



Unitarian Universalist
Society of Geneva



Pioneer Newsletter

September - October 2016

[UUSG Calendar](#)



From the Pulpit

the Rev. Dr. Lindsay Bates

First of all, thank you! More than 100 of you wrote out your thoughts on how you know that you're happy, what makes you happy, where you find happiness. I thank you for the caring and the openness and the depth of your responses.

Some themes and responses appeared quite often. Some were more idiosyncratic. All were loving and healing. Here is a sampling of at least some of the words you offered to me and to one another:

Want to Know More?

[Board Minutes](#)

[Team Reports](#)

[Financial Reports](#)

Table of Contents

[From the Pulpit](#)

[Scott's REgards](#)

[boardblog](#)

[September Music](#)

[Staff Time Off](#)

[Circles of Life](#)

[Volunteer Appreciation](#)

[Food Bank News](#)

[New UUs](#)

[Annual Thanksgiving Dinner](#)

[Blessing of Our Animal Companions](#)

[Equal Exchange Fair Trade](#)

[Membership Prep Class](#)

[Women's Circle](#)

[Carnivale UUSG](#)

[Crop Hunger Walk](#)

[Commit to Knit](#)

[Mutual Ground Walk for Hope](#)

[Interweave](#)

[New2U](#)

[Blackberry Fundraiser](#)

Read a poem a day to keep your heart soft When I am surrounded by my children & grandchildren Making a difference for others. . . .in nature, the woods, by the lake or sea. . . .When I love what's happening. When I truly appreciate who is with me, what I'm a part of. . . .Kind deeds by myself and others. . . .when the Cubs win. . . .in my family, especially with my spouse. . . .recognizing I am making others feel good about themselves. . . .I'm in deep grief now – I find happiness in small moments of grace. . . .with the beauty of nature, with my dog, forgetting myself, helping others. . . .A colorful sunset. A cool glass of water. . . .when I finish a creative project at work. . . .Discovering all that is good in myself and others. . . .calmness, carefreeness for a period of time. . . .Seeing the world through my child's eyes. . . .feel lightness & joyfulness in my heart. . . .I am happiest when I am not thinking about it. By absorbing myself in things that do make me happy – family, friends, music, sport, learning, etc. – then I can live in that moment and be happy, without really thinking about it. . . .I am happy when I feel closely, intimately connected to family, friends, & community. I am happier when I also feel connected to the world & the earth in a healthy way. I am happiest when I add to the health, safety & happiness of others. . . .Loving self and others. . . .Joy in God's universe. . . .deep, fleeting joy. . . .happiness is founded on loving service for other people. . . .When I am relaxed & without tension; when I am energized &

excited. When I am hugging my cats. . . .Happiness is a choice – I have to make a choice to be happy each day. . . .Home. . . .When I want for nothing, except to keep doing what I am doing. . . .peaceful on the inside. . . .talking to good people. . . .When I feel safe, loved, accepted, valued, and can see a good future ahead of me and all of us. . . .Knowing those I love are safe and content; knowing I make a difference to others. . . .being silly. . . .Making music with others. . . .with family or friends who do something good for each other, know it, and feel good about it. . . .I think it's more when I am OK with just being. . . .cuddling together through the night. . . .fulfillment of purpose. . . .a sense of balance & contentment. . . .when I am sharing with others, sharing gifts, energy, food, thoughts, and learning. . . .being grateful for what I have, feeling peace inside. . . .my mind isn't cluttered and I can function without difficulty. . . .know forgiveness; dismissed resentments. . . .connectedness = happiest. . . .I am most happy in the early morning of cool days in spring and fall. The whole universe is mine. It is quiet and peaceful. . . . Seeing joy in someone else's eyes. . . . My happiness resides inside my heart. It awakens me in the morning – it goes to sleep with my prayers at nightIt is you feeling alive within yourself. . . . when I'm in the moment, one fleeting momentlittle moments of unexpected kindness. . . .I don't exclude giddiness, spontaneous silliness or belly laughs – these are legitimate symptoms of deep happiness for me. . . .a pat on the back. . . .finding

peace and joy in yourself and others. . . .I am happy! And if not, I lie about it. . . .when my mood feels light and when I feel peaceful and appreciative. . . .when I feel “oriented” in the larger sphere of Nature. . . .a weekly time of rest & renewal – a Sabbath . . .when I feel like I want the present moment to continue. . . .When I feel safe and trusting and generous. . . .Turns out, I make me happy!?! Being able to handle hard situations and recover from my problems makes me proud, being proud of myself makes me happy. . . . I find happiness only when I make the decision that it is there – somewhere. . . .When my nose tingles. . . .with my friends at UUSG. . . .The sublime makes me happy. I find the sublime in music & nature. . . . when I fix something broken. . . .sometimes the struggle is happiness. . . .laughter. . . .Happiness for me is a hard-worn, spiritual space that I squirrel away in my heart. . . .Where? Anywhere. . . .Happiness is a choice to open your heart and let love flow. . . .”doing the right thing”. . . .when I want to express love to everything and everyone in the world. . . .

I'm going to put all the cards in a basket on the coffee table in the Common Room. If you'd like to take a few moments to read the full messages, they'll be there.

Blessings and peace!

Lindsay



Scott's REgards
the Rev. Scott Talbot Lewis

One of the true menschen of the congregation reminded me that our annual homecoming Sunday fell on the 15th anniversary of the fateful attacks on the Pentagon and the World Trade Center.

Carol Burnett once said "Comedy is tragedy plus time." I hope September 11th is never the subject of humor, but I do wish over the intervening years we, as a nation, had done more self-examination. Less than a month after the attack, journalist Fareed Zakaria wrote an opinion piece called "Why they hate us." In it he tried to explain why hostile elements of the Islamic world would do something so deplorable. Zakaria put forth some controversial ideas, but was looking for patterns, explanations, and an intelligent path forward, but his ideas were virtually ignored. Zakaria has continued to ask the question most recently in a television report which aired on CNN in July. You can view it on You-tube.

Mind, explanation neither condones nor forgives anything! But it can be a source for greater wisdom. In the intervening years, some have met hate with hate. Since 9/11 I've made it a personal mission to learn more about Islam and I agree with Zakaria, It's not about theology, it's about politics.

"Everything changed after September 11th," many say. What I find discouraging is the regressive choice and desire to externalize conflict. In my mediation training, I learned every conflict is easier to resolve when the parties can reflect on what may have angered or hurt the others involved. Since 9/11, that kind of Soul-Work has been in short supply and that explains a lot. It explains election year politics. It explains racially unjust law enforcement. It explains personal antipathy. Simply put, we cannot change the beliefs or actions of others, but our interpretation of those beliefs and actions is our choice.

As one whose vocation is Religious Education, I think the Soul-Work of self-reflection is an essential religious teaching. Every great religion focuses on self-reflection usually in meditation or prayer. Knowing ourselves increasingly better is essential for our spiritual development.

Our children are exceptionally talented critical thinkers, as are most UU kids. One of my favorite experiences of the Habitat for Humanity trip was engaging in individual and small group conversations about ethical and social issues with the YRUU youth. How are we doing at teaching our kids the essential soul-work

of self-reflection? How are we doing at doing our own soul-work of self-reflection? How well do we strive to see ourselves as others see us?

The Jewish High Holy Days begin with Rosh Hashanah on Oct 2 and end with Yom Kippur on Oct 12. These are traditionally the days of self-reflection. Shalom!

With joy, love and gratitude,

Rev. Scott



boardblog

The boardblog will return next month! Questions or comments? Contact the [Board of Directors](#).



September Music

The Homecoming Sunday band featured Tracey McFadden, Andy Montgomery, Liam Johnson, Tracy Rosenkrans and John Rosenkrans. Many of the lyrics were rewritten for UUSG, and humor infused the celebration of a new church year.

Looking ahead, we'll be treated to the UUSG Jazz Combo featuring Michael Townley, Tracy Rosenkrans, Meredith Vandre, and Liam Johnson; the UUSG Choir, led by Cynthia Spiegel; and more of the piano artistry of Geoff Pynn, Patricia Arzaga, Lynn Fisher McCanne and Dean Malambri.

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.



Upcoming Staff Time Off

Rev. Dr. Lindsay Bates will be on Retreat October 3-10.

Rev. Scott Talbot Lewis will be on Study Leave October 19-24, and on Vacation October 25-29.

Christine Imielski, our Congregational Administrator, will be on Vacation October 12-20.



Circles of Life

Congratulations to Honna Austin and Michael Townley on their new arrival, Lola Yvette Austin Townley! Welcome to the world, Lola!

We send our condolences to the Rev. Dr. C. Scot Giles and Rev. Dr. Lindsay Bates on the passing of Scot's mother, Marie Giles.

We send our condolences to the Tomell Family, on the passing of their beloved dog Andre on 9/22/16.





Volunteer Appreciation

We give our heartfelt thanks to the following people:

Worship Associates: Doreen Christiani, Debbie Leoni, Diane Gallentine, Andrea Gruszecki, Patricia Arzaga, Roxanne Willis

Greeters: Don Smith, Nancy Smith, Martha Tabis, Gail Tattersfield, George Tattersfield, Mark Alleman, Louise Haslett, Pam Tilbrook, Roger Tilbrook, Bob Prah, Manya Prah, Deb Brod, and Don Brod.

Social Hour Hosts: Jim and Jamie Carroll, The Stewardship Team, The Board of Directors

Counters: Kevin O'Neill, Bob Swanson, The Finance Team, Pat Ward, Gail and George Tattersfield, Jim Carroll, Brad Lipman.



Food Bank News

The September 24th trip to the [Northern Illinois Food Bank](#) was another record breaker. We packaged more frozen noodles than any other group in the past month: 1900 lbs! And, we had an additional group of UU Youth who processed 2963 lbs of canned corn. That's almost 2.5 tons in total!

Thank you to our volunteers: Katie Baar, Kevin Beyer, Betty Bristol, James Carroll, Jamie Carroll, Nancy Christensen, Huli Davalos, Solame Fogelman, Joni Garcia, Bryce Jonke, Eric Jonke, Ethan Jonke, Mary-Margaret Jonke, Scott Talbot Lewis, Vera Lind, Gary Littlefield, Maissy Littlefield, Doreen Mace, Mike Machnik, Nate Ng, Gary Noll, Kathie Noll, Cathi Plass, Emily Plass, Diane Rodi, Hamid Rusef, Ramsey Rusef, Martha Tabis, Ryan Thornton, Evelyn Tomchek, Pat Vary, and Quinn Welsh.



New UUs

Newcomers are invited to attend our Fall New UUs orientation to get to know us better. The dates are Sunday the 9th, 16th and 23rd of October. We'll meet in the Common Room immediately after the second service for a light lunch, and wrap things up by 3:00. Each program is different, so we hope you'll participate in all three. To help us better plan our resources, please [register online](#) or in person at the Welcome Center table to let us know which sessions you plan to attend. If we don't have a minimum of 5 people signed up by October 2nd, we will have to cancel. Child care is available upon request but we ask for 2 weeks' advance notice. Please join us!



UUSG Annual Thanksgiving Dinner!

Is it too soon to talk turkey? Then just pencil in November 24th on your 2016 calendar and Jeanne Neltor & Vohny Moehling will fill in the details in October.



BLESSING of OUR ANIMAL COMPANIONS

It's been a while since we've celebrated our connections to the four-legged, feathered, scaled, & finned creatures that share our lives. But now that we have the Third Street property, we've got a perfect location to gather and have a Service of Blessing. Mark your calendars for **Saturday, October 15, at 10 AM (weather permitting)**. All pets must be leashed, caged, or otherwise appropriately & protectively restrained. We'll have a service together, then those who would like an individual blessing for their animal companions will be invited to bring the animals to Rev. Scott or to Rev. Lindsay for an individual "laying on of hands."

We could use help with set-up, cleanup, greeting & inviting people to join us, and providing cool water in recyclable paper bowls for our four-legged guests. We're not sure what (if anything) we'll do about music, so if that's something you'd like to help with, please let Rev. Scott know. (Rev. Lindsay will be out of town from October 3 through October 10, so please don't send messages to her - she'll be on Silent Retreat and won't have phone or email access!)



Equal Exchange Fair Trade

We just got in a new shipment & there are a few surprises on the shelf in the north armoire. That's the good news. The disappointment is that EE sent *Love Buzz* coffee instead of *Ethiopian Blend*, which had been requested. That should be rectified in about 10 days. Requests are always welcome! Please add them to the payment can on the Equal Exchange fair trade shelf.



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.



Women's Circle October Program

"Spirituality in Music II," led by Cymbal, a small group of UU singers, will be the next offering in the Women's Circle series. Join us on Saturday, October 22nd from 1:00 to 4:00 in the Common Room to explore the power of music and its connection to our lives. To sign up and to learn more about this program and the Women's Circle, [visit our webpage](#). We hope you can join us and bring along a friend!



Celebrate CARNIVALE UUSG! Our All-Church Auction

October 16: Final date for submitting a donation form online or in the Common Room.

October 30, 9 am-1pm or November 4, 7-9 pm: Bring donations to the church.

November 5, 5-8:30 pm: CARNIVALE UUSG!!

We need your participation! This event is for people of ALL AGES.

Parents: Please sign up children ages 0-12 in the Common Room or contact auctionleader@uusg.org

We need your help! Please volunteer (contact auctionleader@uusg.org) about:

Showing us how to dance the *Samba*

Helping to *decorate* the Common Room

Taking a shift to help in the *kitchen*

Taking a shift to *sign in* people at the door

Taking a shift to *sell raffle tickets*

We need your contributions! Please help us by:

Donating with a form in the Common Room or online at www.togetherauction.com/uusg OR

Contacting auctionleader@uusg.org to tell us you will:

Donate money or items for a Holiday party-themed basket

Donate money or items for an African-themed basket

Donate money or items for an Entertainment-themed basket

Donate money or items for a Sports/Fitness-themed basket

Lend items for the Children's Rooms:

costumes of all kinds;

Mardi-Gras style decorations

We need your creative ideas for contributions of Talents, Events, or Parties, e.g.:

Teach how to use a smart phone

Teach sign language

Coordinate a Mystery Trip (based on clues, participants guess where they are going)

Conduct a behind-the-scenes tour (garden, theater, museum)

Host a party

Ethnic food using Grandma's or an exchange student's recipes

Celebrating an event like a candle-light party on Earth Day

Pool party

Provide a service:

Bake 3 doz. cookies for someone to donate to cookie walk

Wrap holiday or birthday presents

Make a coffee cake for someone contributing to a Coffee Hour

Make cupcakes for a birthday party



**Tri Cities CROP Hunger Walk – Saturday October 15
Registration 8:00 AM; Walk begins 8:50 AM.**

Individuals are invited to participate in the CROP Walk which is a community outreach activity to raise funds in support of local food pantries and international hunger initiatives. Local agencies receiving funds from the event are the Batavia Interfaith Food Pantry, Northern Illinois Food Bank and The Salvation Army in St. Charles.

[Sign up as a Walker or to donate here](#), and click on “Register” or “Donate”. Our team name is Unitarian Universalist Church Geneva. Walker donation envelopes are also available.

All ages are welcome to participate in this 3 mile walk. This year there is a new route that begins at Bethlehem Lutheran Church in St. Charles and passes through the Norris Woods Nature Preserve.

For more information or to receive a Walker donation envelope contact Shawn Thornton cropwalk@uusg.org



Commit to Knit!

Leaves are falling, the air is cool and crisp, the light is turning golden -- with the coming of autumn, our thoughts naturally turn to YARN. We invite you to knit, crochet, and quilt with us and donate your work to the non-profit knitting4peace.org. Please join us in the Common Room between services on the first Sunday of the month. If you have questions or need assistance, contact Katherine Lyons at knitting@uusg.org.

MUTUAL GROUND



Where the Healing Begins

Mutual Ground 9th Annual Walk for Hope

We are really excited to announce that this year's Walk for Hope, presented by Paylocity, will be held at Blackberry Farm in Aurora! This is our largest fundraiser of the year, and our goal is to have everyone who walks, create a fundraising page, and help raise money. We hope you will join survivors, victims, and family and friends of Mutual Ground on Saturday, October 22nd. It's going to be a great day of fun, all for a great cause! [Register Here!](#)

Mutual Ground's 9th Annual Walk for Hope
Saturday, October 22nd, 2016
Blackberry Farm, Aurora
8:30am – 11:00am



Get Involved With Interweave

Interweave is a local group of GLBTQ members, friends and allies who meet once a month for discussions and special events. We will have our fall social after second service **Sunday 10/16/16**. We will gather at the church at 12:30 and walk to a nearby restaurant to eat lunch together. For information please contact Lynn Steele at interweave.leader@uusg.org.



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.



Blackberry Pickery Fundraiser

Well, the blackberries are over for the season and it's time now to harvest other things. Thank you to everyone who came and picked a total of 39

pounds of fruit. It was a joy to share my crop with you and it is a joy to support the church as well. Enjoy the changes of light and temperature and I hope to see you again next year. -Jenny Gresko Schevers



Website



Podcast



Contact Us



Facebook

Copyright © 2016 Unitarian Universalist Society of Geneva, All rights reserved.

[unsubscribe from all UUSG MailChimp emails](#) [update subscription preferences](#)

MailChimp