 175th anniversary, you can own a print of our historic Sanctuary. Choose from an 1893 photo of the building's exterior; an Historic American Buildings Survey by the Works Progress Administration; or get them both! See them on display in the Common Room. Various sizes available. For ordering information, go to [uusg.org/new2u-shop](http://uusg.org/new2u-shop).

**Holy Cow I Sure Do Love You.** For Valentine's Day, get this oddly moo-ving collection for your significant other, adult child/grandchild, best friend, etc. Set includes gift book (signed by Tom Lichtenheld, illustrator), 3 notebooks and 12 thank you cards. All monies to UUSG. See samples and purchase in the Common Room, at the New2U display.



### **RE Music**

RE Music students are back in “singing” again! Like the song from last fall, the lyrics are made especially for UU’s by Rev. Tony Larsen, but this time they are sung to the tune of “Do Lord.” Students are singing about the light, love, and joy within each of us, as they spend their Sundays learning about what it means to be a Unitarian Universalist. Be sure to come sing with them during services on Sunday, March 12, 2017!

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### **Upcoming Office Closures & Staff Time Off**

Rev. Dr. Lindsay Bates will be attending a conference from February 23 - 27.

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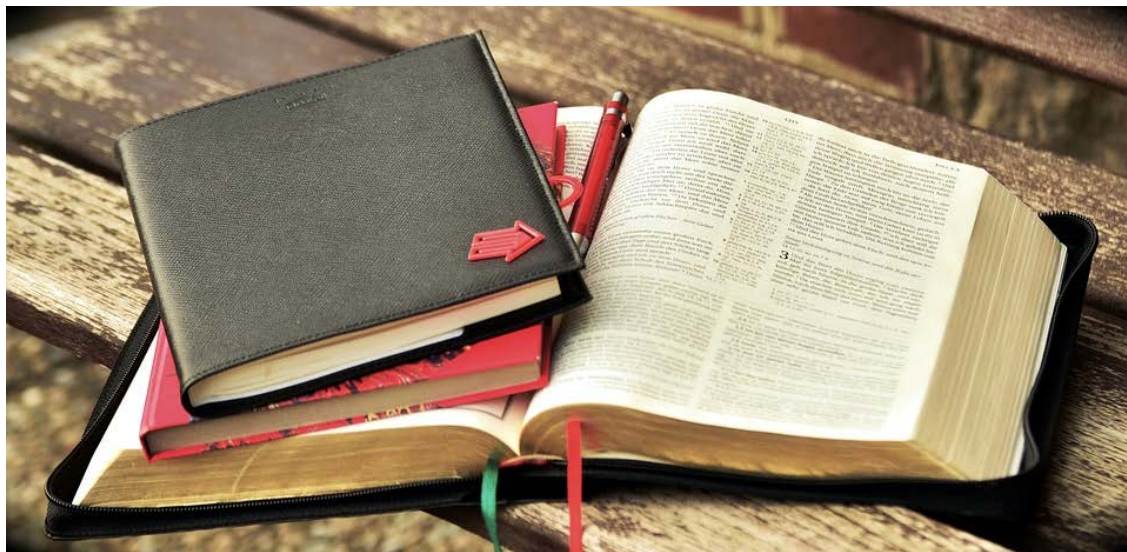


## Winter Weather Closing Policy

Because we're a regional congregation, with many of our folks traveling a considerable distance to get to Geneva, we do have a policy for winter weather.

If the wind chill in the greater Chicago area is colder than 40 degrees below zero, or if travel advisories have been issued because of snow or wind, we cancel all church events, including any committee meetings, office hours, Sunday morning religious education, and Sunday worship. During the week, if you're not sure about the severity of the weather, please check with your group's facilitator before heading to a meeting.

If Sunday activities are canceled, we'll try to get that information onto our website and the Congregational Administrator's voicemail message (call the church office at 630-232-2350 and then press 1-0-0 to hear the message). But when in doubt, please stay home!



## 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 February 20. We're finishing up Genesis and starting Exodus using "The Bible with Sources Revealed" by Richard Elliott Friedman.

For more info, please contact Jim Frazier [biblestudy@uusg.org](mailto:biblestudy@uusg.org). If you haven't had a chance to finish the reading, please join us anyway. The conversation frequently wanders beyond the book.

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### Got Pictures?

Heritage Team wants photos to include in the church history book to be published this year. If you have photos of events, celebrations, or groups of people (auctions, pageants, music, etc.) illustrating UUSG's church life during the years 1992-2017, please send copies to [heritage@uusg.org](mailto:heritage@uusg.org). Identify as best you can the date, activity, and people in the photo. Because of publication cost we're planning to use only 6 to 8 photos in the book, but all submitted photos will be considered. If you submit printed, rather than digital, photos, put your name on the photos if you want them returned to you. Deadline for submission must be February 28, 2017. Thank you!

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### **Friday Flick's - *From this Day Forward***

Friday, February 24, 2017 at 7:00pm

UUSG Common Room

*From This Day Forward* is a moving portrayal of an American family coping with the most intimate of transformations. When filmmaker Sharon Shattuck's artist father came out as transgender and changed her name to Trisha, her transition was difficult for her straight-identified, physician wife, Marcia, to accept. Having married and fallen in love with a man, Marcia found herself doubting whether she could love Trisha as a woman. And, as a heterosexual woman, she felt that the idea of walking down the street, holding hands with a woman, would paint a false picture of her own identity. At the time, with Sharon in her preteen years and focused on developing her own sense of self, her parents' relationship seemed a mystery.

After announcing that they would get a divorce, Marcia and Trisha found themselves heartbroken and decided that they loved each other too much to separate. Committed to staying together as a family, they then began a careful balancing act that would test their love for one another, and ultimately prove even more challenging than expected.

As Sharon approaches her own wedding day, she begins asking the questions she couldn't ask as a child: Why did her father choose to transition when she and her sister were so young? How—and why—did her parents decide to stay together? As the film evolves into a conversation about love and acceptance in a modern American family, it raises questions relevant to all of us: As individuals, how do we adapt to sustain long-term love and relationships? Where do sexuality and gender intersect? And how do families stay together, when external forces are pulling them apart?

*This showing is sponsored by Interweave which is a local group of LGBTQ members, friends and allies who meet once a month to have time together for discussions and special events. It is part of our annual events leading up to the Interweave church service on Sunday March 5.*



## **Circles of Life**

Our congratulations and best wishes to Doreen Christiani and Jim Swick,  
married by Rev. Lindsay at UUSG on January 7!

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## Women's Circle

Women's Circle is excited to be hosting a new program on Saturday, February 25 at 1:00pm entitled, "The Spiritual Side of Yoga". Our presenter, Lynn Meredith, will guide us in exploring the meditative and spiritual aspects of this ancient practice. We will learn about the 8 limbs or paths of Yoga, and will then focus on the first limb, the Restraints, which provide gems of wisdom that give directions to living fully. No Yoga experience necessary, and practices/poses may be comfortably done from a chair or mat (you will need to provide your own mat.) If you have questions please contact Susan O'Neill or Trish Beckjord. [RSVP at uusg.org/womens-circle-signup](http://uusg.org/womens-circle-signup)

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## Adopt-a-Plot

Adopt-a-Plot Weeding Ministry would like to thank the following people for their hard work and dedication to keeping our grounds weed free in 2016: Bill Scown, Becky Hruby, Shawn Thornton, Kathy Meier, Rhonda Robinson, Velma Powers, Melissa Auer, Jan Miller, Carol Myers, Debbie Leoni, Sandy Bottoms, Vera Lind, Vohny Moehling, Laura Bartoszek, Renee Tomell, Diane Gallentine, Meredith Vandre, Cynthia Spiegel, Llona Steele, Ann Drover, Tony Gibbons, Nancy Goodfellow, Mylane Bryant, Glenda Peck, Nancy Steinke, Julie Riffle, Eric Peterson, Rosemary Maziarz, Elke Chateau, and Sally Jones. Interested in joining Adopt-a-Plot Weeding Ministry 2017? It's a once a month commitment that involves keeping a small plot of our church grounds weeded (April through October). If interested contact Karen Laukaitis at [weeding@uusg.org](mailto:weeding@uusg.org).

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## Annual Day Of Service

Our Annual Day of Service will be held on Saturday, March 18, 2017. We hope you'll mark your calendar to join us for a volunteer effort, for dinner, or for both! If you're interested in joining the planning team, there are a variety of ways to get involved.

Contact Lisa Gades [dayofservice@uusg.org](mailto:dayofservice@uusg.org) if you'd like to help.



## Choir Thank you

Heartfelt thanks goes out to our 2016 Christmas Eve Candlelight Service Choir, under the direction of Ruth Cavanaugh. Their expressive singing of everything from Bach to Rutter to the "Carol of the Bells" to the haunting "All the World is Winter" added warmth and vibrancy to an already beautiful service of readings and carols. Our singers were: Julia Adams, Mark Adams, Mark Alleman, Trish Beckjord, Robert Brubaker, Colleen Cushing, Brian Doyle, Liam Doyle, Roger Gallentine, Andrea Gruszecki, David Hanchette, Anne Heavey, Kelly Herz, Becky Hruby, Calvin Hruby, Cathy Kern, Cameron Klein, Corey Klein, Jennifer Klein, Lynn Fisher McCanne, Linda O'Neill, Erin Rosenkrans, Rhonda Robinson, Robert

Savage, Glenn Vallone, and Pat Vary.

A special thanks to our "youthful" participants for adding their spark and talent: Liam, Cameron, Corey, Calvin and Erin! Thanks to Tracy Rosenkrans for leading a tenor/bass sectional and numerous coaching sessions contributing to the the success of the choir.

The choir was expertly accompanied by John Rosenkrans. His lush arrangements for the string ensemble are an annual treat. Thank you to our string ensemble members, Wendy Evans-Glazier & Stella Childs, violin; Larry Glazier, cello; and Tracy Rosenkrans, bass.

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### **Equal Exchange Fair Trade**

EQUAL EXCHANGE/fair trade: UUSG supports Equal Exchange fair trade by purchasing coffee, tea and sugar for church use. In addition EE/ft products are for sale to the Congregation and friends at no or very low mark-up. These products are displayed in the Common Room north armoire.

NEW offerings include: milk and dark chocolate bars, extra virgin olive oil, peppermint tea, dark chocolate cocoa and SALE items. The dark chocolate cocoa is delightful in chili and coffee and sprinkled on just about anything.

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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 12:30 after second service on Sunday February 19 to finish the plans for our annual LGBTQ Friday Flicks and church service. For information please contact Lynn Steele at [interweave.leader@uusg.org](mailto:interweave.leader@uusg.org).

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## Be A Hero to a Hero Christmas Stocking Drive 2016



UUSG BOW offering for November 2016 went to the stockings for local veterans in nursing homes as well as those who are home bound. Over 500 stockings were processed with the help of Llona and Lynn Steele and Elke Chateau and other volunteers. The stockings were distributed in plenty of time for Christmas Day. The each stocking had at t-shirt, toiletries, socks, and in some cases a soft toy. The generous donations from UUSG made the funding for this year's operation a success.



## Giving Beyond Our Walls

UUSG BOW offering for November 2016 went to the stockings for local veterans in nursing homes as well as those who are home bound. Over 500 stockings were processed with the help of Llona & Lynn Steele, Elke Chateau, and other volunteers. The stockings were distributed in plenty of time for Christmas Day. Each stocking had at t-shirt, toiletries, socks, and in some cases, a soft toy. The generous donations from UUSG made the funding for this year's operation a success.

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## The Office Report

Christine Imielski, Congregational Administrator

-Watch your mailboxes for the 2016 Donor Statements. I will be mailing those out no later than January 31st. If you have any questions about yours, please call me at 630-232-2350 or email [office@uusg.org](mailto:office@uusg.org) and I will be happy to assist!

-The 110 South 2nd Street door keycodes were changed on January 23rd. If you have a keycode and did not receive an email with the new one, please let me know.

-The Winter-Summer 2017 UUSG Directory was emailed to Members & Friends at the beginning of the month. Email me if you did not receive one and I can send an electronic copy your way! There are also some hard copies available in the information kiosk in the Common Room.

Happy days to all!

Christine



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Podcast



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