



Unitarian Universalist
Society of Geneva



Pioneer Newsletter

September - October 2017



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From the Pulpit: Blessing Our Animal Companions

the Rev. Dr. Lindsay Bates

In our house, Scot and I are owned by our cats. We do not own them – we're all quite clear on that! Over the years, we've been privileged to share our lives with a long succession of great cats – Archangel Gabriel the Mighty, the Rev. Miss Olympia Brown, Richard Hooker, Sir Thomas More, Saint Shadrach the Martyr, Muffin, Jedediah, Good King Josiah the Just, Admiral James Tiberius Kirk (known to his friends as "Tibber"), Valkyri Cat and her Freya Kitten, My Lord Grayshadow Underfoot, the

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Lady Astarte, King Hezekiah, Hannah, Pumpkin, and Lucrezia Borgia Romanoff. When Scot and I announced our engagement, the 8 cats in our lives sent out the notice, announcing “with disgust” the combining of their households. I had Gabriel, Hooker, Thomas, Muffin, and Tibber; Scot was accompanied by Shadrach, Olympia, and Josiah. My wedding gift to Scot was Muffin – so that we each could honestly say, if asked, “I have four cats,” thus conforming to the letter if not the spirit of the domestic animal restrictions then in effect in DuPage County

Now only our 19-year-old Hezekiah (on meds for thyroid and kidneys, sweet and affectionate and deaf as a post) and 10-year-old Lucrezia, who came to us feral and untamed, and who now, after a decade of being loved, sits in laps, sleeps on the bed, enjoys being petted, and purrs. They are both of them – as were all of their predecessors – great blessings in our lives. We hope we are blessings to them.

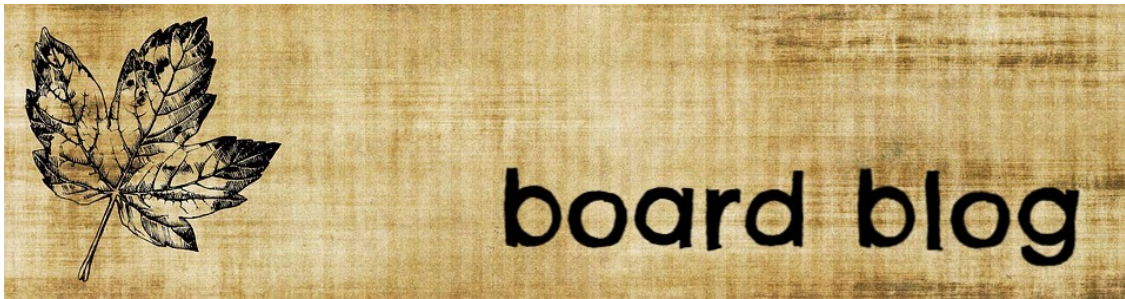
For many years, I had the privilege of leading the Blessing of the Animals at Anderson Animal Shelter. I loved doing that service, and when those services ended, we started doing occasional Blessing services here at UUSG. On October 8, we'll be doing one more.

You and your reasonably well-behaved (please!) animal companions – furred or feathered, shelled or scaled, hooved or clawed or no feet at all – are invited to a special service on **Sunday**

afternoon, October 8, at 2 PM over on our Third Street property. Please be sure your special critters are appropriately leashed or tethered or caged in secure carriers. We'll have a general blessing for all the companions present, in fact or in spirit (bring pictures if you'd like of those who now live on in your hearts), followed by individual blessings for any creature who wants one.

Special thanks to George Tattersfield, Joe Paszkiet, Marilyn Hebda, Andrea Gruszecki, Pat Ward, Doreen Christiani, Jim Swick, Liam Doyle (along with dad Brian), and Martha Tabis, who have volunteered to help with set-up, clean-up, greeting, and presenting the service with me. If there's anyone else of any age who would like to help with the service logistics, please let me know! No need to sign up to participate – just be there on Third Street at 2 PM on Sunday, October 8.

(If the weather on October 8 makes an outdoors service impractical, we've scheduled the following Sunday afternoon, October 15 at 2 PM, as our "rain date." Sorry, but bringing all our beloved beasts into the Sanctuary isn't an option.)



board blog - Nancy Christensen

Hello All

Interim – Latin for ‘the time between’. It’s something to think about. We are fast approaching an interim period in the life of our church, a time between most of us have never experienced. Times like these can be frightening, as we worry about all the things that will change in our church in the next few years. Everyone feeling anxious about this has every right to feel that way. Times of change are rarely pleasant.

Our time with Lindsay has been long. We are all used to a way of being UUSG. We have no way of knowing what will come. Nevertheless, we know we have no choice but to proceed. We are committed to moving forward in a way that we hope will make UUSG better in the future. We got a basic outline of the process on Sunday and so now know the tentative plan. Some of us are ready. Some of us are not. In my mind, that is just the way it is. And, it is an OK way to be.

For me, this is an exciting time. I am anxious about the work to be done. I am anxious about how our community will be during this time, wanting us to work together to find what is best for our community moving forward... and what is best left behind. This seems like some very difficult work that will require all of us to do our best, making a commitment to UUSG that maybe we never have made before. I am anxious that the many voices in our congregation be heard. I am understanding of the reality that everyone is not going to be as happy as they can be about the changes. This may very well be a time of compromise and negotiations as we try to determine not just what is best for ourselves, but what is best for our community.

I am not afraid of this, most of the time. The Board is committed to making this process as open and honest as possible and I hope all the members and friends of UUSG will make that commitment also. As we enter the process of hiring an Interim Minister and the time of the actual Interim, I am committed to being available, open and honest and I hope all of our members and friends make the same commitment...for the sake of our community.

Peace, my friends.

Nancy



Staff Time Off

Rev. Lindsay will be on retreat October 16-23, and Christine will be out of the office on October 16 & 17. Please note that the **office will be closed** on October 16 & 17.



New2U: Everybody Wins in this Fundraising Effort!

Don't you love to participate in projects where everyone wins? That's New2U! In the program, sellers clear out unused items and get tax credit for their donations; buyers get great deals on great stuff; and UUSG gets funds. Win. Win. Win.

So if you haven't seen your floors for a while and it's time for some fall cleaning, list your items with New2U.

And, if you haven't looked at N2U's catalog for a while check it out. There are some very interesting listings things you didn't even know you needed. Plus, give the program an extra boost by telling your family, friends, and neighbors about New2U -- bringing in outside dollars is great for the church.

Whether selling or shopping, check out N2U at uusg.org/new2u.



Music at UUSG

Setting the tone for a joyful Homecoming service was The Happy To Be Home Band with Ellie Montgomery, Andy Montgomery, Liam Johnson, Tracy Rosenkrans and John Rosenkrans performing with effervescent spirit. Meredith Vandre and Geoff Pynn teamed up for stunning duets for flute and piano, respectively. And September also brought us the lovely keyboard artistry of Sandra Anderson-Cordogan and Lynn Fisher McCanne.

Looking ahead, we will be treated to the UUSG Choir led by Cynthia Spiegel, followed by more vocal fireworks by the FUUsion ensemble. Among the keyboardists sharing their special gifts will be Dean Malambri.

There is a place for you in our Music Ministry. Please contact Music Director Tracy Rosenkrans at music@uusg.org today!



RE Students Music

Our PreK through 5th grade students are busy singing “I Know Your Name,” a song that touches on the ideas of getting to know people through one’s travels, finding traits we recognize in others, trying to live in kinship with people of all nations, and remembering that each person needs another. These ideas tie in with students’ study of various religions and ways of thinking about God, in that one of the desired outcomes is to achieve greater understanding, acceptance, and appreciation of others. Students will share their singing – and their art work! - with the congregation during services on November 5, so be sure to attend!



Our House

The air conditioning unit that services the offices and classrooms died last month and was replaced. The new unit cost \$4000. Fortunately, our property insurance covered \$1500 of that \$4000, thanks to Christine!

The curtains and ribbons on the chancel were changed, thanks to Sherri Casterline, Tom Lichtenheld, and George Tattersfield.

George Tattersfield also repaired the door stops on the sanctuary doors. Amazing what a little WD-40 can do.

The exterior trim on the sanctuary was repaired and painted, thanks to Tom Lichtenheld who coordinated the project!

In addition, Tom Lichtenheld was responsible for coordinating and completing several other projects, including: 1) getting window well covers installed (now the rain and snow won't leak into the basement); 2) switching the name tag holders in the vestibule of the sanctuary so that the name tags now face people as they enter; 3) replacing the door stop on the heritage room exterior doors, and 4) persistently looking for ways to fill the gap between the two exterior sanctuary doors to stop the cold

winter draft from coming into the sanctuary!

In the coming week Ron Craig will do an exterior inspection of the Sanctuary, Pioneer House and the Common Room. He will also be leading an effort to inventory all the extra paint we have collected from various painting projects over the years.

The Facilities Team has many handyman projects to complete, so if you or someone you know is able to replace a door, paint a wall, or apply WD40 on an old hinge, then please contact the [Facilities Team](#). It takes a village to maintain our house.



Harvest Dinner

Harvest Dinner at UUSG

Have you signed up yet? Come enjoy delicious fare on Saturday, October 21, at 6pm, by signing up [here](#).

The menu will be the same as in previous years: Crock-Pot soups, healthy salads, casseroles, homemade breads, and (of course) desserts. We encourage everyone who can bring something to consider making healthy and or homemade choices. Please note that we are not able to offer childcare for this event. Dinner preceded by 1/2 hour presentation by Dan Huntsha of Faith in Place (faithinplace.org).

Who is Faith in Place? Since 1999, Faith in Place has worked with over 1,000 houses of worship throughout Illinois to protect our common land, water, and air. With outreach staff working across the state and offices located in Chicago, Lake County, and Central Illinois, Faith in Place inspires faithful people to care for the Earth through our four program areas: Energy & Climate Change, Sustainable Food & Land Use, Water Preservation, and Advocacy.



CROP Hunger Walk

For the annual Tri-Cities CROP Hunger Walk, our church is forming a team this year to walk for hunger relief both locally and around the world. The 3 mile walk takes place on Saturday October 14, at 8:00am, starting at Bethlehem Lutheran Church in St Charles. To obtain more information and to become a donor or a walker, visit [here](#) and follow the prompts to reach our team name "Unitarian Universalist of Geneva". Walk donation envelopes for the collection of cash and checks are also available. Contact Shawn Thornton for walk donation envelopes at cropwalk@uusg.org.

Your generous donation to the Tri-Cities (IL) CROP Hunger Walk will help address the root causes of hunger for children and families in the U.S. and around the world!



Statement about Interim Ministry

The purpose of interim ministry is to help the congregation prepare for change. Ninety percent of UU congregations that prepare for a search to call a new settled minister first engage in interim ministry. Especially following a long settled ministry, it is essential that the congregation have a period of time to decide together how we will do the work of the church in the world.

The UUSG Board of Directors plans to engage in interim ministry for the

period of 2018-2020. It is expected the interim ministry process will follow guidelines and principles published by Unitarian Universalist Association (UUA). Specific plans and procedures will be made with the input and guidance of the interim minister.

It is understood, in accordance with established policy of the UUA, that the interim minister is pledged not to become a candidate for called ministry, not to serve the congregation for more than two years, and not to discuss prospective candidates for called ministry with the search committee. It is also understood that interim ministers carry out the normal responsibilities of congregational ministry, including worship and pastoral care, and assist the congregation in addressing the following interim tasks:

- Claiming and honoring its past; engaging and acknowledging its grief and conflicts
- Recognizing its unique identity and its strengths, needs, and challenges
- Understanding the appropriate leadership roles of minister(s), church staff, and lay leaders and navigating the shifts in leadership that may accompany times of transition
- Making appropriate use of regional, UUA, and other outside resources
- Renewing its vision, strengthening its stewardship, preparing for new growth and new professional leadership, ready to embrace the future with anticipation and zest

For more information about the UUA's guidelines on interim ministry, see uua.org/careers/ministers/interim. For questions and concerns, please contact UUSG Board President Jean Pierce at boardpresident@uusg.org.



Get Involved With Interweave

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 12:30pm after second service on Sunday October 15, to plan our winter activities and discuss current events. For information please contact Lynn Steele at interweave.leader@uusg.org.



**Women's Circle
A Stereotype 'Blast': Muslim Women and Spirituality,
Bringing the World Together.**

Our country is in some turmoil regarding immigrants from many countries and bans on those from predominately Muslim countries. Many misperceptions are being created about Islam, and stereotypes are rampant. Want to learn more about Islam and the lives of Muslim women here and abroad? Have questions about their role in family life, or the limitations and opportunities afforded them?

Come share a presentation and discussion on these and related topics with our special guest speaker, Huda Husseini, a chemistry educator and mother originally from Jordan. Her goal is to raise awareness, help combat stereotypes, and bring people together in peace. Huda looks forward to your questions and guiding our discussions! Join us October 28, 1-4pm.

[Sign up at uusg.org/womens-circle.](http://uusg.org/womens-circle)



Annual UUSG Thanksgiving Dinner

No plans for Thanksgiving? Family lives too far away? Then join fellow UUs for the Annual T-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 1:15pm 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. SAVE THE DATE: 11-23-17. More info in October.



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 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.



Friday Flicks

This month's Friday Flicks Presentation: *Immigration Battle*
Friday, October 27, 2017 at 7:00pm
UUSG Common Room

Join us as we return, once again, to an issue which seemed to be making some movement to resolution only to be resurrected in a much darker form in 2017. October's Friday Flick, *Immigration Battle*, was produced in 2015 and looked at the legislative process that failed, at that time, to produce a comprehensive reform bill on immigration.

Why has it been so hard for Washington to fix our country's broken immigration system? In *Immigration Battle*, a 2-hour film from Frontline and Independent Lens, independent filmmakers Shari Robertson and Michael Camerini take viewers behind closed doors in Washington's corridors of power to explore political realities surrounding one of the country's most pressing and divisive issues.

In *Immigration Battle* we follow Rep. Luis Gutierrez (D-IL) as he works behind the scenes with congressional leaders and the White House to try to create a bill that would be acceptable to both Republicans and Democrats. Interestingly, the film makers conclude that Republicans weren't the only ones to blame for the failure to pass an immigration bill.



Book Exchange

Take a peek at the UUSG Book Exchange across from the James Street/North Entrance. Borrow or keep any of the books in the barrister shelves. No sign in/out - just enjoy. **Several new additions available.**



Youth Outlook Drop-In Center Is Back!

After taking the summer off to do some outreach to the local middle and high schools, the bi-monthly Thursday drop-in center for LGBT youth opens September 28, at 6:30pm. Through July and August, the drop-in center volunteers worked to create new outreach materials and developed a new list of contacts, focused on Tri-City middle school social workers and counselors who would be the most likely professionals to make referrals for youth seeking support.

In its first year, the drop-in center served a mix of LGBT youth, with a high percentage of trans and gender non-binary students. In the coming year, all LGBT youth are welcome.

Adults volunteers who would like to assist with running the drop-in center may want to consider the upcoming November volunteer training, scheduled for November 4, 11, and 18. For further information or to receive an application, see the Youth Outlook website youth-outlook.org, or contact the executive director, Nancy Mullen, at nancy.mullen@youth-outlook.org.



Pathway to Membership

"Can't the Welcoming Team come up with a better approach?"

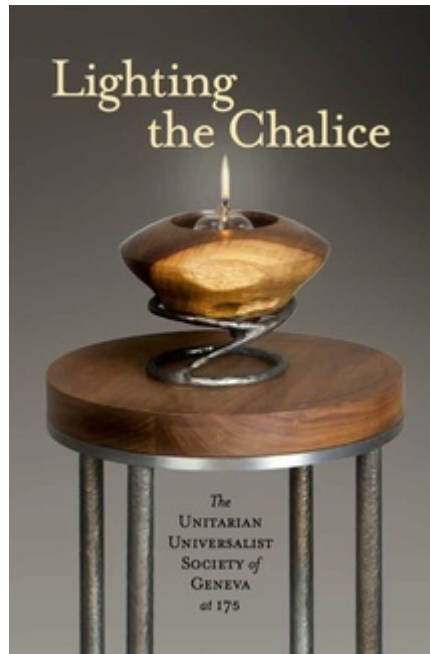
"I can't commit to three Sunday afternoons in a row!"

"We'd love to come, but we're just so busy!!"

Well, we can and we have! We're going to try something different this fall. The Welcoming Team will offer a one-day "Pathway to Membership" program, 1-4pm, on Sunday, October 15, in the Common Room. Newcomers can experience "the best of" our former New UUs Orientation combined with the required elements of the Membership Preparation Class in a single three-hour session. If at the end of the afternoon you feel ready to sign the Membership Book, you can do so on the spot!

Have you already attended New UUs but just haven't been able to find time to come to a separate MPC? "Oldcomers" are welcome to join us at the midpoint (about 2:30pm) and participate in the second half only. There is no obligation to join at the end of the day, but the invitation will be offered.

We'll kick things off at 12:30pm with a light lunch. Childcare will be provided upon advance request. Watch for more details in the next Pioneer and listen for pulpit announcements as the date approaches. Questions? Please stop by the Welcome Center in the Common Room between services. [Please RSVP here](#). Stay tuned!



Book Release Party & 175th Anniversary Celebration Thank You!

Thanks to everyone who attended and helped with the Book Release Party Sunday evening - it was a truly delightful evening! Thanks to the 175th Anniversary Committee and to everyone who participated in writing the beautiful new book, *Lighting the Chalice*. Thanks to Don Brod for all your time, effort and talent in editing, publishing and introducing the book, and for initiating the Book Release Party complete with authors signing the book. Thanks to Rev. Lindsay for encouraging the writing of the book and for support of all the anniversary festivities. Thanks to Patrick McGleam, Jim Frazier and Tom Lichtenheld for photos and book design.

Thanks to author/researchers Pat Ward, Lindsay, Deb Brod, Jean Pierce, Jenny Montgomery, Deann Alleman, Lou Pierce, Kevin O'Neill, David de Coriolis, Kurt Heinz, Barbara Iverson, Kate Frazier and Glenda Peck. Thanks to David Tomell, Don Brown, Deb Brod, Renee Tomell and Bev Coe for bringing refreshments and for working the party, and to Bill Koehl for help with cleaning up. Thanks to everybody who assisted during the party.

Thanks to everyone who bought a copy of *Lighting the Chalice*! We sold 50 copies during the party, and many of the contributors were there to add their signatures. If you missed the party but would still like to purchase a book, there are copies available for \$10 in Christine's office, or [for purchase on Amazon](#).

Happy Anniversary, UUSG - from Kathy Cornell, Jill Brown and the 175th Anniversary Committee!



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 October 16. We'll be finishing "[The Bible: A Biography \(Books That Changed the World\)](#)" by Karen Armstrong.

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.



Write Time Writers Group

The Write Time Writers' Group will move its meeting location to the Vineyard Church in Wheaton starting in October. The WTWG has been in several locations over the years, but the 'center of gravity' of the group has moved eastwards. We are grateful for the home we have had at UUSG, many thanks. For more information contact Roger Tilbrook.



Green Sanctuary News

Green Sanctuary Team would like you to know about upcoming events for the public:

- The Illinois Solar Tour on Saturday, October 7, is a series of free public open houses. Home and business owners with renewable energy installations will open their homes to the public to share their passion, knowledge, and experience of owning and living with renewable energy. Visit any site at any time between 10am and 3pm. Homeowners will be available at each site to provide information, share experiences, and answer questions. Information available [here](#).
- Gubernatorial Candidate Forum on the Environment October 14, 11:00am-12:30pm. More information available [here](#).
- Recommended story: [Invisibles, The Plastics Inside Us](#)

More information is available on the Green Sanctuary bulletin board.



The Office Report

Did you know that The Pioneer newsletter was started in 1949 by UUSG's minister Dr. Charles H. Lyttle? I learned this little nugget of information while reading *Lighting the Chalice*, the new publication that was edited by UUSG's own Don Brod with many UUSG Members and Friends researching and authoring the individual chapters. I remember when I first started here, many of the authors would come looking for past years' Annual Reports, spending countless hours in the Common Room reading and researching in preparation for writing their chapters. It was a lot of fun to read the book, especially since I have gotten to know many of the "characters" mentioned in its pages. If you haven't picked up a copy yet, stop by my office to purchase one. You'll be glad you did!

~Christine
Congregational Administrator



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