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Unitarian Universalist
Society of Geneva



Pioneer Newsletter

March - April 2018



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From the Pulpit

the Rev. Dr. Lindsay Bates

This is quite literally "from the pulpit" – I'm sharing with you the 20 Strong Suggestions for UU Community that I wrote for the Pledge Drive sermon in 2011. I'm sending these out again as a follow-up to the Sermon on the Amount on March 18.

In order to have a healthy community, there have to be rules. You might call them guidelines or suggestions; I won't go so far as to label them Commandments, but they're too important to be set aside as inconvenient or irrelevant when they interfere with what we as our less-than-perfect selves might choose to do. So let's call them promises, promises we won't keep perfectly, but promises we can

[New UUs ReUUnion](#)

return to as often as needed, to guide us in our life together.

[Dungeons & Dragons](#)

In no particular order, here they are:

[New2U](#)

I promise to participate. A congregation is not an audience.

[Interweave](#)

I promise to listen to/respect/consider the needs and desires of others, including those with whom I deeply disagree and even those whom I may not much like, or who don't much like me. If there are such people.

[Friday Flick](#)

[CPR & First Aid Training](#)

I promise to share – my time and talents and treasure, certainly, but also of my self, my thoughts and dreams and beliefs.

[Soup Kitchen](#)

[The Snowfall Project](#)

I promise to let others share with me, to receive as well as to give.

[Piano Party](#)

[Bible Study for UUs](#)

I know I won't always have things my way. With some things I won't EVER have my way.

[April BOW](#)

I promise to work on being OK with that.

[#MeToo](#)

[Internet Safety Presentation](#)

I promise to maintain a healthy sense of humor, an appreciation for the absurd, and a sense of perspective.

I promise to be patient – things take time. Even urgent things.

I promise to remember and to accept the fact that we are all of us, individually and collectively, works in progress.

I promise to give others the benefit of the doubt.

I promise to be practical and realistic – or at least to listen seriously to those who are more practical or more realistic than I might be.

I promise to let myself dream, to aim higher than I might think I can reach – and to listen seriously to the dreams of others.

I promise to believe – even in the face of the occasionally contradictory evidence – that being in community is far better than being isolated and alone. I do believe that what I receive is of such great value that I want even more of it. And I want it not just for myself, for my own family or my own friends. I want it for everyone and anyone whose life would be enriched by being here, who comes to the door and comes inside.

I promise to do my best to communicate from the heart as well as from the head and the gut. I want to be reasonable; I want to be grounded and determined to find and follow my own true path. But most of all, I want to be compassionate, respectful, clear, non-violent in my communications. I promise to keep working on this.

I promise to help make this community welcoming and safe, even if I don't much want to. Therefore I promise to break off a conversation with a friend I see every week so that we can both go say hello to the newcomer holding that special coffee mug.

I promise to share in our celebrations, in providing support, in a shared openness to spiritual growth and in changing the world.

I promise to live out my belief that we can make a difference.

I promise my faithfulness to our Covenant. If I ever find myself unable to say those words with a clear conscience, I will know I have

much inner work to do.

I will speak up. I will speak directly and clearly and with both compassion and respect when I see a need or a problem that must be addressed. And I promise to speak with the people who need to hear whatever I need to say – those with whom I may be disagreeing, or in conflict, or in a misunderstanding, or those who have both the ability and the authority to do something with whatever concern I may bring to them. I will talk with people – not about them – as we find our way back into right relationship.

I will take responsibility and ownership and care for this place. I promise to remember that “somebody else” does not come to this church. If something needs to be done and I am able to do it, I will not go looking for Somebody Else.

I promise to hold out a vision of community at its best. We continually create and re-create the community we most deeply desire, and the community will reflect our commitment.



Board Blog - by Kathy Cornell

We can do it! This is the motto for our current Pledge Drive - just like Rosie the Riveter, we can have a terrifically successful Pledge Drive and get ourselves set for a positive and productive year ahead. You should have received your pledge packet in the mail; we hope you will read the messages it contains and give serious consideration to making your pledge as generously as you can. We are hoping for 100% participation of our members and friends so that the Board and the Finance Committee can put together a budget that allows us to flourish in the coming year. The board is participating 100% as pledgers and as members of the Pledge Drive Team.

As we hope you know, the Pledge Drive is offering another challenge match campaign. A group of generous members and friends has established a seed fund to match all new dollars that come in from all pledgers during the coming weeks. This means that when you increase your pledge amount above what you pledged last year, the additional dollars will be matched one-for-one -- please take advantage of this excellent opportunity to maximize the impact of your pledge.

During the '17-'18 church year we have been celebrating our amazing 175th anniversary as a congregation. We celebrated the historic founding of UUSG with parties and presentations, we honored the 39th anniversary of our Rev. Lindsay's ordination, and we celebrated the 174th anniversary of the dedication of our beautiful building. Let's demonstrate through our pledging that we are making a statement: *UUSG is personally important to us*. In addition to getting set for a successful year of programming, we will be honoring Lindsay as she retires after 40 wonderful years with us. And there is another very important reason to have a super-productive Pledge Drive: it makes a statement to our Interim Minister prospects that we, as a congregational community, are 100% committed to supporting UUSG during the coming year, after Lindsay has retired and as the new Interim will be serving during our transition period.

So... when a member of the Pledge Drive Team contacts you to talk about your participation this year, please do have a conversation. We hope you'll be able to get together in person for coffee (or wine, or beer, etc.). *We look forward to hearing about your joys and concerns, and mostly we want to thank you for your involvement in the life of UUSG and for your generous support!*



UUSG Music

March launched with the rousing vocals of Parvaneh Shidnia-Smith and Jessica Littlefield for the Interweave service, beautifully backed by the

UUSG Jazz Combo featuring Michael Townley, Geoff Pynn, Tracy Rosenkrans, Liam Johnson and Paul Sargent. Sharing his wonderful music was singer and composer Jim Scott, whose songs are in the UU hymnal, taking a turn as guest in the pulpit, paired with a shining appearance by the RE music students led by Sandra Anderson-Cordogan.

Lending full-throated inspiration to Pledge Sunday were powerfully performed songs by the UUSG Choir, led by Cynthia Spiegel. And a special treat in the first Naming and Dedication service was the gift of a song by FUUsion for fellow member Sara Hoerdeman, whose daughter was part of the ceremony.

We look forward to the return of the UUSG Choir and the keyboard gifts of Dean Malambri, Tom Zimmerman and Lynn Fisher McCanne.

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!



Green Sanctuary News

[Day of Service Post Card Event:](#)

Saturday, April 7, from 1-3pm, in the Common Room. Like the campaign itself, the content of this event continues to evolve. There will be several activities and it is not necessary to participate in all or to stay for the 2 hours. Hint - this is easy, super easy, fun and you just might help save civilization.

A story circle to discuss and share experiences of contemplating nature and finding sources for Nature quotes. Just what is Transcendentalism and will I get hurt if I have a mystical experience? An exercise combining drawing and meditating. An a short section to actually make a few cards. This option will be available at anytime whether or not you participate in

the story circle or drawing practice. All are welcomed, even if you are just curious about the SnowFall Project and only want to watch. This is not your usual postcard writing event.

[Green Sanctuary's Green Dinner:](#)

Saturday, May 5 from 5-9 pm. Deni Mathews from the Citizens Climate Lobby will have a presentation about the Revenue Neutral Carbon Fee and Dividend. What is a Carbon Tax and How Does That Work? Why is it considered the Gold Standard for action on climate change? The CCL will start holding monthly meetings in our facilities starting in May. [Join us and RSVP here.](#)

[Chasing Spring Ephemerals!](#)

Join the Green Sanctuary Team on a Spring Flower expedition to local area forest preserves. Wild flowers will be coming up very soon. We will contact a local naturalist and take field trips to find when and where these brief but brilliant displays occur. Interested? [Contact Bill Koehl.](#) For inspiration see: [My Journey Into the Wilds of Chicago by Mike MacDonald.](#)

Green News & Local Events

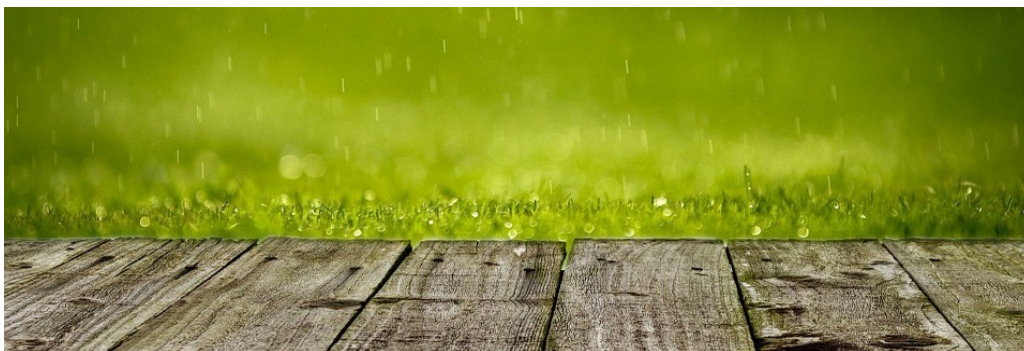
[Ruling to make Municipal energy customer ineligible for Illinois solar incentives:](#)

Will we be just getting a lump of coal? Illinois's major move into clean energy is finally coming alive. But it may not help communities like Batavia or Geneva.

What is The Future Energy Jobs Act? [The Future Energy Jobs Act](#)

Save the Date: On May 12, we will "Walk the Line" of the tar sands pipelines as they pass through Hammond and East Chicago on their way to the BP refinery. [Walk the Line](#)

For Better Shopping - consider human rights and the environment every time you vote with your dollars: [Learn more here.](#)



Worship Planning Team Report

Spring is here, the Pledge Drive has begun, our Day of Service is right around the corner. And, our Worship Team is finalizing plans for our services and with our summer service guest speakers. We look forward to sharing new ideas and inspiration from, among others, the Rev. Linda Slabon (previously at UUFD) and the Rev. Bob McWilliams, Ms. Huda Hussein (blasting Muslim stereotypes), Ms. Chazmin Baechler (ethics and

fairy tales!), Alan Mills (Mass Incarceration), and an all-music service with Cynthia Spiegel. Regular service features include musicians, For All Ages, great Readings, and a time for reflection. We hope you will all review the schedule when posted and plan to participate this summer!



Women's Circle

Our March Women's Circle Featured UUSG member Kim McDuffee Dotson facilitating our session entitled Celebrate Spring Pagan Style! Women's Circle celebrated Ostara, the spring equinox, through the creation of sacred space and group ritual. We enjoyed learning a great deal about pagan practices, and explored and experienced some of the sacred practices as part of our ritual celebration of Spring equinox. Twenty-five Women, including some newcomers, participated in creating invocations and a sacred circle, calling upon the spirits of earth, air, fire, and water. We thank Kim for her leadership and sharing her beliefs.

Women's Circle continues next month, our last session of the season, Saturday, April 28, 1-4pm. We will be learning about labyrinth meditation practices, led by Julia Friesen and Pat O'Malley, and will share the opportunity to walk a labyrinth in the session. Hope to see many of you there! [Sign up to participate here.](#)



Pledge Drive 2018-2019

This will be an important year for UUSG. We have enjoyed 40 years of superb ministry and leadership from our Senior Minister, the Reverend Dr. Lindsay Bates. With the new church year, we begin a time of reflection, imagination, and planning for a new chapter in UUSG's story.

You have likely received your Pledge Drive Brochure in the mail. The Pledge Drive runs from March 17 to April 7, culminating in our Annual Day of Service. You can help shorten the Pledge Drive by [submitting your form 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. Now is the time to roll up our sleeves and remind ourselves that as a community, "We Can Do It!"



New UUs ReUUnion!

If you attended “New UUs,” “Membership Preparation Class,” or a “Pathway to Membership” session since January of 2016, you are invited to attend a reunion potluck party hosted by the Welcoming Team on Sunday, May 6, at 6pm. Leaders from various teams will be there to talk about their work and mission. Bring a spouse, partner, or a friend, (and a dish!), and join us for an evening of food and fun. RSVP at uusg.org/new-uus-reunion.



Dungeons & Dragons Group at UUSG

Wanted: A party of brave adventurers, mages, fighters and the like to be sent on an epic quest wherein lie hoards of gold and magical treasure! Dungeons and Dragons tabletop role playing group to be held on every 3rd Tuesday and 1st Friday of the month, 4:00 to 6:30pm and 7:00 to 9:30pm at UUSG. No role play or gaming experience necessary. If you wish to create your own character, please come at least half an hour early. A Dungeon Master (DM) will be available to walk you through the process. Otherwise characters and dice will be provided. BYO 5th edition Level 3 characters and dice welcome as well.

Please register at uusg.org/dungeonsanddragons. Questions? Contact Teal Cyko at dungeonsanddragons@uusg.org.



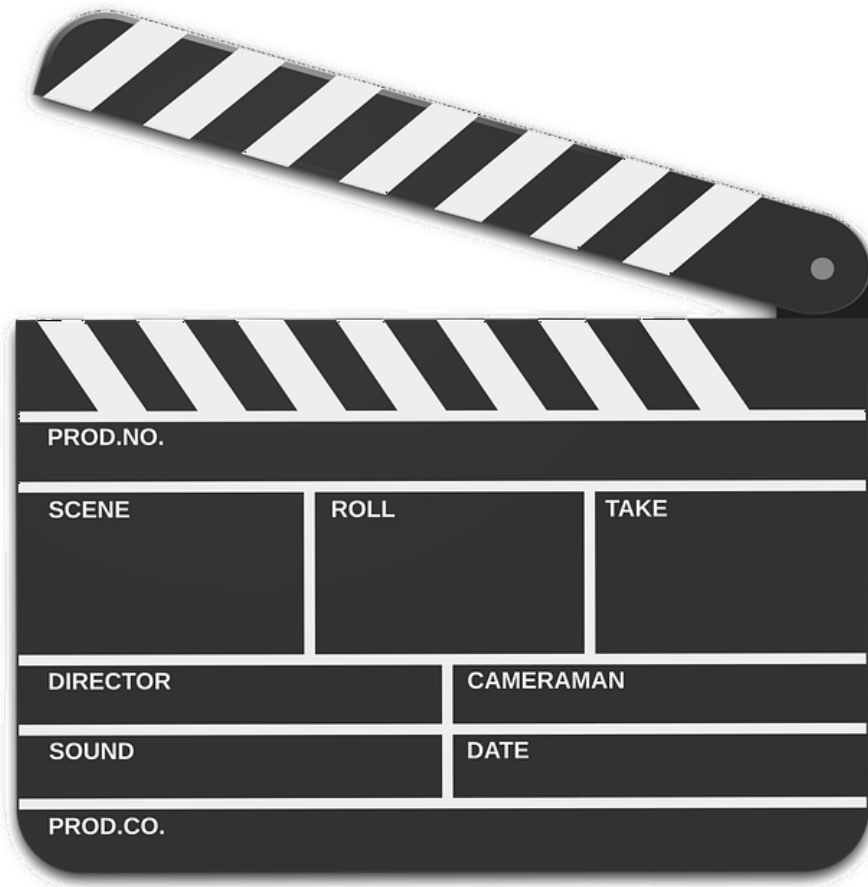
New2U has Tickets!

Whether you're interested in how math and science are being used in Pixar films or would like to experience the Grand Canyon from the perspective of National Geo Live's adventurers, New2U has the tickets. All monies benefit UUSG programs. Both events are happening soon, so click [here](#) for more info.



Get Involved With Interweave - Sunday, April 15

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 April 15, to plan upcoming activities for Pride Month in June and discuss current community events. For information please contact Lynn Steele at interweave@uusg.org.



April Friday Flick: *The Reluctant Radical*

If a crime is committed in order to prevent a greater crime, is it forgivable? Is it, in fact, necessary? *The Reluctant Radical* follows activist Ken Ward as he confronts his fears and puts himself in the direct path of the fossil fuel industry to combat climate change. The film reveals both the personal costs and also the fulfillment that comes from following one's moral calling- even if that means breaking the law. The film follows Ken through a series of direct actions, culminating with an action that shuts down all the U.S. tar sands oil pipelines and threatens to put him behind bars for 20 years. Ken Ward has no regrets, and his certainty leaves the audience to consider if he is out of touch with reality, or if it is the rest of society that is delusional for not acting when faced with the unsettling evidence that we are collectively destroying our world.

This month's Friday Flick is sponsored by the UUSG Green Sanctuary Committee. Please plan on joining us in the Common Room April 27, at 7pm, for this provocative film on Environmental activism.



CPR/AED & Basic First Aid Training

You've asked - ERT is responding. This is your opportunity to obtain valuable training. One never knows when you'll encounter the need to help save a life! Class size is limited to 12 students including personalized, hands-on practice. You are encouraged to enroll in both classes, but feel free to choose whichever is better for you. Advanced registration requested by March 28, at uusg.org/training. Each class is \$40.00 and payment is due to the UUSG Office by April 15. Please write a check to "UUSG" with "AHA Training" in the memo line. April 27, in the YRUU Room: CPR/AED: 9am-12pm, Basic 1st Aid: 1pm-4pm. Questions? Contact Hal Schulman at ertleader@uusg.org or 630-886-8641.



Soup Kitchen Group Needs Your Help

Soup Kitchen Group needs volunteers to prepare and serve food for the needy. Next dates are Wednesday, April 25, 6:30-9:00pm in St. Charles and Thursday, April 26, 10:30am-2:00pm in Aurora. We work side by side with teams from two Episcopal churches. Come join in the camaraderie and that good feeling of helping others. Questions, contact martha.tabis@gmail.com. More info and sign up [here](#).



The Snowfall Project

Help save civilization - one card at a time. Check out the Snowfall Production table at the back of the Common Room. During social hour or anytime during the week, write a card, drop it in the box. Save the world for your grandchildren. Tell them you did something when you had the chance.

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

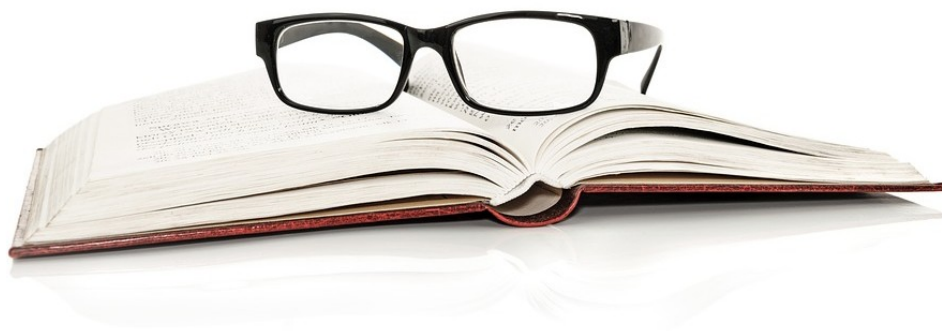


Piano Party!

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)



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 April 16. We'll be discussing Exodus. 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.



April "Beyond Our Walls"

The Beyond Our Walls cause for April will be the Conservation Foundation. The Conservation Foundation is a non-profit land and river protection organization founded in 1972. With the support of more than 3,500 members and 500 volunteers, The Conservation foundation preserves and restores open space and natural lands, protects rivers and watersheds, and promotes stewardship of the environment in DuPage, Kane, Kendall and Will Counties. Learn more at theconservationfoundation.org/.



Mental Health Ministry Presentation: #MeToo.

Rescheduled to Sunday, April 15. In October of 2017, actress Alyssa Milano posted a tweet asking women to speak up about their experiences with sexual assault and harassment with the hashtag #MeToo. Over the course of a few days, this hashtag exploded all over the world, as women shared their stories of sexual harassment and assault. The Mental Health Ministry at UUSG will be hosting a discussion of this movement on Sunday, April 15, at 1pm. We will talk about why this movement took hold at this particular time in history, and brainstorm ways how to keep the momentum going to protect and enhance women's rights across the globe. The discussion is open to the public.



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

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



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