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# Pioneer Newsletter

## May - June 2017

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### From the Pulpit

the Rev. Dr. Lindsay Bates

The Question Box service is one of my favorites. There's never enough time, unfortunately, to respond to all the questions. It can be a challenge to skim quickly through the stack and pull out the ones that seem most interesting or reflect shared concerns. And I never know what will come up - except that at least one person will ask, "So, what is the meaning of life?" (42...) Thank you to all who asked questions. I'm sorry I couldn't get to more of them on Sunday. I'll tackle a couple more here.

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“Have you gotten kittens yet?” No, no kittens. Our house does seem oddly empty with only two cats (Hezekiah and Lucrezia Borgia Romanoff). Our Hannah, a tiny old Siamese, was a huge presence who ruled the household with a velvet-&-iron paw. Since Hannah's death in early March, Lucrezia, a rescued feral cat, has blossomed. She's sitting in laps, she's sleeping on the bed, she's asking for attention. It's taken us ten years to get to this point with her! Unfortunately, she's still quite anxious. We've had to put her on diazepam to stop the territorial marking, and we're afraid that the stress of adding any more cats to the household right now would only cause a relapse. So no kittens or yearlings or adult cats will be joining our household any time soon.

“My spouse does not want to come to church...” It's disappointing and a bit frustrating as well when we've found something that nourishes us but holds no interest for people we care about. Especially when children are involved; how do you handle it when one parent wants to go to church and take the kids along, but the other parent prefers to stay home? UUSG has several families who have had to work this out. The first step seems to be coming to accept that your partner does not share your desire to be part of a religious community. You may be sure they'd change their mind if only they'd give it a try (and I'd be inclined to hope they would!), but adults get to make these choices for themselves. Not everyone wants to spend an hour

or more in a church service - they may, however, discover the thought-provoking and entertaining conversations in the Big Ideas group, or spend the time teaching in the church school, meeting with a ministry group to help get an important project underway, or working in the gardens. The children, on the other hand, do need a village of peers and grownups to make them welcome, to guide and support them, and to model and share the values of kindness, fairness, honesty, respect, joy (to name just a few) that give our lives meaning. I hope that you and your children will continue to come regularly and enjoy being part of our UUSG community. If they tell Dad they're having a great time, maybe he'll eventually decide to come check the place out a bit more closely.

“How will we survive?” “We will survive, won't we?” “Please just tell us it will all be okay! 😊” Ah, the joys of interesting times! But yes, I do believe that we will survive and all will be well - if and only if we continue to take care of each other, remember our deepest values, and live those values into reality. We are called to be active agents in the world, using our gifts, our talents, our resources, even our positions of unearned privilege to create a world of justice, compassion, joy, and peace for everyone. We can do this. No more hiding under the bed, not even with that bottle of Bailey's and a cat. We have work to do.

Peace!

Lindsay

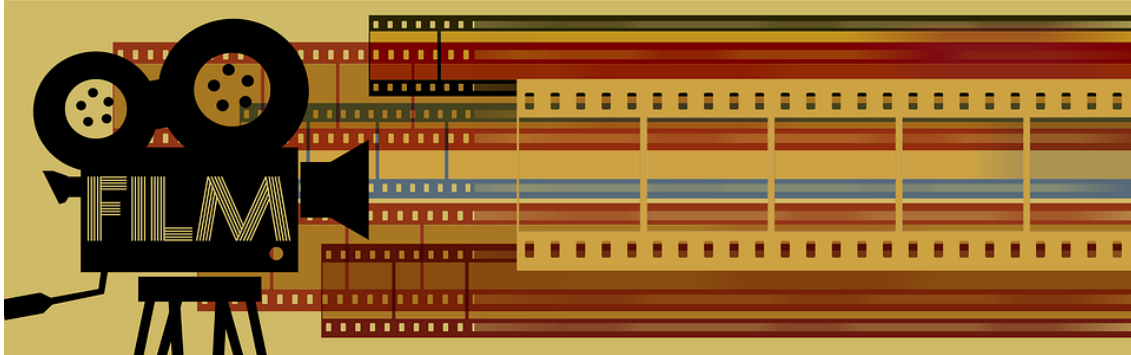
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# boardblog

The Board Blog will return next month!

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

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## Friday Flicks

Friday, May 26, 2017 at 7pm  
UUSG Common Room

This month's Friday Flick, "Lakota People – American Disgrace" and 2 additional short documentaries, focuses on the history and fate of the Oglala Lakota people has loomed large in the United States from "Custer's Last Stand" to Wounded Knee.

The Pine Ridge Reservation, home to these people, is the poorest county in the United States and life expectancy of its residents is the lowest in the country. We will hear personal experiences and observations from presenters who have traveled to Pine Ridge and volunteered for Re-Member, a non-profit organization working with the Oglala Lakota people.

Please join us for what we expect to be an informative session and lively discussion regarding these people, their history, their current situation and what is being done to support them.

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### **Circles of Life**

We extend our heartfelt appreciation to Lindsay and all of the volunteers who created such a beautiful memorial service for Al Frazier on May 6. Our UUSG friends and family surrounded us with their love as we celebrated Al's long life. With thanks and gratitude, Jim and Kate Frazier

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### **175th Anniversary Party!**

The UUSG 175th Anniversary Committee cordially invites all members and friends to a special evening to celebrate the founding of our congregation 175 years ago! We will be toasting with champagne and wine (and other beverages), enjoying gourmet hors d'oeuvres and beautiful anniversary cake. Please join us on Sunday June 4 at 7:00 pm for a delightful "grown-up" social event in honor of our illustrious past and our enduring, positive future! As we've been saying - 175 Years, A Great Beginning! [RSVP Here](#).

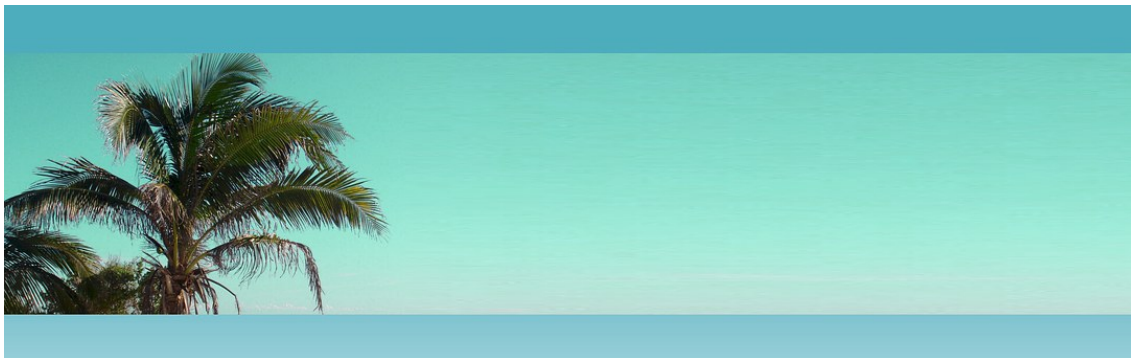
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### **Music at UUSG**

May's Music News will be reported on next month with June Music! In the meantime, there is a place for you in our Music Ministry. Be brave and talk to Music Director Tracy Rosenkrans at [music@uusg.org](mailto:music@uusg.org).

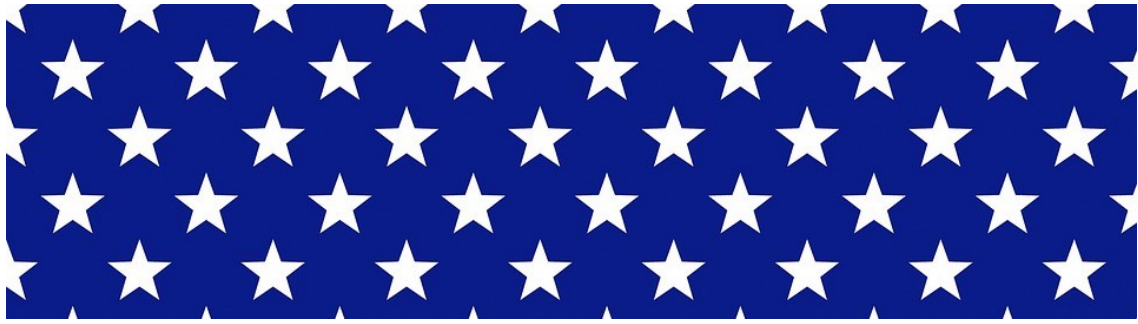
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### **Summer Worship Services**

Beginning Sunday, May 28, we will move to our summer worship schedule of one worship service each Sunday at 10am.

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### **Staff Time Off**

The office will be closed, and all staff off, on Monday, May 29, in honor of Memorial Day.

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### **Taoism Discussion Group**

Have you heard of the yin and the yang? Do you want to know more about them? To find out why yin and yang are less like enemies and more like playful wrestlers, join the Taoism Discussion Group on Sunday, May 28 from 11:45am to 12:45pm in the Alcott Room. We'll be discussing "The Yin-Yang Polarity," which is Chapter 2 of the Alan Watts book "Tao the Watercourse Way."

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## Swedish Days Pizza Booth 2017!

We were going to tell you a joke about pizza...but it is too cheesy!!!

All jokes aside, WE NEED YOUR HELP! Our UUSG Swedish Days Pizza booth has been moved to a prime location (our own green space right along 3rd Street) and now we need to staff it with some eager people to help us sling some pizza, meatball/beef sandwiches, and much, much more.

You'll be signing up for a two hour shift - working the counter or grabbing food and drinks. You'll be working alongside fellow UUSGers - so it's a great time to meet new people or reconnect with old friends. You'll need to be able to stand for two hours and keep yourself from eating the delicious pizza and sandwiches until your shift is over (or come early to familiarize yourself with the product lineup before you start - it's not empty calories - it's research!). If you like action - pick a mealtime shift; if you like watching grass grow - choose morning or mid-afternoon. [Click here to sign up for a shift \(or two!\).](#)

And a new, exciting opportunity!

Have you always wanted to perform for a crowd? Do you have musical talent that you would be willing to share for one hour?

This year, we are hoping to lure more booth traffic with some of our fabulous UUSG talent! We are hoping to fill 4 one hour shifts on Friday and Saturday. [Please sign up for the day and time that works for you.](#) Bring a tip jar - you may keep (or donate) the tips!

And THANK YOU for your willingness to "sing, sing a song..." !!  
Questions or Comments? Contact our Pizza Booth Coordinators: Mary Swanson, Tom Russo & Molly MacKay Zacker at [swedishdays@uusg.org](mailto:swedishdays@uusg.org).

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## **Emergency Response Team**

The UUSG Emergency Response Team (ERT) is seeking additional volunteers to help ensure we make our spiritual home safer, stronger and better prepared to address accidents, threats of terrorism, crime and disasters. We certainly do not want a real incident, yet "just-in-case" could happen here! Should misfortune strike, we sure do want to be in the best position possible to handle it. "This could be the best job you never got paid to do."

Our Board of Directors has recently sanctioned an Emergency Response Guide (ERG) package covering a broad range of potential scenarios. One piece of the ERG is to implement a small, trained Security Team that would be "on duty" on Sunday mornings. While it is important for every person to individually take responsibility for his/her own safety, this new team would be specifically trained to handle unplanned situations arising from disruptive, threatening and violent types of behavior.

It's not a job for everybody - it takes commitment and it takes training. But, if you're in good health and you're willing to help, you can become part of our ERT volunteers. With your help, we can hopefully divert small interruptions from escalating, and minimize the potential damage of severe events.

A professional background/degree in a related field is not required to join the ERT. Having a willingness to serve and respond to unplanned circumstances (equipped with applicable training) is a valuable prerequisite. For more information please contact Hal Schulman via either [ertleader@uusg.org](mailto:ertleader@uusg.org) or cell: 630-886-8641.

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### **Green Sanctuary Team Postcard Event**

Join Green Sanctuary Team in raising our voices on critical issues. We will have a Postcard writing session on Sunday, May 28, at 2pm in the UUSG Common Room. Refreshments, stamps, and supplies provided. We will have prepared notes or templates for your use, or feel free to write as you please. Bring your concerned self, family, and friends, to share the experience of active civic participation. Questions or ideas to share in advance? Contact Bill Koehl. [RSVP at uusg.org/postcard.](http://uusg.org/postcard)

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### **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 June 19. We'll be reading "[What Paul Meant](#)" by [Garry Wills](#).

If you haven't had a chance to finish the reading, please join us anyway. The

conversation frequently wanders beyond the book.

For more info, please contact Jim Frazier [biblestudy@uusg.org](mailto:biblestudy@uusg.org).

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## LRE Update

**June 4** - is the Moving Up Service. We will be recognizing students who will be moving up from their current class group to the next group. Names will be read and small tokens distributed. Some adults who are hitting milestones will also be honored.

**June 11** - Coming of Age was reinstated this year with 7 participants working with mentors to develop their own belief statements. Youth will give those statements during the service that day.

We still need Teacher volunteers for next school year. We especially need teachers for the 3-5th grade classes at both services. Please contact Jodi Brown or Jenny Montgomery if you are interested in teaching!

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### **Get Involved with Interweave**

Interweave is a local group of LGBTQ members, friends and allies who meet for discussions and special events. We will not meet in May but will have our annual Pride Picnic at Island Park at 11:30am on Sunday June 4. For information please contact Lynn Steele at [interweave.leader@uusg.org](mailto:interweave.leader@uusg.org).

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### **UUSG Book Exchange**

UUSG Book Exchange is located in the north entry. Please take and keep as many books as desired.

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## Reimbursement Requests

If you spent money on behalf of UUSG this year and have not yet requested reimbursement, please do so by June 30. Reimbursement request envelopes are available just outside our Congregational Administrator's office.

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## 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. When purchasing items, please make your check to "UUSG" with "EE/ft" in the memo. Place checks in the coffee can in the armoire. Requests and suggestions are always welcome - please add them to the coffee can.

NEW OFFERINGS include: Ethiopian coffee, chocolate candy bars, and a few gift items for yourself or others.

>>> Are you concerned about lead and cadmium levels in some dark chocolate? Please see the 2-page response from Equal Exchange posted in the armoire.

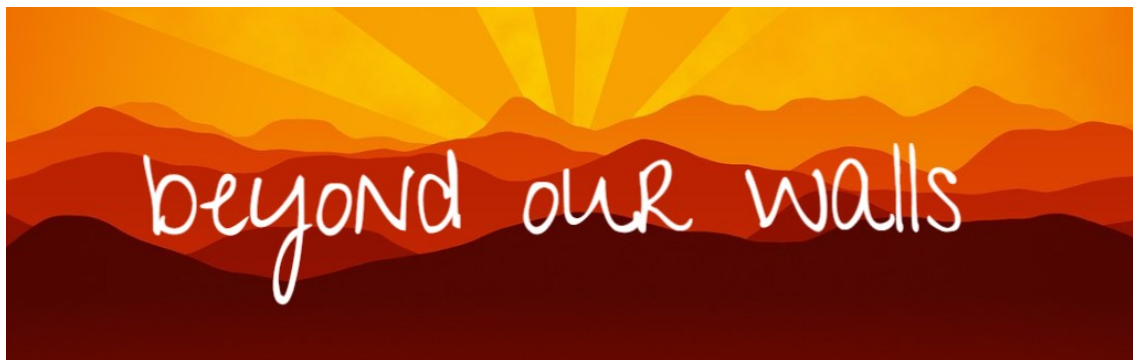
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### **New2U Needs an Administrator**

If you've been thinking about getting involved at UUSG, here's a great opportunity. New2U, an established fund-raising program, needs a new leader by June 15. If you'd like more information, contact Jan Miller at [new2u@uusg.org](mailto:new2u@uusg.org).

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### **Beyond Our Walls - The Human Library**

The Human Library of the Fox Valley has partnered with local volunteers from traditionally marginalized groups, human 'books,' to create safe, free opportunities for 'readers' to better understand those with whom they share their communities, during 1:1 conversations lasting up to 30 minutes. We're challenging prejudice, one conversation at a time. Learn more at [humanlibraryofthefoxvalley.org/](http://humanlibraryofthefoxvalley.org/).

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*Being desirous of promoting practical  
the world of aiding each other in moral &  
improvement, have associated themselves together  
in opinion - not as having attained universal*

## **175th Anniversary Congregational Gift**

What's an Anniversary Celebration without a Gift?

Throughout our history, UUSG members and friends have marked important anniversaries by making a special Congregational Gift to our beloved church — most notably, donating the funds to build a parsonage (today's Pioneer House) on our 50th anniversary in 1892.

This year as we celebrate the 175th anniversary of UUSG, we are continuing our long tradition of generosity to each other in the form of a Congregational Gift — not to build something new, but to preserve the priceless record of our past.

Preserving the treasures of our history in digital format.

Our church archives are filled with historic photographs, records, correspondence, publications, and ephemera. The vast majority of these items are paper, and all are vulnerable to loss by fire, storm or decay over time. For the past six years, the UUSG Heritage Team has been painstakingly sorting and storing these precious documents. But unless something is done to permanently preserve them, they are in danger of being lost forever.

The solution is digital archiving — scanning and converting the paper originals into a digital format that will endure for centuries. Having a digital archives of our most important historical photos and documents will put UUSG technologically far ahead of mid-size UU churches and churches of other denominations in our preservation efforts. Members and friends of all ages can participate in creating the digital archives. The digitization project is also a perfect complement to the history book to be published by the Heritage Team during this anniversary year.

We are seeking a total of \$3,000 in donations to purchase the archiving software, train people to use it, and provide ongoing service and tech support.

If you treasure our church's proud history and want to ensure that it is preserved for future generations, please support acquisition of the software with a generous donation to the 175th Anniversary Congregational Gift campaign. The campaign was formally announced to the congregation on May 21. You make make a donation in two ways: a check in the offering basket, payable to UUSG, and write "Congregational Gift" on the memo line or a checked mailed to UUSG, PO Box 107, Geneva, IL 60134.

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## **Mental Health Ministry's Life Span Series: Stages of Faith - Part 2**

Join us May 28 at 12:30pm in the Common Room as we continue this discussion led by Tom Schevers, PhD.

Children from all cultures learn religion first from stories not from theological or philosophical tracts. But the stories that excited and satisfied the young child can seem silly to the adolescent and irrelevant to the adult and maybe profound again as the adult gains wisdom. The point is that as a person goes through stages of physical, cognitive, emotional and social development, his or her faith changes. People often leave a church not because they have lost faith but because they have outgrown that church's vision of faith.

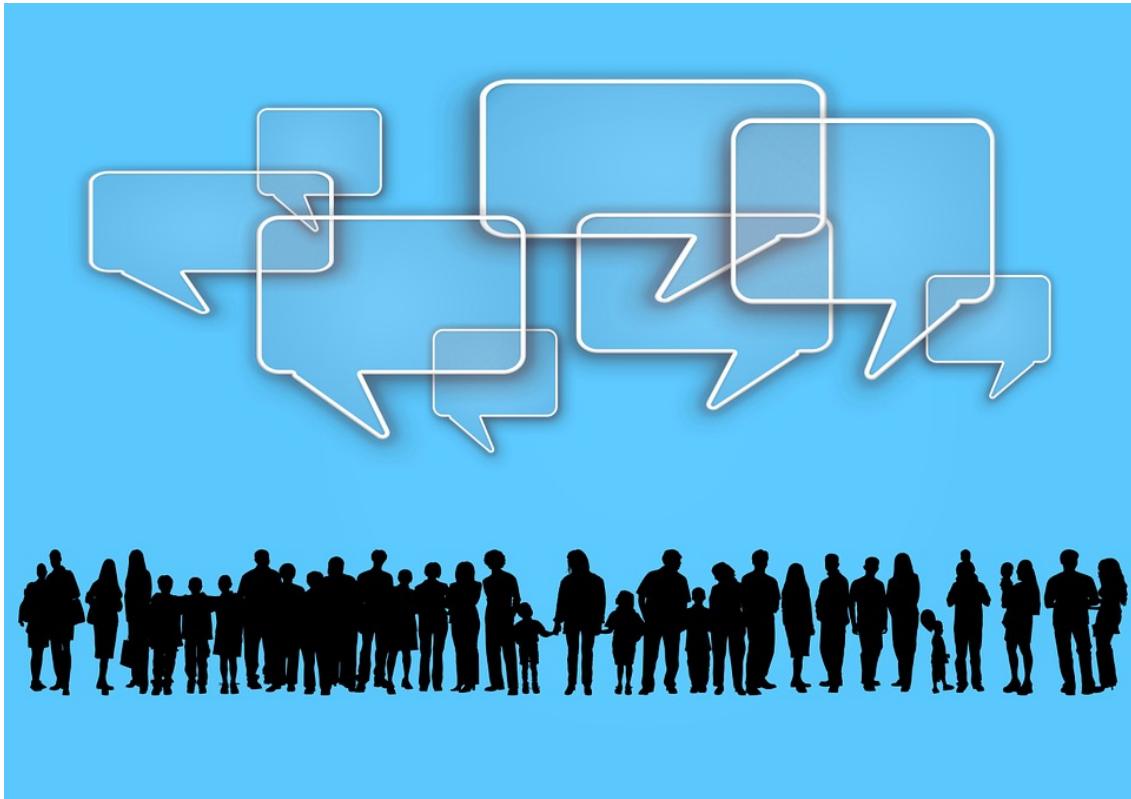
James Fowler says faith is the underlying process that helps us form beliefs, find meaning, connect with others, and face the mysteries of life. He describes 6 stages of faith starting from infancy to old age. Understanding these stages can help clarify intrapersonal and interpersonal conflicts, confusion, breakthroughs, and enlightenments. Come join the discussion.



### **Celebration of the Life of George Hickman**

The date has been confirmed by George's family for Aug 6, during our 10am service. Both his daughters and some of their children plan to attend. If you are interested in contributing/being a part of this service, along with several other members who have already stepped forward, please contact Tracy at [tracyrosenkranz@sbcglobal.net](mailto:tracyrosenkranz@sbcglobal.net).





## **Town Hall on the Environment**

There will be a Town Hall on the Environment Monday, July 10, at 7pm at the Arcada Theatre. Special guest speakers will include Chris Kennedy, Candidate for Governor - Environment; Karen Hudson, Co-Founder of IL Citizens for Clean Air & Water - Factory Farming; Mary Shesgreen of Fox Valley Citizens for Peace & Justice IL- Pipelines & Coal Mines; and Debbie Dudek of Elgin Green Groups 350 - Growing local food. Let's educate ourselves on climate change and global warming. Come and learn how to be sustainable. Organizations will have tables with information.



## The Office Report

The Office Report will return next month! See you all Sunday!

~Christine

Christine Imielski  
Congregational Administrator

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Website



Podcast



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