



THE PIONEER

December 2011 - January 2012

Paper Pulpit

the Rev. Dr. Lindsay Bates, Senior Minister

Year Ends & Odds...

Late December already? Amazing. Christmas Eve services are at 4pm (Family), 8pm (Choir), and 10pm (Meditative). Christmas Day and New Year's Day are traditionally low-attendance days as folks enjoy their holidays with their families & friends. But there are still many who want something special for December 25 and January 1. My plan is to be at the church with coffee and donuts starting at 9:30am both of those Sundays, and to have music and readings, stories and activities for all ages ready for whoever arrives. Steve Hanson will be at the piano for a holiday sing-along on January 1. If you're in town and want to join in on either or both days, bring a "brunch-ish" something to share if you can, and come to church!

A number of you have asked about Saturday services, both favoring and questioning. So let's raise the issue. We're rapidly hitting comfortable capacity at both Sunday services. Are we ready to look at Saturday again? Or Sunday afternoon? We're not likely to have any church school (although we would provide nursery care), so this would be for adults and older children & youth. If we were to have the funds to do this (it will add about \$7800 to the budget), would you attend? Which day - Saturday or Sunday? I'm counting only the "yes" votes, so if you're a "yes," let Katie or me know within the next couple of weeks.

"We've got the Rainbow!" The UUA has officially recognized us as a Welcoming Congregation, and we now appear on their website with the rainbow designation as well as on a special list of congregations that are intentionally welcoming of all LGBTQ folks. Well done and thank you to our WC Team! We'll have our official celebration in the spring, on March 18, when the service theme will be "The Chalice at the End of the Rainbow."

Guest at Your Table/Little Old Church on the Table: if you were in church for our Thanksgiving services, we hope you took home both the UU Service Committee's GAYT box and the UUSG Church box for our "Make a Difference" fund. The boxes (or their contents in the form of checks made out to UUSG with either "Guest at Your Table" or "MAD Fund" in the memo line) can come back to us any time between Christmas Eve and January 15. Special thanks for all MAD donations. Our UUSG community (both members and friends) has taken some rough hits during this recession, and the MAD Fund has let us help with medical expenses, food, transportation, legal assistance, education costs, and rent. Half of the Christmas Eve offerings will also support MAD, so if you won't be with us on Christmas Eve, please do consider a special end-of-year gift to UUSG for MAD.

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The next Hypnosis Ministry Information/Intake session is set for Tuesday, January 24, from 7pm to 9pm. This session is required for anyone who would like to be part of our "Last Tuesday" group hypnotism programs, so if you've been thinking you'd like to check those out, this is your chance. I do these Intake sessions when a month has 5 Tuesdays (so participants can join the Last Thursday group the following week). The next one won't come along until May at the earliest. Sign up in the Common Room after the holidays.

Finally, Katie has posted your staff's planned work & time off schedules in several places (including page 4 of this newsletter). The best way to find any of us during the holidays will be to call or email.

Have a joyful holiday season!

Peace ~ LB

Religious Education Announcements

Holiday Pageant

The Winter Lights pageant was met with great attitudes and lightheartedness! Thank you to all who participated—that means everyone who attended in body or spirit. Pictures of the pageant characters are displayed in the Common Room for all to learn about and enjoy. Special thanks to Al Drover, who lent his creative ideas and artistic ability for our pageant props!

Pictures of Teachers

Jim Frazier has been photographing RE teachers. Some have yet to be photographed, so we will schedule Jim on another Sunday in early January.

These pictures, along with a few words from each teacher about what they enjoy about teaching RE, will be posted in the Common Room soon.

Teachers, if you have not already done so, please email to Deb (lre@uusg.org) your 1-3 sentence statement about what you like about teaching. If you can send it before January 1, that would be great!

YRUU Reunion

All current and former members of YRUU are invited for a gathering of food, fellowship, and fun on Friday, December 30, 1-4pm. Bring a dish to pass. RSVP to Elba Karim.

What's Happening in the Classrooms?

Parents, please take a few minutes to review with your child what he or she did in class each Sunday. The teachers are providing a class summary for you to take when you pick up your child—we hope to also begin emailing these summaries in the upcoming months. By reviewing what your child did in class, you stay current with what he or she is learning and you can provide further opportunities to integrate learning material in your child's daily life.

Everyone, please take a moment and ask a UUSG youth what they are learning in their RE class. The class topics (listed below) and materials are very interesting, and the children benefit from sharing what they are learning. You might learn something, too!

RE classes resume on Sunday, January 8. Here's what each grade level is focusing on this church year:

Grades K-2: Stories about God. Recent topics included:

- The Mystery of God
- Different Points of View about God
- Different Ideas UUs Have of God

Grades 3-5: Holidays and Holy Days. Recent topics included:

- Divali (Hindu New Year celebration of hope for prosperity)
- Hanukkah

Grades 6-8: Neighboring Faiths

The first field trip is to a synagogue in Elgin on Friday, February 10. More information to follow.

OWL (Our Whole Lives) (Grades 7-9)

- The first overnight class for the spring semester is January 13-14.
- If your youth is planning to be a part of this program and isn't already signed up, please contact Elba Karim by January 1. Special permission forms and advanced registration is required.

YRUU (Grades 9-12)

- "7 Habits" curriculum in general to build community, develop youth leadership, and engage in worship and social action.
- As part of an ongoing service project, YRUU continues to collect gently used clothing, costume jewelry, movies, hand-held games and gaming systems, books, toys, outerwear, etc. for local families affected by child abuse who have accessed Children's Advocacy Centers. Gift cards and checks (made out to UUSG with YRUU clearly written in the memo line) will also be gratefully accepted.

UUSG Winter Playdate

for PreK through 5th Grade Children and Families
Windmill Sledding Hill, Batavia
(1925 South Batavia Ave./Route 25)
Sunday, January 15, 12:30pm—1:30pm

Bundle up, throw your sleds in the car, pack a snack, and join us for a sledding playdate! We'll meet in the parking lot at the sledding hill by the Fabyan Windmill. If Mother Nature doesn't provide us with snow, we'll take a winter hike from the same location instead. We'd like to give younger school-aged children a chance to build community and get to know each other better.

If you plan to attend, please contact Karen Laukaitis.

Guest at Your Table

It will soon be time to collect your Guest at Your Table boxes! On Sunday, January 15, we will close our Guest at Your Table program.

Please look for a display in the Common Room where you can drop off your boxes or envelopes.

Before bringing back your Guest at Your Table box, be sure to complete the form on the box. And, if possible, please convert your cash and coins to a check made out to "UUSC." We'll announce the results of our Guest at Your Table program as soon as we are able.

On behalf of the Unitarian Universalist Service Committee, thank you to every person who has chosen to share their blessings through the Guest at Your Table program.

If you'd like to donate early, you can give your collected money to Deb Askelson at any time.

Reminder to Teachers

Our Mid-Year Teacher Meeting is coming up on Monday, January 30 at 7:30pm. Attendees will be invited to share mid-year thoughts and ideas regarding our religious education program.

If you would like childcare, please make your request by Monday, January 16, to our Church School Administrator, Deb Askelson, at lre@uusg.org and we'll try our best to provide it.

RE Music Program

Over the three weeks since Thanksgiving, PreK through 5th grade students enjoyed a variety of activities.

First, they read and sang "Over the River and Through the Woods," a Thanksgiving poem by UU Lydia Marie Childs. Next, Tracey McFadden visited, giving a demonstration of the guitar and singing "Jingle Bells," a winter song composed by UU James Pierpont.

Finally, they learned more about their "Guest at Your Table" boxes - how the money they donate goes to help people around the world, by supporting the UU Service Committee's activities.

"Munch & Learn" Lecture Series

The next "Munch & Learn" lecture is on Sunday, January 8 at 1pm. Our monthly series continues with "The Long and Winding Road" with Eileen Berman.

Eileen will share, and we'll discuss, the many things she has learned in her breast cancer journey this past year. This includes what she didn't know then, but does know now about cancer, treatments, medical records, and a new use for Claritin.

Sign up in the Common Room or send an email to lre@uusg.org if you plan to attend.

Library Software...Up & Running!

RE curriculum materials are getting organized, inventoried, and entered into the library database for better access for RE teachers. Thanks go to Linda Burke for helping with this project.

A huge thank you to Jeanne Neltor for getting the library books inventoried, entered into the database, and shelved. And Doreen Christiani deserves another thank you for donating the library computer and setting it up!

Registration Forms

In January, Deb Askelson, our Church School Administrator, will be sending out emails/letters with necessary forms to parents to ensure all student registration materials are in—especially for Junior High and YRUU students. They must have all materials on file in order to attend upcoming field trips and CONs.

Holiday Happenings

Upcoming Services

Saturday, December 24 Christmas Eve Services

- 4 pm Our “Family Friendly” service especially for young children. Please note that this service has been moved up an hour.
- 8 pm Candlelight Choir Service
Seating in the Sanctuary will be limited to 150 people, so get here early!
- 10 pm Candlelight Meditative Service

Sunday, December 25, 9:30am-12:30pm

Holiday Potluck Brunch with seasonal music, readings, and reflections, welcoming all ages to come together and celebrate. No worship services.

Sunday, January 1, 9:30am-12:30pm

More brunching, singing, reading, and fellowship for all ages. No worship services.

Holiday Staffing

In addition to their regular days off (Fridays & Saturdays for Katie; Wednesdays, Fridays, & Saturdays for Deb; and Wednesdays & Thursdays for Lindsay), the staff will be off on these days:

Christmas Day Sunday, Dec. 25 (Katie & Deb only)	Boxing Day Monday, Dec. 26	New Years' Eve Saturday, Dec. 31	New Year's Day Sunday, Jan. 1 (Katie & Deb only)
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Staff hours between Christmas Day and New Years' Day will be irregular. Please call first if you need to stop by during that time.

Hello, Mr. Fire Marshall!

Using all available seating, our Sanctuary holds an absolute maximum of 150 people, including the Choir. Understandably, the 8pm Choir Service is the most popular—for our own folks and also for visitors looking for a place to go on Christmas Eve.

Once there are 150 people in the room, our Greeters will have to turn people away. We'll broadcast the service into the Common Room for those who choose to stay and listen, but it's not ideal.

We strongly recommend that families with young children plan to attend at 4 o'clock. That service contains all the central Christmas Eve elements, but is paced for shorter attention spans and lasts no more than an hour.

The 10 o'clock service has most of the same readings and carols as the earlier Choir Service, but is far more meditative/prayerful in tone—and has far more room to stretch out and enjoy the beauty of our Sanctuary by candlelight.

If the 8 o'clock service is your only option, please do plan to arrive well before 8pm. Latecomers are almost guaranteed seating in the Common Room.

Christmas Eve Collection

This year's collection will be divided between Mutual Ground and our UUSG “Make a Difference” emergency assistance fund.

If you'll be out of town or otherwise unable to attend Christmas Eve services but would like to make a donation to the Christmas Eve offering, please mark it "For Christmas Eve" and send it in or drop it into the collection baskets.

Christmas Eve Greeters

Are you planning to attend the 10pm Christmas Eve service? If so, consider being a greeter!

We're still in need of 2 greeters at the late service—if you can help, please send an email to Lindsay at minister@uusg.org.

Social Justice News

Happy Holiday Report from the Illinois Youth Center Project

UUSG raised more than \$2,600 for this year's Youth Center Project. This allowed us to purchase computers for the boys to use. Some of the money combined with additional gifts from individuals also went towards 35 gift bags each containing a hand-knit hat, gloves, socks, deck of cards, candy, a puzzle book, and note paper. In addition, books were donated by the Fox Valley Literacy Council.

The gifts were presented at our annual party on December 17. Members of UUSG and boys from the Youth Center participated wholeheartedly in constructing 21st century sleighs for Santa from assorted materials, creating unique versions of Christmas carols, and devouring mountains of cookies.

The Social Justice Committee expresses sincere appreciation to the following people who contributed their time and talents to the project this year: Melissa Auer, Kevin Beyer, Joe Eddy Brown, Sherri Casterline, Donna Ellis, Kate Frazier, Lisa Gades, Diane Gallentine, Diane Handler, Becky Hruby, Tiny Leidolf, Jenny Leslie, Jeanne McGowan, Maureen McKeough, Vohny Moehling, Jeanne Neltner, Jean Pierce, Lisa Rittenberry, Hal Schulman, Mary Schweizer, Bill & Jeannie Scown, Emily Clark, Jan Pritchard Voogd, and Ben Walker.

We were also joined this year by Cobe Williams from Ceasefire as well as Keith Knazze and Toussaint Smith from Transition Alternatives. All three had successfully turned their own lives around following imprisonment. Each of them met individually with the boys, giving them the hope of making a smooth transition following incarceration. Cobe shared the story of a boy who had been in the St. Charles IYC but, with the help of Ceasefire, now has a job, a car, a place to live, and a family. A number of the boys got contact information from these men, so they have connections to help them as they strive for a better life after they are released.

There are many aspects of the project which are personally rewarding—sharing smiles, laughter, and stories with the boys; finding opportunities to assure them that we appreciate their talents of leadership, creativity, artistry, and engineering; and seeing how eager they are to make connections with people who can help them succeed in the future. It takes a village, but without question we are giving them the message that we believe they are important and capable of making good decisions.

Special January “Friday Flick”

In January, our free “Friday Flick” will be on Saturday, January 21st. Beginning at 8:30 in the morning at the Randall 15 IMAX theater in Batavia, the featured film will be “The Interrupters.”

This film tells the moving and surprising story of three dedicated individuals who try to protect their Chicago communities from the violence they themselves once employed. These “violence interrupters” (their job title)—who have credibility on the street because of their own personal histories—intervene in conflicts before the incidents explode into violence. Their work and insights are informed by their own journeys.

Ricardo “Cobe” Williams, who is featured in the film, will be present for a question-and-answer reception in the theater lobby immediately following the screening.

Showing this film is made possible in part by the generous support of State Representative Linda Chapa LaVia and Commonwealth Edison. Representative Chapa LaVia and Ceasefire director Tio Hardiman will both be present, as will students invited from local high schools.

Although the film will be shown free to the audience in one of the largest theaters at Randall 15, it is essential that people who would like to attend contact Jean Pierce (socialjusticechair@uusg.org or 630-232-2350) to hold a ticket for you.

People who have been promised tickets are requested to see Jean at the theater at 8:15am on January 21st.

Giving “Beyond Our Walls”

We collected \$1778 for the Illinois Youth Center project during our 2nd Sunday collection on December 11.

Many thanks to everyone who donated money or purchased items to support this important ministry!

More Social Justice News

Recruiting Service Volunteer Participants (RSVP)

January 2012: Gift Bags for Seniors

On Saturday, January 28, 2-3:30pm, we will gather in the Common Room to assemble gift bags for needy seniors in the Kane and DuPage County area. Volunteers of all ages are needed to decorate the gift bags for a “personal touch” and to fill them with items that will be useful and comforting during the winter months. Gift bags are distributed through the Humanitarian Service Project, which is committed to alleviating the pain and suffering poverty brings to children and the elderly living in DuPage and Kane Counties. All of their programs are fueled by the love and generosity of local clubs, schools, businesses, churches, and individuals who contribute their time, energy, and resources. More information can be found at <http://www.humanitarianservice.org>. To sign up, see the Social Justice bulletin board in the Common Room, visit <http://content.uusg.org/rsvp-program/>, or contact Lisa Gades through the church office at 630-232-2350 or office@uusg.org.

February 2012: Canvass Day of Service and Celebration

The RSVP activity in February will be part of our Canvass Season this year. The Canvass will kick off on Saturday, February 11 with a Day of Service & Celebration. A menu of different volunteer opportunities will be available through the day and will include packing food at the Northern Illinois Food Bank, wrapping birthday presents for children in need, and building a Habitat for Humanity home in St. Charles.

More information will be available after the holidays, so look for details in upcoming Pioneers, Mini-Pioneers, and weekly email blasts.

Date	Location	Ages	Requirements	Activities
Saturday, January 28 2-3:30pm	UUSG	All ages	Willingness to help seniors	Prepare gift bags for seniors
Saturday, February 11 all day	Various locations	All ages	Willingness to serve others	Various—more info coming soon!

Show Your Support to Prevent Torture Around the World

Social Justice Action Alert

The United Nations has established an agreement to prevent torture in countries around the world called Operational Protocol to the Convention against Torture (OPCAT).

The Unitarian Universalist Service Committee has created a petition which urges President Obama to join the other 60 countries in agreeing to this Protocol. OPCAT establishes independent UN panels to ensure that torture is not occurring in domestic detention facilities around the world.

For more information and to sign the petition please go to the following website:

<http://actnow.uusc.org/site/PageNavigator/opcatpetition.html>

Achieving the Rainbow Chalice

Great news for UUSG: we are now an official UUA-recognized Welcoming Congregation!

The Welcoming Congregation Program is a completely volunteer program for Unitarian Universalist congregations that want to take intentional steps to become more welcoming and inclusive of people who are lesbian, gay, bisexual, and/or transgender (LGBT).

We've been working on this process in many ways for the last decade, but recently took steps to complete our application.

Now, when a person searches for a congregation in our area, there is now a rainbow chalice symbol beside the UUSG name and information. UUSG also shows up on the list for those looking for only churches which have the "Welcoming Congregation" designation.

Many thanks to everyone who participated in our recent programs on bisexuality and transgender identity which helped us document our progress to UUA that resulted in our approval!

Great appreciation goes to Lynn Steele, who spearheaded the recent activities, and to everyone on the Welcoming Congregation Team—Mark Alleman, Bev Coe, Bruce Fackler, Kate Frazier, Llona Steele, & Jim Toland—for their time, energy, and commitment.

The Welcoming Congregation Team is planning new activities for the spring, which will include special video selections for the "Friday Flick" on March 16 and a celebratory church service on March 18.

We are also going to form a chapter of Interweave, which is a gay-straight alliance group sponsored through UUA. We will have our first meeting on April 15. There will be more information on these events as we get closer to springtime. In the meantime, you can check out our coveted rainbow chalice on the UUA website to see our special church holiday present this year.

Supporting Practical Goodness

It might not be 2012 yet or even Christmas, but your Canvass Committee has already been hard at work planning next year's Canvass.

This year's theme is "Supporting Practical Goodness," and we'll spend the Canvass season exploring how service & practical goodness & how pledge dollars translate into a strong church which is capable of doing good works within UUSG, our community, and the larger world.

The main event this year will be a "UUSG Community Day of Service & Canvass Celebration" on Saturday, February 11. We'll offer a number of service opportunities throughout the day (building a home in St. Charles with Habitat for Humanity, helping the hungry at Northern Illinois Food Bank, and wrapping birthday gifts for needy children) and church members & friends will be encouraged to join in at least one service activity during the day.

That evening, we'll gather in our Sanctuary for a 30-minute worship service, to be followed by a catered meal in our Common Room. Anyone active in our church community, of any age, is welcome! Childcare will be provided.

In addition to our Day of Service, we'll also enjoy our annual Luncheon & Celebration, catered by our very own Elba Karim, on Sunday, March 4.

Canvass Season will run from mid-February to mid-March. Look for more information in upcoming Pioneer newsletters, Mini-Pioneer bulletins, weekly email blasts, and in your

End-of-the-year Donations

This is the perfect time of year to make a donation to UUSG, just in time to include it as a deduction on your 2011 taxes!

Donations must be received by Saturday, December 31. If you'd like to know your donation total for 2011 thus far, please contact Katie in the office.

Volunteer Headquarters

Volunteer Appreciation

We send our heartfelt thanks to:

Our December Greeters: Lynn & Llona Steele, Don & Nancy Smith, Gail & George Tattersfield, and all our last-minute recruits

Our December Social Hour Hosts: Tracy Paszkiet, Nancy Goodfellow, David & Renée Tomell, and Shirley & Dick Yingst

Our December 18 Solstice Singers: Tracey McFadden, Diane Handler, Nadia Handler, John Towell, Abby Zacker, Sarah Jonke

Our Holiday Decorating Team, who transformed UUSG into a winter wonderland

Helen Hawkins' Memorial Service

On Wednesday, November 30, our church community gathered with Helen Hawkins' family to celebrate her life and remember her many kindnesses.

Many thanks to Gail Tattersfield, who coordinated the luncheon with help from other members of the Hospitality & Fellowship Committee.

Our appreciation also goes out to everyone who brought food, helped with set-up, or stayed to help clean up: Winnie Blewitt, Jean Pierce, Jenny Montgomery, Lesley Ronson Brown, Tammy Thompson, Molly MacKay Zacker, Jane Willard, Ruth May, Joan Mansfield, Pat & Jim O'Malley, Gloria Mansfield, Eleanor Lukazewski, Vohny Moehling, Sandy Anderson-Cordogan, Betty Bristol, Anne Veague, and anyone else we may have inadvertently left out.

January Volunteer Openings

Greeting in December

December 24, 10pm

Greeting in January

January 8, 11:15am
 January 15, 9:30am
 January 15, 11:15am
 January 22, 9:30am
 January 22, 11:15am
 January 29, 9:30am
 January 29, 11:15am

Hosting Social Hour in January

January 15, 10:30am (2 openings)
 January 22, 10:30am (1 opening)
 January 29, 10:30am (2 openings)

If you're interested in greeting or hosting, you can sign up in the Common Room or by going to <http://content.uusg.org/greeters-and-social-hour-hosts/>.

Be a Coffee Hero

As of today, there are 5 openings left: 2 on January 15, 1 on January 22, and 1 on January 29. These openings must be filled by noon on Saturday, December 31 in order for us to have refreshments at any January social times.

Be a coffee hero—sign up today online at <http://content.uusg.org/greeters-and-social-hour-hosts/>.

If you have any questions or concerns about social hour, please contact one of the chairs of the Hospitality & Fellowship Committee, Judith Calleja and Cindy Vacek.

Resolution: Appreciation

Make it your New Year's resolution to show your appreciation more often. Take a moment to thank your child's RE teacher, the social hour host who made coffee for you on a cold winter morning, the greeter who welcomed you into church, and any of the other church members & friends who show you extraordinary kindnesses on ordinary days.



Green Corner

Special Program: Going Green in New Ways

This special program will be presented by Jennifer Jarland, Kane County's new Recycling & Resource Conservation Program Coordinator, on Thursday, January 19, at 7pm at the Batavia Public Library.

Join others for a program about Kane County's new ideas on product stewardship, recycling beyond curbside collections, conservation, electronics legislation, & more. Jarland spoke at UUSG in October. She is a former Zero Waste & Resource Conservation specialist in Boulder County, CO, with much community involvement and with special emphasis on resource conservation. She is an avid trainer of large and small groups and is looking forward to the educational aspects of her new job. In her talk, she will also discuss textiles, plastics, building materials, compost, and pharmaceuticals. Mark your 2012 calendars to be sure to catch this free event. You will find Jennifer Jarland very informative and engaging.

Recycling Holiday Decorations

Finish out the Holiday Season by recycling your old decorations at Goodwill.

You can also recycle discarded and burnt-out strings of lights at these locations:

Kane County Monthly Electronics and Book Recycling Collection Event
540 S. Randall Rd., St. Charles
630-208-3841
Hours: 2nd Saturdays, 8am-2pm

Batavia Public Works Department—
self-serve electronics drop-off
200 N. Raddant Rd, Batavia
630-454-2310
Hours: Monday-Friday, 8am-3pm

ReStore Electronics Recycling Drop-off
800 N. State St., Elgin
847-742-9905
Hours: Wed-Fri, 9am-6pm;
Sat. 9am-4pm

Electronics Recycling

Illinois' new landfill ban requires that electronics no longer be collected with regular trash. Electronic items have valuable resources as well as toxic contaminants; recycling metals, plastic, and glass from electronics conserves natural resources and uses far less energy than mining or refining raw materials. Such metals—including gold, cadmium, lead and silver—when trashed, are wasted resources and can threaten groundwater. So be sure to take the following items to the drop-off sites listed in the article to your left ("Recycling Holiday Decorations").

Items include: televisions, monitors, printers, computers, mice, keyboards, fax machines, game consoles, VCRs and DVD players. Most collection sites will also accept cell phones and small household appliances.

More Green Corner

Green Exit Lights

You may have noticed that we have new exit lights in our buildings—the red lights have been replaced with green energy-efficient fixtures that have already begun to save us money!



Our great appreciation goes to Marko Spiegel for heading up the project and to Tracey McFadden, John Zinser, Willy Román, John Towell, Bob Atac, and Tom Zimmerman, who all helped out to get the work done. This group donated not only their time, but all the fixtures, so they are very deserving of our gratitude.

The project included replacing eleven 40-watt conventional exit lights with 11 new ones that use an average of 4 watts, plus two self-illuminating ones in Pioneer House that don't require any power.

Habitat Recycles!

The current local Habitat for Humanity renovation project created a lot of waste, but much of it has been recycled. All the aluminum siding, soffits, and gutters removed from the garage and garage addition was removed and recycled. All the removed copper wire was stacked for recycling when the job is complete. The removed kitchen cupboards went home with volunteers and neighbors who are adding storage space in their garages.

Celebrating the Life & Work of Aldo Leopold

The movie “Green Fire,” shown in December as part of LRE’s “Munch & Learn” Lecture Series, was enjoyed by all who attended. The focus of the movie is the life story of Aldo Leopold, the foremost naturalist of the 20th century.

His life work was a stellar example of learning by experience. Leopold originally encouraged hunting wolves so that elk could thrive. Once the wolf population was significantly reduced, he realized the increased elk population was destroying the balanced ecosystem that had existed.

Baraboo, WI and Rockford, IL are two nearby places where Leopold did research and would make great short summer trips for environmentally-focused families.

Cookie Walk Results: \$2,160.58 640+ dozen cookies 79+ volunteers

A HUGE thank you goes to Elba Karim & Sherri Casterline, who coordinated the fundraiser and worked hard to make this year’s Cookie Walk a success! We couldn’t have done it without you.

Special thanks to Jim Frazier, who took great pictures of the evening!

We are also extremely grateful to everyone who baked delicious & beautiful cookies, helped with set-up, worked during the event, and helped with clean-up—THANK YOU!

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|----------------------|-----------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| Marcia Friedman | Katie Baar | Betsy Zinser | Jim King |
| Kate Frazier | Rhonda Robinson | Sarah Vetter | Jordan Karim |
| Kathy Meier | Betty Bristol | Tracy Paszkiet | Don Smith |
| Jeanne Letizia | Linda O’Neill | Julie Riffle | Nancy Smith |
| Jenny Montgomery | Kevin O’Neill | Katie Pokorny | Nancy Goodfellow |
| Molly MacKay Zacker | Lynn Mraz | Tracy Rosenkrans | Monica Jenkins |
| Claudine Myers | Judith Calleja | Laura Laughlin | Alesa Burbach |
| Josie Myers | Cara Whiting | Pat Ward | Ellie Radvanovsky |
| Llona Steele | Amy Hong | Diane Peters | William Elbert |
| Grace Christiani | Ann Drover | Jan Lee | Barb McKittrick |
| Jen Reiner | Martha Cox | Sally Jones | Dane McKittrick |
| Mylane Bryant | Karen Moore | Mary Swanson | Lucy Thelin Atac |
| David & Renée Tomell | Shirley Yingst | Gloria Mansfield | Jeanne Neltor |
| Ravyn Wheeler | Amy Brink | Jan Miller | Susan O’Neill |
| Vohny Moehling | Dawn Christ | Pat Vary | Diane Thornton |
| Steve & Emily Clark | Diane Peters | Gail Tattersfield | Melissa Auer |
| Jean Pierce | Linda Burke | Glenda Peck | Jessica Auer |
| Pam Tilbrook | Lisa Gades | Bill Scown | Nancy Christensen |
| Anne Wilson-Dooley | Michele Hoecker | Vera Lind | Mary Phillips |

If you helped out and aren’t listed here, please let Katie know (office@uusg.org, 630-232-2350) so we can properly appreciate you!

Interested in Church Leadership?

Our Nominating Committee has already started to think about who in the congregation to approach to fill next year’s openings on the Board of Directors.

If you’re interested in getting involved in the Board of Directors or you’d just like more information, please send an email to nominating@uusg.org or talk to any member of the Nominating Committee: Diane Peters (chair), David Tomell, Sally Jones, Gail Tattersfield.

Keeping Warm!

All the thermostats at UUSG are programmed to provide heat when there are activities in the building and to conserve energy when no events are planned.

But there are times that the temperature needs to be adjusted—and you’re welcome to do so! But PLEASE follow the instructions posted at each thermostat so that the programs remain and so future groups can also adjust the temperature.

Yurika

Sue

Jen

Katie

Jenny

Holiday Greetings from Your UUSG Staff!

Kat

Jen

Deb

Friday

Alendy

Circles of Life

Our thoughts and prayers are with Steve Hanson and his family this month—Steve’s mom recently passed away.

We send our best wishes to Cindy Vacek, Doreen Christiani, Gene Moehling, and Thom Thomas, who are all recovering from medical adventures.

Congratulations to our former Intern Minister Pam Rumancik, who recently received a "1" (the highest score possible) from the Ministerial Fellowship Committee and is now going forward with her plans for ministry. Best of luck to you, Pam!

On Wednesday, November 30, our church community gathered with Helen Hawkins' family to celebrate her life and remember her many kindnesses.

November Financial Summary

In October, we recorded \$18,878 in income and \$23,655 in expenses.

Overall, at 42% through the year, our income is at 40% while our expenses are at 32% of what we budgeted for the year.

Other items of note for November:

- We collected \$1,255 to purchase care package items and send them to troops in Afghanistan.
- Our mortgage balance (for the western property) is \$108,813.

If you have any questions about our income or expenses, or would like to see a copy of our monthly financial report, please talk to Katie in the office (office@uusg.org, 630-232-2350).

New UUs Orientation Program

Designed for anyone who would like more information about Unitarian Universalism in general and UUSG in particular, our “New UUs” Orientation Program is for newcomers and curious regulars alike.

The sessions will take place on three Sunday afternoons, right after the second service: February 12, 19, & 26, 2012.

Look for details of the content of each session and sign-up options in January, or feel free to talk to any Membership folks at the Welcoming table!

Steeple Walk Summary

The Cardboard Hearts performing trio—made up of Kristin McFadden, Taylor Sherry and Thomas Bravos—entertained the Steeple Walk audience at UUSG on December 4th. The three juniors from St. Charles North High School presented a program of holiday favorites and encouraged the audience to join in for a sing-a-long for the last three pieces. They did a wonderful job! There were three other church stops on the Steeple Walk, and our own Ruth Cavanaugh led the Larkin High School Visual and Performing Arts Academy Chamber Orchestra at the United Methodist Church. Ruth reported that her students “really enjoyed playing for the crowd.”

We are fortunate to have such talent in our church family!

Circle Suppers

Thank you to all who signed up for 2012’s Circle Suppers. All materials have now been mailed.

If anyone would like to participate as an Alternate, please let Jim Burke know.

Tish Hinojosa Concert

On November 30, we hosted international recording artist Tish Hinojosa and raised \$75 to Mutual Ground for their work with those affected by domestic violence and sexual assault. Many thanks go to Jeff Stibal, Melissa Auer, and Nancy Goodfellow for handling the nuts & bolts of the evening.

A New Holiday Tradition

Thank you to everyone who donated mittens, hats, and gloves to our Mitten Tree! The Hospitality & Fellowship Committee will donate them to Hesed House.

JANUARY 2012

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1 9:30 AM Holiday Potluck Brunch	2 12:00 PM Holiday Un-decorating Party 7:30 PM Technology Committee Meeting	3 7:30 PM Program & Administrative Councils	4 <i>Church School</i> <i>Administrator's Day Off</i> <i>Senior Minister's Day Off</i> 7:00 PM UU Buddhism Meditation and Study Group 7:30 PM GAS AA	5 <i>Senior Minister's Sabbath</i> 7:00 PM Youth Outlook (youth can begin arriving at 6:30pm)	6 <i>Church School</i> <i>Administrator's Day Off</i> <i>Congregational</i> <i>Administrator's Day Off</i>	7 <i>Church School</i> <i>Administrator's Day Off</i> <i>Congregational</i> <i>Administrator's Day Off</i> 9:00 AM - 3:00 PM Pottawatomie Habitat for Humanity Workday
8 9:30 AM & 11:15 AM Worship & Church School; Social Time at 10:30 AM 9:30 AM Nominating Committee Meeting 11:00 AM Finance Committee Meeting 11:15 AM Big Ideas Covenant Group 12:30 PM Membership Committee Meeting 12:30 PM Social Justice Committee Meeting 1:00 PM "Munch & Learn" Lecture Series: Eileen Berman on "The Long & Winding Road"	9 7:00 PM Reiki Discussion Group 7:30 PM LRE Committee Meeting	10 7:30 PM Board of Directors	11 <i>Church School</i> <i>Administrator's Day Off</i> <i>Senior Minister's Day Off</i> 7:00 PM UU Buddhism Meditation and Study Group 7:30 PM Compassionate Communication Study Group 7:30 PM GAS AA	12 <i>Senior Minister's Sabbath</i> 7:00 PM Youth Outlook (youth can begin arriving at 6:30pm) 7:30 PM Small Group Ministry 7:30 PM Write Time Writers' Group	13 <i>Church School</i> <i>Administrator's Day Off</i> <i>Congregational</i> <i>Administrator's Day Off</i> 6:30 PM Junior High OWL Overnight Begins	14 <i>Church School</i> <i>Administrator's Day Off</i> <i>Congregational</i> <i>Administrator's Day Off</i> 9:00 AM - 3:00 PM Pottawatomie Habitat for Humanity Workday 4:00 PM Junior High OWL Overnight Ends
15 9:30 AM & 11:15 AM Worship & Church School; Social Time at 10:30 AM 10:00 AM Hospitality & Fellowship Committee Meeting 11:00 AM Visitors & Newcomers Mini-Orientation Session 11:15 AM Big Ideas Covenant Group 12:30 PM Welcoming Congregation Team Meeting 12:30 PM Winter Playdate (meeting off-site) 12:45 PM Visitors & Newcomers Mini-Orientation Session 7:00 PM Reiki Share	16 7:00 PM "The Bible for UUs" Study Group	17 7:00 PM Reiki Share	18 <i>Church School</i> <i>Administrator's Day Off</i> <i>Senior Minister's Day Off</i> 7:00 PM UU Buddhism Meditation and Study Group 7:30 PM GAS AA	19 <i>Senior Minister's Sabbath</i> 7:00 PM Youth Outlook (youth can begin arriving at 6:30pm) 7:15 PM WomenSpirit Rising	20 <i>Church School</i> <i>Administrator's Day Off</i> <i>Congregational</i> <i>Administrator's Day Off</i>	21 <i>Church School</i> <i>Administrator's Day Off</i> <i>Congregational</i> <i>Administrator's Day Off</i> 8:30 AM Saturday Flick: "The Interrupters" (off-site) 9:00 AM - 3:00 PM Pottawatomie Habitat for Humanity Workday 6:00 PM Games Night
22 9:30 AM & 11:15 AM Worship & Church School; Social Time at 10:30 AM 10:30 AM Communications Committee Meeting 11:15 AM Big Ideas Covenant Group	23 9:00 AM PIONEER NEWSLETTER DEADLINE	24 7:00 PM Hypnosis Info-Intake Session	25 <i>Church School</i> <i>Administrator's Day Off</i> <i>Senior Minister's Day Off</i> 6:00 PM Pioneer Mailing Prep 7:00 PM UU Buddhism Meditation and Study Group 7:30 PM Compassionate Communication Study Group 7:30 PM GAS AA	26 <i>Senior Minister's Sabbath</i> 9:15 AM Simple Living Circle 7:00 PM Youth Outlook (youth can begin arriving at 6:30pm) 7:30 PM Write Time Writers' Group	27 <i>Church School</i> <i>Administrator's Day Off</i> <i>Congregational</i> <i>Administrator's Day Off</i> 8:00 PM Cooper, Nelson, & Early Concert	28 <i>Church School</i> <i>Administrator's Day Off</i> <i>Congregational</i> <i>Administrator's Day Off</i> 9:00 AM - 3:00 PM Pottawatomie Habitat for Humanity Workday 2:00 PM RSVP: Gift Bags for Seniors
29 9:30 AM & 11:15 AM Worship & Church School; Social Time at 10:30 AM 11:15 AM Big Ideas Covenant Group	30 7:30 PM Mid-Year Teachers' Meeting	31 7:30 PM Last Tuesday Group Hypnosis	1 <i>Church School</i> <i>Administrator's Day Off</i> <i>Senior Minister's Day Off</i> 7:00 PM UU Buddhism Meditation and Study Group 7:30 PM GAS AA	2 <i>Senior Minister's Sabbath</i> 7:00 PM Youth Outlook (youth can begin arriving at 6:30pm) 7:15 PM WomenSpirit Rising	3 <i>Church School</i> <i>Administrator's Day Off</i> <i>Congregational</i> <i>Administrator's Day Off</i>	4 <i>Church School</i> <i>Administrator's Day Off</i> <i>Congregational</i> <i>Administrator's Day Off</i> 9:00 AM - 3:00 PM Pottawatomie Habitat for Humanity Workday

The Unitarian Universalist Society of Geneva

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Deb Askelson, *Church School Administrator*
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Our Covenant

(written in 1842)

Being desirous of promoting practical goodness in the world, and of aiding each other in our moral and religious improvement, we have associated ourselves together — not as agreeing in opinion, not as having attained universal truth in belief or perfection in character, but as seekers after truth and goodness.

Our Mission Statement

The Unitarian Universalist Society of Geneva is a diverse, welcoming community which endeavors to make its Covenant a living reality. We provide religious education and opportunities for spiritual growth. We encourage individual and mutual responsibility as together we work to be a liberal religious voice in the community and a force for compassionate social justice.

— adopted by the congregation May 19, 1996

The next Pioneer deadline is January 23, 2012 at 9am. Please send all articles to BOTH office@uusg.org AND minister@uusg.org.

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