



Unitarian Universalist  
Society of Geneva



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# Pioneer Newsletter

## October - November 2016

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### [UUSG Calendar](#)



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

#### A Halloween Meditation

It used to be our practice on Halloween Sunday to have our children come to church in their costumes. They dressed up in all sorts of wonderful, fanciful, cute, and scary outfits. Ghosts and ballerinas and pirates and princesses, Darth Vaders and Harry Potters, witches modern and ancient, politicians and one year even a tax accountant. In accordance with long-standing tradition, they dressed up as our

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nightmares and our dreams.

The dreams are joyful and fun. The nightmares are a bit more challenging. There are terrifying things that happen in the world that should not ever happen –and yet we know that they do. We read the newspapers; we hear the stories; we look at our neighbors' lives – and our own, and we know that tragedy can strike anywhere. We know that on any given Sunday in our sanctuary there are hearts confronting loneliness, fear, immeasurable loss. The forces of sorrow, desperation and dis-ease are not always dramatic – but they are always here.

Our children will wear their costumes, and our nightmares will be of a manageable size. We do not fear the children in their make-up or their masks, for we see, despite the disguises, the beloved small eager faces of Life. May we always remember that eager face – and have faith to know that, however well it may be disguised, Life and Love have the strength to triumph.

Blessed Be!

Lindsay



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

I'm in beautiful San Diego on study leave at the convention of the Liberal Religious Educator's Association (LREDA). It is lovely to be here with 167 religious educators, both ministers and laypersons. It IS wonderful but also a challenge. Over the 4 days we've done Soul Work around the issues of money, death, race and sexuality. These are about the most complicated and emotional subjects we are asked to respond to as people of faith. Yet being among these warm and protective people feels like one of the most embracing environments I remember encountering.

For many of us the topic of sexuality was the most loaded and concerning. As Rev. Sarah Lammert, Director of Ministries and Faith Development at the UUA reminded us today, "In the era of California v. Brock Allan Turner and nominee 'locker-room talk', the questions of sexuality and ethical conduct has rarely been so important." And I agree with Rev. Lammert that the Our Whole Lives (OWL) human sexuality program "Is perhaps the most important thing we do." The OWL program is one of the signature programs of our church's Religious Education program, and one I hope we'll have the volunteers and enthusiasm to expand, sometime soon. For now the OWL parent information meeting is scheduled for November 15th. This is an opportunity for parents of youth in 7th-9th grade to find out more about the OWL program and consider whether or not they want their children to participate in this esteemed program.

In our conversations today, we religious educators testified to the life-and-love-affirming program that OWL offers our youth. Though we agree that parents are the ultimate sex educators, the OWL program makes it less awkward for parents and their kids to talk about sex! For many, OWL is a starting place for kids to talk with parents about the stuff that really matters. The 25 sessions go in depth on the many significant aspects of love and human intimacy with sensitivity, wisdom, candor and competence. In this first half of November, I hope you'll take the time to talk with me about the OWL program, both as we

offer it at UUSG and its many other aspects. (Ask me and win a prize!)

With joy, love and gratitude,

Rev. Scott

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### **boardblog - Nancy Christensen**

Hello All!

I joined the UUSG Board of Directors as a Vice President in July. When I agreed to be on the Board, I, of course, had to ask myself what I hoped to accomplish as a Board member. That was a difficult question for me, because I have little experience with the inner workings of this church. And, I had little desire to get involved in that experience. =)

As you may know, I am a YRUU advisor and coordinator of the Youth Habitat for Humanity trip each summer. I also teach chemistry at a community college. My 'calling', if I have one, is to work with the youth, as a mentor, role-model, and a safe adult in their lives. It is an amazing experience to work with the youth and it helps me to feel good about the future. From a distance, the youth of our nation seem like helpless, self-centered children. Up close, they are thinkers and fighters and carers and movers and shakers. They care deeply about issues that affect their lives and their friends' lives. They are spread too thin in their lives, just like a lot of us, and so sometimes seem not wholly committed to their causes. Our job, as adults in our congregation, in my opinion, is to meet them where they are and then push a little from the back or drag a little from the front. They want to improve their world and are learning about ways to make changes. The beauty of working with them is that I learn they are not as

jaded as we are or cynical about their futures. They are still focused on the joys in their lives and work to maximize that.

I am very appreciative of the safe space we make for youth in our church. Our YRUU is a place where all youth and, notably, the LGBTQ youth are welcomed and supported in a community of love and honesty. We all know that many of these youth may not be welcome in the church in which they grew up and sometimes even in their own families. I am proud of our UUSG community and its welcoming congregation status and what it means to youth, especially.

As a member of your Board, I have invited the youth to be members of the Board and now we have five youth who act as alternating, ex-officio members of the Board. Our goal, (the youth and advisors of the group) is to have their presence at the Board meetings be a reminder of their presence in the church and their importance to the future of us all. Also, we believe it is important for the youth to be aware of the inner workings of the Church and for the youth to realize that there are many committed adults that make what we do in the basement and on our trip in the summer possible. Our youth dress a little strange sometimes, color their hair strange colors oftentimes, act a little obnoxiously many times, and care about their world and the humans around them all the time. I urge you to sometime say hello to one of those groups of kids standing around at the coffee time. When you're at the Food Bank and one of them is there, work at a table with them. If there's an activity where they are there, work to sit with one of them and ask them about their lives. It's not that different from your life, really. They are just trying to make a difference in the world.

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

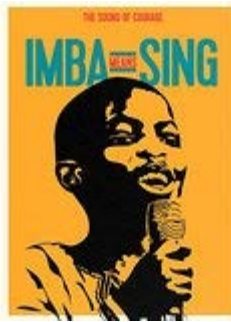
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### **Welcome Our New Board Director, Eric Jonke!**

The Board of Directors is pleased to announce that Eric Jonke has accepted an invitation to serve as a Director until June 30, 2017. Welcome, Eric!

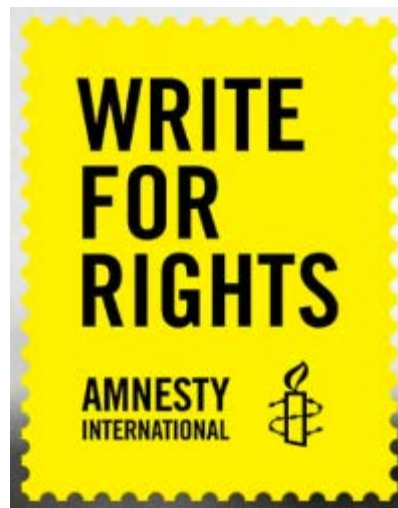
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### Our October Friday Flick

This film reminds us of the importance of education and opportunity in ending poverty in our world. "[Imba Means Sing](#)" is a character-driven heartfelt story of resilience and the impact of education. The film follows Angel, Moses and Nina from the slums of Kampala, Uganda through a world tour with the Grammy-nominated African Children's Choir. The film is stunningly shot and told through Angel, Moses and Nina's perspectives on their one shot journey from poverty to education. Their story is an intimate look at the inner workings of the Choir and how each child processes the joys and challenges of their life-changing opportunity. Please join us October 28, at 7pm in the Common Room.

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### UUSG & Amnesty International Event

UUSG will host an event for this year's Amnesty International "Write 4 Rights" Campaign. Join thousands worldwide to write letters that help free prisoners of conscience. This is a new event for everyone here, no experience is necessary. Join us on Saturday, October 29 at 2pm in the Common Room. [RSVP](#) preferred, but not required.

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## October Music

We kicked off a month of terrific music with the riffs and rhythms of the UUSG Jazz Combo featuring Michael Townley jammin' on that T-bone, Tracy Rosenkrans, Liam Johnson, Meredith Vandre and Geoff Pynn; rousing global selections in multiple languages by the UUSG Choir, led by Cynthia Spiegel, joined by Pat Vary on violin; and the piano artistry of Patricia Arzaga, Lynn Fisher McCanne and Dean Malambri.

Looking ahead, we'll be treated to a spirited performance by the UUSG Crypt Band, featuring Tracey McFadden, Andy Montgomery, Tracy Rosenkrans, John Rosenkrans and Liam Johnson. Later in the month, come hear the Brazilian artistry of EnsAmble Ad-Hoc with Francy Acosta, Ruth Cavanaugh and Jose Luis Posada; and pianist Sandra Anderson-Cordogan leading the Children's Choir. In early November, Andy Montgomery is our featured soloist for Election Sermon Sunday, followed by our musical veterans Brian Joose, John Towell, and Tracey McFadden.

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).

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## What You Need to Know about the Facilities Team

There are many reasons you might want to get involved with the UUSG Facilities Team. It is a place where you can make an impact. With one of the largest budgets, the Facilities Team undertakes projects that make a difference. Everything from gutters and downspouts, to remodeling the library, to making seasonal changes that enrich the beauty of our sanctuary; they all fall under the loving care of the Facilities Team.

The Facilities Team is also a great place to demonstrate your skills or learn some new ones. If you're a financial wizard, a do-it-yourselfer or have a fine-tuned sense of aesthetics, we want you! Folks are often unaware of the many skills needed to keep our elegant historic church looking and functioning at its very best. Our 175th anniversary is an important time to show our Geneva landmark in all its classic beauty.

Many of us find that the most binding and enriching relationships we build in our lives are formed through a common goal. No matter what skills or experience you have, being part of the Facilities Team will give you an opportunity to work with others who share your enthusiasm for and pride in the place of worship and humane values it symbolizes. If you'd like to know more about the Facilities Team and their upcoming projects contact them at [facilities@uusg.org](mailto:facilities@uusg.org).

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## Carnivale UUSG is Almost Here!

Our all-church fund-raiser, Carnivale, is just days away – Saturday, November 5th. We have some amazing offerings – really fun dinner parties, wine/cheese tastings, a day at the lake, plane ride, interesting basket treasures, etc. You can see all of them [online](#) or in the printed version available in the Common Room on October 30. If you haven't already signed up for finger-foods, please do so [HERE](#) or in the Common Room.

We are still in need of a few folks to help us pull-off this amazing event:

- Volunteers are needed to help in the children's room: Help the kids (ages 6 to 10) with craft activities/games; set out/put away the finger food; and, in general, facilitate a fun time for the kids in our Carnivale-themed kids' room! All materials and food are provided – we just need your support! Volunteer for one of two shifts: 4:30 to 6:30 p.m. or 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. Contact [Jennifer Klein](#).
- Volunteers are needed to help with check-in at the beginning of the evening and check-out at the close of the evening. Contact [Jeff Stibal](#).
- Volunteers are needed for half-hour shifts to pass the 50/50 raffle basket. Contact [Jean Pierce](#).
- Anyone know how to samba? Please contact [Tracy McFadden](#).

Please bring your donations to the Common Room either Sunday, October 30, between 10:30 a.m. and 12:30; or on Friday, November 4, between 7 and 9 p.m. Questions, contact [auctionleader@uusg.org](mailto:auctionleader@uusg.org).

The event schedule on the 5th is: 5 to 6:30pm, come enjoy finger-food potluck, wine, and the silent auction (we have a "Buy It Now" function, so come early to get the good stuff!); 6:30 to 8:30, live auction. Be there or be square!

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### **Upcoming Staff Time Off**

Cathi Plass, Church School Coordinator, will be on vacation October 30.  
Rev. Dr. Lindsay Bates will be on vacation November 22-29.

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### **Circles of Life**

We send our loving sympathy and our prayers to Faith and Bob McWilliams and their son and daughter-in-law, Mike and Linda. Faith and Bob's 23-year-old grandson Kevin died unexpectedly after recent surgery.

Congratulations to our former Congregational Administrator, Katie Phillips, on her new part-time Administrative Assistant position with the MidAmerica Region of the UUA!

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## Veterans Day Service Photographs

Like last year, at the Veterans Day service November 13, we will display photographs of UUSG members and their family members who were/are veterans. Please contact Jeff Stibal ([techdirector@uusg.org](mailto:techdirector@uusg.org)) no later than November 5 with your photographs, if you would like to see them displayed. If you submitted photographs last year, they will be displayed again, unless you ask Jeff to remove them.

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## UUSG Annual Thanksgiving Dinner!

No plans for Thanksgiving? Family lives too far away? Then join fellow UU's for the Annual Thanksgiving Day Dinner. Family and friends are welcome. We usually have about 30 attendees. Turkey and ham will be provided; please bring a dish to share. Doors open at 1:15 with snacks and beverages available. Dinner will be served at 2:00pm in the Common Room. We enjoy a bountiful dinner with fellowship before and after the meal. [Sign up online](#) or on the sign-up sheet in the Common Room.

- What: Annual UUSG Thanksgiving Dinner
  - When: 1:30/2:00 on November 24th/Thanksgiving Day
  - Where: UUSG Common Room
  - Who: YOU!
-



## Learn Facebook with the Social Media Team!

Looking for help creating a Facebook account or navigating the site? [The church is using Facebook](#) to communicate and would like to help anyone who is interested in learning! Stop by the Alcott room on Sunday, Nov. 13 between 10:30am and 11:30am for a hands on, one-on-one tutorial or Q&A with a member of our social media team.

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## Love the holidays? Love crafts?

Come join us November 26, as we decorate the church for the holidays. A craft project will be available for any little ones and refreshments available for all. [Sign up here](#) by November 20.

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### **Lazarus House Volunteers Needed**

You Can Sleep on the Job and only work two or three nights a year! Become an overnight volunteer at Lazarus House. UUSG is committed to providing volunteer coverage to supplement staff on the first Saturday of every month at Lazarus House in St. Charles. The work is easy, infrequent and rewarding. Consider adding your talents to the four regulars who already do this. Contact [socialjusticeleader@uusg.org](mailto:socialjusticeleader@uusg.org) to learn more and explore this opportunity to promote practical goodness. Put "Lazarus Overnight" in subject line.

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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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### November "Beyond Our Walls"

The November BOW offering will go to the St. Charles organization called Be A Hero To A Hero. They provide up to 800 Christmas stockings filled with socks, a t-shirt, and toiletries for disabled and infirm vets at the big VA nursing home in Manteo, various nursing homes in Geneva and St. Charles, and also many home-bound vets in our area. All donated funds go directly to these items for the vets.

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### **Membership Preparation Class**

Are you thinking about becoming a member of UUSG? If you are, and have been coming to church for at least three months and have attended at least one of the New UU sessions, please come to the Membership Preparation Class on Sunday, November 13th from 12:30 to 3:00 in the Common Room. This class is a requirement for church membership. At the end of the class, you'll have the opportunity to sign the book. For more information or to [sign up online](#), visit our [webpage](#). If we don't have a minimum of 3 people signed up by November 6th, we will have to cancel. A light lunch is included and childcare will be provided for those who request it in advance.

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## Registration Now Open!

Women's Retreat Registration for our Feb 3-5, 2017 "Evolving within Our Sisterhood" is now open! We have limited spots left, so don't delay! For those who have already registered (yay!) payments are due into the office by December 1st. To register or for more information please click [here](#). If you are are not able to register online, or have any other questions, please contact us at [womensretreat@uusg.org](mailto:womensretreat@uusg.org).

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## 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. Early registration of \$150 ends Nov. 5th. Information is found at: <http://www.womenandreligion.org/>



### The Annual Day of Service

We are looking for 2 co-chairs to work with Lisa Gades this year, and then take over the planning and organization. The event has grown dramatically over the years, does a lot of visible good in the community, and generates positive fundraising energy at UUSG. Please contact Bill Scown at [socialjusticeleader@uusg.org](mailto:socialjusticeleader@uusg.org).



### **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](mailto:facilities@uusg.org).

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### **Say Cheese!**

We will be taking photos for the 2017 UUSG Directory on Saturday,

November 19, from 10-11am and 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.](#)

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### **New2U Debuts a New Category: WANTED**

Looking for something? A congregant may be able to fulfill your request...so list it under N2U's "WANTED" category. A win-win for both parties.

You'll find WANTED at the end of the [marketplace listings](#). And, while there's no requirement to donate to UUSG in this category, if monies change hands, New2U will be happy to accept a donation, with the tax deduction going to the donor. To list something, or for more information on WANTED, contact [n2u@uusg.org](mailto:n2u@uusg.org).

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## Bible Study for UUs

For UUs who simply want to learn more about the Bible as literature, we meet the third Monday of each month, 7-8:30pm. Our next meeting will be November 21, and we'll be reading Genesis. As a companion book, you may wish to use "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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