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Unitarian Universalist  
Society of Geneva




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# Pioneer Newsletter

## January - February 2018

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### From the Pulpit

the Rev. Dr. Lindsay Bates

If you were with us on Christmas Eve, you may remember these lines from the poem "Star Giving," by Ann Weems:

*What I'd really like to give you for  
Christmas is a star.*

*Brilliance in a package,*

*Something you could keep in the  
pocket of your jeans*

*or in the pocket of your being.*

*Something to take out in times of  
darkness*

*something that would never snuff  
out or tarnish,*

*something you could hold in your*

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*hand,  
something for wonderment,  
something for pondering,  
something that would remind you of  
what Christmas has always  
meant...*

As a remembrance of our last Christmas Eve together, I gave out stars – nothing big or fancy, just something you could keep in your pocket or hang on your tree as a reminder of all the blessings that Christmas has always meant.

There are still some stars left. If you were not able to be here Christmas Eve or at the service on Dec. 31, but you would like one of the stars, I'll have them at the pulpit. Please do take one, a final Christmas gift from me to you and yours.

Peace and blessings ~

Lindsay



### **Circles of Life**

We send our loving condolences to David and Renée Tomell, on the passing of David's father, Paul Tomell, on January 2, at home in Aurora, age 93. May peace and love surround you both.



## **Naming & Dedication Celebrations**

Once again, it's time to plan for our annual Naming & Dedication Services. Each year, we dedicate at least one full service to a Celebration of Naming & Dedication. It seems to work best for most families if we choose a Sunday at one end or the other of the Spring Break. For 2018, the celebrations will be on Sunday, March 25. We need to know how many families would like to take part and how many children will be dedicated, and we need that information no later than Sunday, March 4.

If you've never experienced one of our N&D services, this is our UU equivalent of a Christian Baptism or a Jewish Naming ceremony or a Muslim Akikah. The entire service is devoted to welcoming and naming the children, with several families participating together. If we have more than three families in any given year, we divide them up between the services (three or four children being about the maximum for each service). Each family presents their child or children to the congregation with a reading (poetry or prose or a prayer or prepared statement) or special music, and the members of each family make their individual promises of love and support to one another and to their children. The ceremony includes older siblings, grandparents, godparents or sponsors, and other special friends and relations. As a religious community, we all covenant to help in caring for all of our children, and if older children are being included, we also invite their classmates to return to the sanctuary for the actual ceremony of Naming and Dedication. The children being Named can be any age, and parents need not be Voting Members of UUSG – they need only want the support of our UU church family as they raise each child.

Let us know as soon as possible, but absolutely no later than March 4, please, if you'd like your child(ren) included. Please tell us which service time you'd prefer (first come first served on that – we can't easily do more than 4 children at a service, so if you have a strong preference, tell us soon). Once we know who's interested, we'll send out the "N & D Info Form" we need filled out for each child.

If you have questions, send Rev. Lindsay an e-mail: [minister@uusg.org](mailto:minister@uusg.org).

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## Our House

Big thanks to Bill Koehl, Hal Shulman, Sherri Casterline, Tom Lichtenheld, and Patrick McGleam! Bill made a new grate for the floor air duct in the Pioneer House, Hal ensured we passed our inspection from the Geneva Fire Department, Sherri coordinated changing the hanging decorations on the chancel, Tom invented a tool to make it easier, and safer, to change those hanging decorations, and Patrick caulked the windows in the kitchen hallway behind the sanctuary!

Currently, Jeff Stibal is working on replacing the fan in the basement furnace room. The Facilities Team recently identified the following project priorities for 2018: 1) replace the roof above the Common Room, 2) repair and paint the trim on the steeple, 3) replace the porch floor boards on the Pioneer House, and 4) repair the brick foundation under the Pioneer House. We are hoping to get volunteers to help us complete projects #3 and #4 this summer.

Also, a big welcome to two new team members – Dave Hansen and Patrick McGleam!

The Facilities Team is looking for members or volunteers. If you're interested in helping us preserve our historic site, improve our meeting space, or enhance our classrooms, please contact Kevin O'Neill.

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## Music at UUSG

Wonderful music has accompanied the turn of the new year, beginning with a New Year's Eve morning service with Dean Malambri shining at the piano. Adding to the gifts of the 12 days of Christmas were evocative vocals by Cynthia Spiegel, beautifully accompanied by Tracy Rosenkrans on double bass and pianist Geoff Pynn. Bringing us ethereal music was outstanding guest harpist Lillian Lau, spanning inspiring anthems to jazz. Tom Zimmerman dazzled at the keyboard in music by Grieg and Brahms, and then wowed with his first vocal performance at the piano, singing John Lennon's "Imagine," followed by a jazz-infused instrumental gem by Chip Davis.

Looking ahead, we'll be treated to the UUSG Choir led by Cynthia Spiegel, the UUSG House Band and keyboard talents John Rosenkrans and Sandra Anderson-Cordogan.

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](mailto:music@uusg.org) today!

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## Women's Circle: Spirituality and Creativity

"The creative process shrivels in the absence of continual dialogue with the soul. And creativity is what makes life worth living." Jungian analyst and author Marion Woodman

Join us as we explore the connection between Spirituality and Creativity. The two go hand-in-hand. Creativity isn't limited to the arts—it can be part of almost everything we do—cooking, child-rearing, playing chess. And it is through creativity—waking up that muse—that we can find the true expressions of ourselves.

We'll discuss ways to nurture your spirituality through creativity and your creativity through spirituality. Unleash and focus your inner creator!

We hope you can join us on February 24, 1-4pm, in the UUSG Common Room. Deb Brod will facilitate. Sign up [here](#).



## Pathway to Membership

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

or

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

or

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

Well, we can and we have! The Welcoming Team will offer a one-day Pathway to Membership program, 12:30-4pm on Sunday, February 25, 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 2:30) 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 12:30 with a light lunch. [Please RSVP here](#). Childcare will be provided upon advance request. Listen for pulpit announcements as the date approaches. Questions? Please stop by the Welcome Center in the Common Room between services.

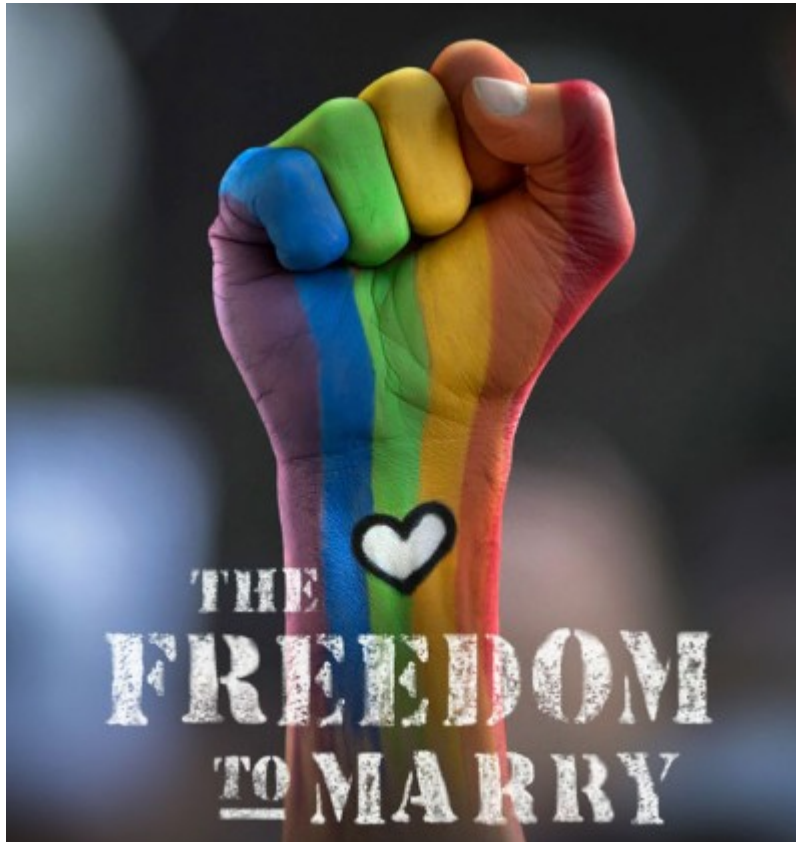


## The Snowfall Project

Meditation, contemplation, social action, poetry and art, we are creating something new. There is no precedent for this. This is a story about to unfold. Everyone is invited to participate.

For more information, please check out [uusg.org/green-sanctuary](http://uusg.org/green-sanctuary) or Realm, or send an email to Bill Koehl at [greensanctuary@uusg.org](mailto:greensanctuary@uusg.org). Bill has introductory packets that include information about the campaign, it's purpose and style. There will be plain postcards included along with samples.

Finished cards can be turned in at any time to the office and we will post and mail the cards out throughout the month.



### **February Friday Flick: *Freedom to Marry***

Come join us for the February Friday Flicks for the showing of a new documentary *The Freedom to Marry*. We will gather in the Common Room at 7pm on Friday February 23, for this film sponsored by Interweave.

Over the last four decades, the concept of same-sex couples marrying went from a 'preposterous notion' to the national law. The marriage equality movement is now known as one of the most successful civil rights campaigns in the modern history, but change did not arrive by happenstance. This victory was carefully planned and orchestrated over decades. *The Freedom to Marry*, a new documentary film, offers the untold, inside story of this historic movement. This is a riveting ride alongside Evan Wolfson and Mary Bonauto, the architect and the main litigator of the movement, and their key colleagues from earliest days of their journey to their final frenetic dash to the US Supreme Court. For more information contact: [interweave.leader@uusg.org](mailto:interweave.leader@uusg.org).

And don't forget we will be showing *Disneyland of War*, tomorrow, January 26, at 7pm. This short documentary covers the glorification of war and violence in our culture, shedding light on the indoctrination of the public including young children at events like the Miramar military air show. Bill Koehl of our congregation will lead a discussion following the film to identify opportunities for future actions. Please plan on joining us in the Common Room as we embark on a new year of films that address today's major social justice issues.





### **Equal Exchange Fair Trade**

Sale in progress! Coffee pods guaranteed to work in Keurig coffee machines. Check out the armoire in the Common Room for great deals on great products.

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### **UUSG Book Exchange**

Take a peek at the UUSG Book Exchange across from the James St/North Entrance. Borrow or keep any of the books in the Barrister cabinet. No sign in/out - *just enjoy*.

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### **Emergency Response Team (ERT)**

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](mailto:ertleader@uusg.org). A professional background/degree in a related field is not required.

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### **Improve Your Bottom Line!**

You just received your UUSG Donor Contribution Report for 2017. Next year, you can substantially increase the "Total Donations" line by selling unused items on New2U. One of our donors increased their total donations by 13% with New2U sales. So clean out your attic, basement, garage and list on [New2U](#). It's easy.

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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 services. During the week, if you're not sure about the severity of the weather, please check with your group's convener before heading for a winter meeting.

If Sunday activities are canceled, we'll try to get that information onto our homepage 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!



### 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 Sunday, February 18, after second service about 12:30pm to discuss current events. We will also be planning for our Friday Flicks presentation on February 23, and the annual LGBTQ service scheduled for March 4. For information please contact Lynn Steele at [interweave.leader@uusg.org](mailto:interweave.leader@uusg.org).

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