



Unitarian Universalist
Society of Geneva



Pioneer Newsletter

November - December 2016

[UUSG Calendar](#)



From the Pulpit

the Rev. Dr. Lindsay Bates

Anxiety is just a bit high these days. I know I'm more easily upset by small things than I usually would be, and big things send me spinning out of control into dark places, like Darth Vader at the end of the great battle in the first Star Wars movie. Being aware has saved me (and others!) from the worst of the overreactions. But it can be difficult.

Lucky us - it's another god-blessed learning opportunity. Remember to breathe, slowly and deeply, to calm both your body and your mind. Get

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outside and touch a tree, pick up some leaves, watch the geese overhead and listen as they honk encouragement to one another. Read for fun. Read for inspiration. Pray, if praying helps you open your soul. Cuddle a sleepy cat. Play fetch with a dog. Get off social media for a while. Be watchful and speak up on behalf of yourself and others, but don't overreact. Assume a lack of malice unless there's clear evidence to the contrary. Eat properly. Exercise. Get enough sleep. And be kind, to others and to yourself. An awful lot of people are pretty fragile just now.

There is and will be plenty of work to do in the upcoming weeks and months and years. Take it all a day at a time. Remember that you are not alone and that you are more powerful than you realize. The world is not yet coming to an end. Love will overcome hate. Stand on the side of love. And know that you are not alone.

Lindsay

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Scott's REgards
the Rev. Scott Talbot Lewis

Rev. Scott's REgards will return next month!



boardblog - Pat Vary

As we begin to think of our history with the 175th anniversary of UUSG

coming up, I have been reflecting on what I have seen as being a member of this church since 1978. When I started attending, Rev. Lindsay had just arrived, and was ordained in our church. Small world—Max Gabler, minister of the Madison, WI, church officiated. I was a member of his church for 2 years and he married my husband Jim and I! The congregation was small, about 100, with volunteers cleaning and Lindsay doing most of the secretarial, maintenance, ministering, and whatever else came up. We did not have other paid staff. People who came to hear her, stayed, and the church grew.

Dick Malm, an architect in the congregation designed the new addition, we all pitched in with carpentry, electrical, plumbing and painting. The Common Room used to end about where you see a beam across the ceiling—very small. Pioneer House was separate. The basement of the new addition was unfinished, but slowly completed in the next few years. Everyone who worked on the addition signed the floor of the Common Room before the carpet was laid. It was a time when everyone knew everyone, and was pretty dynamic, but generated burn out too. We had a small Board, no Council. Many Board presidents have come and gone. I think Jane Willard was the first woman.

In the years since, we have grown, becoming a teaching congregation with interns who stayed for a year, and Lindsay acting as mentor. We acquired Adam Robersmith as an assistant minister, a choir that sang every month (not in summer), a junior choir that sang about every two months. Edith was our organist. Yes, we had an electric organ! When she died, we switched to piano -- a brand new one! In the 2000s, the Sanctuary underwent a big refurbishing with the whole floor being reconstructed. We have had major studies about expanding, tearing down Pioneer House and building a large sanctuary, two stories on the addition, etc. Money and Geneva regulations have slowed the enthusiasm. However, now I look around and we are such a dynamic, young, growing church with a wonderful music program, and Rev. Scott as our new Assistant Minister. I delight in the youth and think of all the wonderful people I have met and gotten to know over the years, many of them now gone. They would be proud of UUSG as I am, a welcoming, warm place of friendship and common purpose.

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



Welcome Home!

Welcome to our newest members, who signed "The Book" on November 13, 2016: Brian Doyle, Kendra Dicker, Susan Lee Weimer, Rachel MacPebbles, Martha J. Malana, Anthony Malana, and Gina Grupe.



Holiday Services Calendar - Please Join Us!

- | | | |
|--------|----------------|--|
| 12/11 | 9:30 & 11:15am | To Celebrate Yule |
| 12/18 | 9:30 & 11:15am | No-Rehearsal Pageants |
| 12/24 | 4pm | Family Christmas Eve Service |
| 12/24 | 8pm | Candlelight & Choir Christmas Eve Service |
| 12/25 | 9:30am | informal Christmas Morning service followed by a pot-luck brunch (no 11:15 service; come join us for brunch & fellowship!) |
| 1/1/17 | 9:30am | informal New Year's service with Fire Ritual followed by a pot-luck brunch (no 11:15 service; come join us for brunch & fellowship!) |
-



November Music at UUSG

We've had much to be thankful for musically beginning with the playful sounds of the UUSG Crypt Band for Halloween, featuring the scary good Tracey McFadden, Andy Montgomery, Tracy Rosenkrans, John Rosenkrans and Liam Johnson. The talented Montgomery family singers – Andy, Ellie and Max – were joined by fingerpicking cellist/guitarist Paul Sargent.

The Veterans Day service included music by Brian Joosse, Tracey McFadden and John Towell. Special thanks to Anna Rosenkrans who played "Taps" on French horn as a last minute sub for Dawn Pokorny, who wasn't feeling so good. The Children's Choir was superb under the direction of Sandra Anderson-Cordogan. EnsAmble Ad-Hoc, led by flutist Ruth Cavanaugh, brought us the crystalline voice of Francy Acosta and lute playing by Jose Luis Posada in a wonderful Renaissance program.

Looking ahead to a festive December, we'll be treated to the vocal harmonies of FUUision, featuring Trish Beckjord, Pam Birch, Lynn Fisher McCanne, Susan O'Neill, Dawn Pokorny, Rhonda Robinson and Pat Vary. Pageant Sunday will bring music from Ellie Montgomery, and the UUSG Pageant Band with Tracey McFadden, Andy Montgomery, Tracy Rosenkrans and Liam Johnson. Adding a glow to Christmas Eve will be Ruth Cavanaugh leading the UUSG Choir, with special instrumentalists at the 8 p.m. service: Wendy Evans-Glazier, Larry Glazier and Stella Childs.

Accomplished pianists will include Tom Zimmerman, Lynn Fisher McCanne, Patricia Arzaga and Sandra Anderson-Cordogan.

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.



Technical Difficulties...

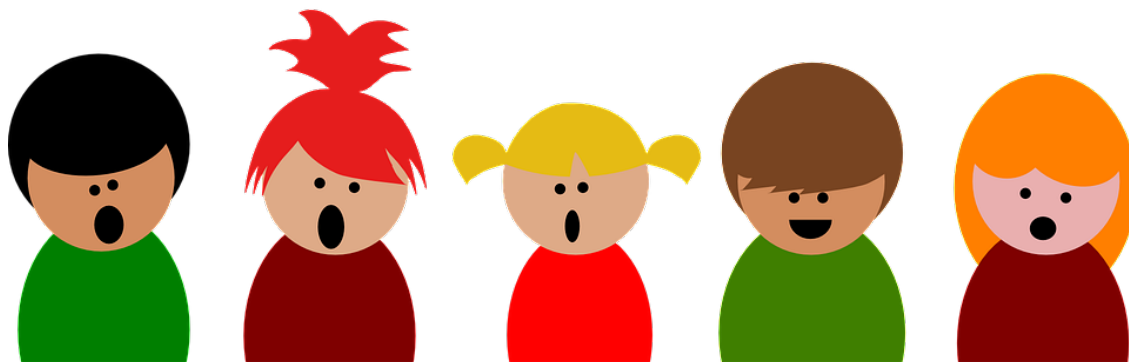
We have had/are having/will alas continue to have technical difficulties here at the office.

Our phone system was fried by lightning back in August. The new phone system has finally been installed, tweaked, and is now functioning properly. You can call all of us at church and we can call you!

We've been having trouble with the GoDaddy forwarders for our various groups for quite a while. We're hoping we have that problem solved, but if you're in a forwarder group (which would be any and all of our various ministry, teaching and leadership teams) and you learn that you didn't receive an email that others got, please let [Christine](#) know!

Finally, email sent from LRE@uusg.org and admin.assistant@uusg.org is being marked as fraudulent. Some emails Cathi and Lisa have sent out have wound up in spam folders. Others seem not to have made it that far. Our Technology Team is working on figuring this one out. In the meantime, please add these emails to your trusted contact list, and remember to check spam and junk folders.

We're all frustrated and annoyed by these problems, and we suspect many of you have been, too, when it's seemed that emails or calls have gone unanswered and messages you should have received have never arrived. If you're among the people affected, we're very sorry. If you think that our technical difficulties are still affecting you, please let Christine know so we can follow up. Thank you!



RE Music at UUSG

RE Music students sang beautifully during our recent Thanksgiving service, sharing "Gimme That UU Religion" with the congregation, who sang along during the chorus. Their artwork interpreting the song was projected on the Sanctuary wall. Since then, students practiced "call and response" drumming with special guest facilitators, Andrea Gruszecki and

Martha Tabis. In the coming weeks of December, students are invited to demonstrate instruments they are practicing, for their classmates.



Upcoming Office Closures & Staff Time Off

Christine Imielski, Cathi Plass, and Lisa Rittenberry will be off and the office closed on December 25 and January 1.

Christine Imielski will be off Sunday, December 18.



Circles of Life

Our loving sympathy to UUSG member Donna Soderquist on the unexpected death of her daughter Sara at the end of October. We held a Celebration of Life for Sara on November 6.

And we who've been here at UUSG for a while mourn the passing of John Jerrard, for whom Death came gently at the end of a long period of decline. We send our loving sympathy to Glen Jerrard, John's daughter Jane and sons Dick and John, Glen's son Graham, and all their families. We will celebrate John's life on Dec. 3, at 11am.



The 34th Annual Cookie Walk is Here!

Leave your holiday baking to us! Choose from hundreds of homemade cookie varieties, boxes are provided. Old favorites and new tastes, perfect for holiday parties, hostess gifts and more! Join us, Friday, December 2, 4:30pm-6:30pm. \$14 per box (Each box holds two to three dozen cookies)



Elba's Kids - You Can Make A Difference

Many in our congregation know that I work with neglected/abused children and traumatized families. It is clear that these children and families are marginalized in many ways. They have suffered unspeakable atrocities, and many are on the verge of giving up hope. Would you like to join me in helping these children and families to know that they matter, that they are important, that others have compassion for their circumstances? If so, please donate to the Holiday Lights Collection or visit the [Amazon Wishlist at Elba Karim](#) and enter elbajkarim@gmail.com to purchase targeted gifts. In addition, gift cards in any denomination towards food (Aldi, Meijer, Caputo's), gasoline, discount stores (Target, Meijer, Kohls, etc.), craft stores (JoAnns, Michael's) or community outings (movies, bowling, go-karting, haircuts, restaurants) and donations of money are greatly appreciated (please designate Elba's Kids, Holiday Lights on your check). Kohl's cash is especially useful, as well.

Please know that it is usually the teenagers that suffer most, as they not only realize the impact of their outcries of abuse, but are usually the last to

be offered items for the holidays. If you have new or very gently used, gift-worthy items such as a used iPod or iPod Touch, costume jewelry, craft supplies, etc., you can contact me directly to arrange for pick-up, or leave them clearly labeled in the YRUU room. Items are needed year-round, but the holidays take a special toll on these families. Items intended for this holiday season would best be contributed by December 21, 2016 so that they can be sorted and delivered, although giftcards and money are welcome at any time. Thank you for your help. - Elba Karim



Moving Sale - Thank You!

Big thanks to everyone who shopped at Vohny Moehling's moving sale, she will be donating the proceeds -- \$290 -- to UUSG. She still has lots left, watch for upcoming photos of items for sale. Special thanks to sale supporters: Ed Anderson, Mabel Peterson, Jeanne Neltner, Rhonda Robinson, Pat O'Malley, Deb Brod, Jill Brown, Elba & Jordan Karim, Cathy Kern, Christine Imielski and Jan Miller.



Junior High Youth Group Meeting

The Junior High Youth Group's next meeting is this Saturday, December 3, 7-9pm at UUSG. See you there!



Holiday Food Drive for Humanitarian Service Project

It's time for our 3rd Annual Food Drive to support Humanitarian Service Project's holiday programs. Pick up a shopping bag in church and return it to the Common Room by Sunday, December 4 filled with non-perishable foods. Last year, we donated 115 grocery bags. Let's top that number this year! Only non-expired food, please.

Most-needed food items: soup, oatmeal, canned fruits and vegetables, peanut butter, cereal, pancake mix, boxed potatoes, stuffing mix, and pasta.



Circle Suppers 2017!

Circle Suppers involve revolving groupings of participants who take turns hosting or providing a part of the meal for each of four monthly suppers. Participating pairs or singles will be grouped with different participants for each of the four suppers, which are held in January, February, March, and April.

The designated guests at each supper will be pre-assigned the tasks of bringing salad, entrée, or dessert. Designated hosts may provide hors d'oeuvres, bread or vegetable, etc., as well as china, glassware, flatware and a place to dine. If you wish to have wine or other adult drinks, BYO.

If you would like to participate in the 2017 Circle Supper Program, as either a "single" or a "pair," and as either a regular or an alternate participant, [please sign up here](#).



Come Celebrate with Joyful Song!

All adults, teens, and youth who love to sing are invited to join Ruth Cavanaugh & Patricia Arzaga in preparation for the 8pm Christmas Eve Candlelight Service on December 24! Rehearsals are 12/7, 12/14, & 12/21, 7-8:30pm. Required Dress Rehearsal is 12/24 at 6pm. Please contact Ruth Cavanaugh with questions at choir@uusg.org. If you require childcare during rehearsals, please contact LRE@uusg.org. [Sign up here.](#)



Food Bank Group News

Please join us on Saturday, December 3, from 9am to noon for our final 2016 volunteer shift at the Northern Illinois Food Bank. We need 30 helper elves to make the holidays brighter for our neighbors in need! [Sign up here.](#)

Thank you to everyone who volunteered at our last meeting. Together we packaged 838 lbs of dried goods just in time for Thanksgiving. Thanks to Kevin Beyer, Betty Bristol, James Carroll, Jamie Carroll, Huli Davalos, Salome Fogleman, Lisa Gades, Cari Gesiakowski, Vera Lind, Nate Ng, Anna Rosenkrans, Tracy Rosenkrans, Amy Swanson, Bob Swanson, Mary Swanson, Justine Jennings, Tim Riley, Yvonne Riley, and Diane Rodi. We finished work left by previous shifts and completed all of the work assigned to our shift in less than our allotted time.



Save the Date!

Rev. Scott Talbot Lewis and Tony Gibbons invite the UUSG Congregation to their holiday open house on Saturday, December 10, 2-6pm, at their new home: 515 S. 6th Ave, St. Charles, IL 60174.



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 write 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, exquisite olive oil, dark & milk chocolate candy bars, peppermint tea, cocoa 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.



Commit To Knit

'Tis the season for caring and sharing, so release your inner elf! Create one-of-a-kind handmade items that spread warmth and love to those who need it most, through the non-profit organization knitting4peace.org as well as within our church walls.

Our team members (aka Santa's helpers) work mostly from home but also gather between services in the Common Room on the first Sunday of each month. Please put on your elf hat and join us in the spirit of the season. Our next meeting is December 4.

For more information, contact Katherine Lyons (knitting@uusg.org).



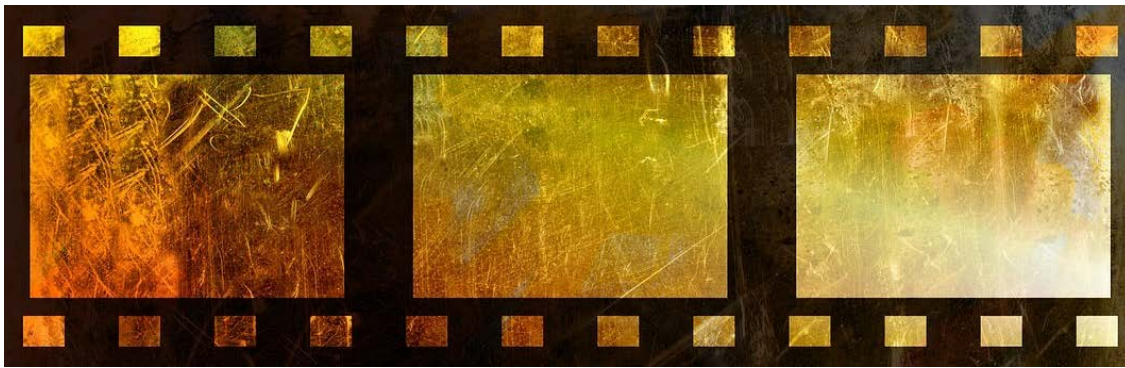
New2U

Declutter and help UUSG! Got furniture, artwork, home décor items, tools, recreational items, children's large playthings, or other great stuff that you're not using? [List on New2U](#); when it sells, you donate the monies to UUSG and get a tax deduction. Everyone wins! Questions, contact [New2U](#).



Keep it together, people!

It takes teamwork to keep our buildings in good repair, and the team that does it has openings for new members. Your facilities team manages contractors and volunteers who maintain and repair every aspect of the UUSG buildings, and the historic nature of our buildings makes this a creative, educational endeavor. If you're interested in project management or any aspect of home repair, make your interest more meaningful by joining the UUSG Facilities Team. Contact us at facilities@uusg.org.



Say Cheese!

We will be taking photos for the 2017 UUSG Directory on Saturday, December 10, from 1-2pm in the Common Room. An electronic copy of your photo will be available for purchase with a \$10 donation to our "Make A Difference" (MAD) fund! [SIGN UP HERE](#).



Get Involved with Interweave

Interweave is a local group of GLBTQ members, friends and allies who meet once a month to have time together for discussions and special events. We will meet at 12:30 on Sunday, December 11 in the YRUU Room at UUSG.



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 8:30 PM. Our next meeting will be on December 19. We're reading Genesis using "[The Bible with Sources Revealed](#)" by Richard Elliott Friedman.

For more info, please contact Jim Frazier 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.



Regional WomenSpirit Winter Conference

Many of our UUSG women have attended the Regional WomenSpirit Winter Conferences over the years. This is a golden opportunity to attend it in our back yard—30 minutes away in DeKalb, IL at UUFD on February 3-5, 2017. There is always a wonderful nationally known speaker (Sue

Monk Kidd was a favorite 3-years-ago) as well as workshops, talks and music. The 2017 conference is "JUST WOMEN: JUST WORLD" with Sister Simone Campbell, the Executive Director of NETWORK, a leader in the global justice and peace movement. Campbell was a driving force behind the "Nuns on the Bus: bus tours which traveled throughout the US. Also, there will be a Concert by the duo, Emma's Revolution on Saturday night. Several of us heard them two years ago at Urbana. They are terrific!

The conference starts Friday evening and goes through a church service on Sunday. If you could not sign up for our own women's retreat, this is a great alternative. It is a very moving experience. Information is found at: <http://www.womenandreligion.org/>



UUSG 4th Annual Women's Retreat

Registration is officially closed. However, we have a limited number of spots remaining and if you are interested in more info please contact Sam Mejia at Womensretreat@uusg.org right away.

If you have already signed up and have not submitted your registration fees please turn them into the office as they are due December 1st. See you in February!



The Office Report Christine Imielski

Thanks for making your way to the bottom of the Pioneer! If you haven't met me yet, I am the Congregational Administrator here at UUSG. I was hired in May of this year, after longtime superwoman Katie Phillips retired. I am responsible for finance & budgeting, communications & publications, scheduling, record keeping, and ushering curious chipmunks out of the sanctuary. I love my position, and the congregation has been incredibly welcoming and fun to work with--thank you!

I have been asked a few common questions during my short time here, so I thought it would be helpful to answer them in my new column:

- My regular hours are Sunday, 8am - 4pm, and Monday - Thursday, 9am - 5 pm. If you are coming to the church to drop something off or pick something up, please feel free to call or email before to make sure I will be here, as I often will run church errands during the day.
- If you are dropping off a check for your pledge, "Beyond Our Walls" donation, or any other check payment, there is an envelope slot outside my door that empties into a secure lock box. Please use this if you have missed the collection basket during worship services.
- If you would like to add an announcement to the Mini-Pioneer Bulletin or Sunday Email, please send copy to me by Wednesdays at 9am. We may have to edit for room in the Mini, but your full copy can be included in the email. [Here are other ways to promote and publicize your event.](#)

Come stop by the office and say hello, and always feel free to [email](#) or call with questions or comments.

Happy Holidays!

Christine



Website



Podcast



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