

A Newsletter of

The Unitarian Universalist Society of Geneva

THE PIONEER

January—February 2010

Paper Pulpit

The Rev. Dr. Lindsay Bates, Senior Minister

There's so much I want to say – and it all sums up as *Thank you*.

Thank you for taking care of one another while I've been unable to be present. You've always done well with this, but a number of you have taken on more than you might otherwise have been asked to carry. I appreciate your ministry to each other more than I can say.

Thank you for sticking together and taking care of our "Church Institutional." Events are being planned and activities going forward – which is as it should be. It's helped so much to see names starting to appear on signup lists for Greeting and Hosting and participating in special gatherings, where only a month or so ago there were so many blank spaces.

Thank you for showing up – never, *never* underestimate the powerful message and gift of simple presence at worship and church school and special events. I've heard that the weather around Christmas Eve and Boxing Day was somewhat uninviting – but attendance was still respectable, and several of the folks who attended the December 27 potluck brunch have told me how great it was to share that time with other members of our UUSG community.

Thank you, Social Activities & Hospitality Ministry folks, for taking over that potluck (and for having the sense to remember that God does not give points for stupid, and canceling the Saturday evening one!). Thank you for handling the decorating, the un-decorating, and the welcoming of our many newcomers during the holidays.

Special thanks to those who stepped in and took over the Senior Minister's role in worship: Sandi Sumner and Thom Thomas and Julie Riffle and Kelly Herz. Missing both the Pageant and the Christmas Eve services for the first time in 32 years was very hard. But I didn't need to spend any energy worrying about them. Thank you.

Thank you to Monica Jenkins, our YRUU, William Elbert, Jean Pierce and our Social Justice/Peace Ministry folks, who had already agreed to take the lead roles in some of the services in January, February, and March. I do still need the breathing room – and my scheduled late February vacation lets me return to my family in New England to continue the work of dealing with the changes in our lives.

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For the overwhelmingly generous holiday gift bag – the books to come, the snacks, the dinners out, the special "go away and rest!" opportunity, the theater tickets, the notes & cards & artwork – thank you.

And most of all, for your kindness and caring, your understanding and concern for me and my family as we gathered in Massachusetts for my father's unexpected death just two days before Christmas – I have no words. Most adults have faced or will face the death of our parents; it's a rite of passage that disrupts the family on so many levels. When it's the minister's turn to walk that path, it disrupts many other folks' lives, to varying degrees, as well. You have responded with grace and a generosity of spirit that did not at all surprise me (I've known you, after all, for many years) – but nevertheless fills me with a gratitude wider and deeper than I have words to express.

Thank you all ~ and now that I'm back, please do be in touch if you need your minister! The privilege of ministering together with you is the most healing gift I could ever receive. Thank you. Peace ~ **LB**

Religious Education Announcements and Upcoming Events

A Message from Sandi Sumner, Our Acting Director of Religious Education

Hello UUSG Members and Friends!

First and foremost, I would like to thank all of you who have provided support to our Lifespan Religious Education Program and to me as we worked together over the last few months. The immense outpouring of love and support from our congregation has been inspirational and touching. Even with the busy holiday season, our programs didn't miss a beat. That is because of the wonderful efforts of our UUSG Members and Friends! The momentum we have generated at the end of 2009 is carrying over into 2010, and we are looking forward to an exciting year!

It's important to note that we have a religious education program that includes offerings for all ages: **church school on Sunday mornings for children** and **a variety of study groups and classes for older youth and adults**. Junior high youth and senior high youth each have their own youth group events. And Games Nights are for everyone! Check the Upcoming LRE Events section on page 3 or the LRE Board in the Common Room for meeting dates and times. Please join us!

Our Church School spring session begins on Sunday, January 31 and we need you! Our Ministry of Religious Education is one of our core responsibilities as a congregation. Church school is an important way in which we pass on our faith to our children and youth. Please consider volunteering to teach our young people. **We need young adults and elders, parents and those without children, people of all kinds, to become teachers in our classrooms!** Sign-up sheets for teachers and substitute teachers are on the LRE Board in the Common Room. If you have questions, please let me know

The Munch & Learn Monthly Lecture Series continues on Sunday, February 7 at 1pm with "The Axial Age, 800 BCE to 200 BCE: The Birth of Four Main Religions," presented by Bob Atac. Bob summarizes: "The Axial Age, a term coined by German Philosopher Karl Jaspers, is a period from 800 BCE to 200 BCE during which there were similarities of circumstance and thought. These similarities included a search for human meaning and truth along with the rise of a new elite class of religious leaders and thinkers in China, India, and the Occident. The three regions all gave birth to, and then institutionalized, a tradition of traveling scholars, who roamed from city to city to exchange ideas. These scholars were largely from existing religious traditions. During this period the following religions were founded:
in China: Confucianism and Taoism;
in India: Hinduism, Buddhism, Jainism;
in Canaan, Judaism;
in Greece: Platonism and other classical philosophy.
in Persia, the religion of Zoroaster may have been started during this period or around 1,200BCE."

Lecturers are needed for these one-hour sessions. Sessions will be scheduled monthly from October through May. Please consider joining us as a lecturer if you would you like to share your knowledge with others, to share the experience of your visit to somewhere wonderful, or to teach others your talent! The only restriction of the topics' scope is that the content of the talk must be factual and not opinion (no ideology, religion, politics, or anything that provokes rancorous debate!). **Please let us know if you will be attending the talk on February 7 or if you are interested in facilitating a future talk by adding your name to the sign-up sheets on the LRE Board in the Common Room.** Future facilitators, be sure to include your topic choice. If you have any questions, please talk to me. Hope to see you there!

Our Guest at Your Table Program has ended. *If you missed bringing back your Guest at Your Table box, you can pass it along to me at any time.* We will announce the results of our program soon. On behalf of UUSC, we thank everyone for participating and sharing their blessings with a *Guest at Your Table*.

See you on Sunday! Sandi

Upcoming LRE Events

Jan 20, 7:30pm	LRE Committee Meeting
Jan 22, 6:30pm	OWL Overnight Begins
Jan 23, 4:00pm	OWL Overnight Ends
Jan 24, 12:30pm	Taste of New UUs (Snow date: 01/31/10)
Jan 27, 7:00pm	Compassionate Communication Study Group
Jan 30, 10:00am	Teacher Planning Workshop
Jan 30, 6:00pm	YRUU Worship Overnight Planning Begins
Jan 30, 6:30pm	Small Group Ministry
Jan 31, 9:00am	YRUU Worship Overnight Planning Ends
Feb 3, 7:30pm	UU Paganism Study Group
Feb 5, 7:00pm	Special Presentation for 7-8 Grade Youth and Advisors
Feb 7, 1:00pm	Munch & Learn Lecture Series "The Axial Age, 800 BCE to 200 BCE: The Birth of Four Main Religions"
Feb 7, 1:00pm	UU Atheism/Humanism Study Group
Feb 10, 7:00pm	Compassionate Communication Study Group
Feb 11, 7:30pm	Small Group Ministry
Feb 13, 6:30pm	Junior High Youth Group
Feb 17, 7:30pm	LRE Committee Meeting
Feb 19, 7:00pm	Friday Flicks: "The Oath"
Feb 20, 3:30pm	Small Group Ministry
Feb 20, 6:30pm	Games Night!
Feb 24, 7:00pm	Compassionate Communication Study Group
Feb 26, 6:30pm	OWL Overnight Begins
Feb 27, 4:00pm	OWL Overnight Ends
Feb 27, 6:30pm	Small Group Ministry

Weekly Adult RE Opportunities

Every Monday at 7:00pm in the Common Room: "Still Living in the Present Moment"

Every Wednesday at 7:00pm in the Sanctuary: UU Buddhism Meditation & Study Group

Walking Meditation

Back by popular demand, the UU Buddhist Meditation and Study Group invites members and friends to join us for walking meditation on Wednesday, January 27, at 7pm in the UUSG Sanctuary.

On February 10, we'll be starting a new book, "Taking the Leap: Freeing Ourselves from Old Habits and Fears," by Pema Chodron.

Gearing Up for Canvass 2010

Food & Fun

What would Canvass season be without a couple parties?

Canvass Kick-Off Party
Saturday, February 27th at 7pm

Annual Canvass Tea & Celebration
Sunday, March 21st at 1pm

Childcare will be provided for both events.
 Sign up in the Common Room or by contacting
 Katie at 630-232-2350 or office@uusg.org.

How to Pledge and Give

Just like last year, our "Canvass Crew" will contact every member and friend of UUSG personally during the Canvass campaign, March 1-31, 2009. You may complete your pledge form at that time, at one of our Canvass social events, by mailing the form to the office, or online at <http://content.uusg.org/canvass-pledge-form/>.

Pledges are payable beginning July 1, 2010. Many people pay weekly or monthly, while some pay the full pledge amount up front. Please do what is most comfortable for your budget.

IMPORTANT: To assist us in budgeting for the coming year, please make sure that we receive your pledge by the end of the Canvass campaign, March 31, 2009.

Thank you for your generous support!

Nuts and Bolts

The Committees and the Board of Directors are in the process of creating the 2010-2011 budget. Details will be in the next Pioneer.

Looking for a Few Good UUs... We're looking for a few good UUs to help with this year's Canvass. If you're interested in meeting with UUSG members and friends to talk about supporting UUSG, think about becoming a Canvass Crewmember! If you'd like to help out, please contact David deCoriolis or Katie Phillips (office@uusg.org, 630-232-2350).

Canvass Season is March 1-31, 2010.

Coming Soon: Pledge Statements in Your Email Inbox

Be on the lookout this spring for an option to have your pledge statements emailed to you instead of snail-mailed.

We'll save money & trees, and you'll save yourself another piece of paper piled up on your desk!

Poetry Reading Roundtable

Come join a reading roundtable on the last Sunday of each month, 1:30-2:30pm. No performing, no critique, just poetry lovers listening to each other read their favorite poets or perhaps their own work.

No sign-up necessary—drop in as the spirit moves you! The first gathering is on Sunday, January 31.

Tax Time

The 2009 giving statements were mailed this week—if you have any questions or your records don't match ours, talk to Katie in the office (office@uusg.org or 630-232-2350).

"Eat Your Heart Out for UUSG"

Join us for a potluck dinner on Saturday, February 13th at 6:30pm. Here's a chance to enjoy outstanding cuisine, fellowship, and fun while learning what you can do to make UUSG even stronger.

Show UUSG the love by getting involved in a committee (or three!). Members of some of our committees will be on hand to discuss what they do and how you can help.

Bring a heart-healthy dish to pass and a recipe to share. Childcare will be available. Sign up in the Common Room by Wednesday, February 10.

Report from 2009 Illinois Youth Center Project

More than \$2500 was raised at UUSG for our 2009 Illinois Youth Center Project. The money paid for 3 flat-screen TVs, one sturdy treadmill, and 35 individual gift bags. On Sunday, December 20, 15 UUSGers celebrated the holidays with boys who do not receive visitors at the Youth Center.

Without the efforts of volunteers, the project would not be possible. This year we are thanking:

For making items to sell: Melissa Auer, Amy Hong, Julie Riffle

For selling items: Ann Drover, Eleanor Lukazewski, Joan McInnes, Jane Willard

For purchasing gifts and party supplies: Katie Baar, Lisa Gades, Joan McInnes, Vohny Moehling, Jeanne Neltnor, Shawn Thornton

For decorating gift bags: the 11am 5th/6th grade class, led by Shawn Thornton, Diane Handler, & Mary Roberts

For assembling gift bags: Kevin Beyer, Alexander & Stephan Cordogan, Lisa Gades, Maureen McKeough, Jeanne Neltnor, Anna Rosenkrans, Diane & Ryan Thornton

For baking cookies: William Elbert, Jeanne Neltnor

For participating in the party: Melissa Auer, Kevin Beyer, Joe Eddy Brown, Lisa Gades, Diane Handler, Richard Leidolf, David Meehan, Vohny Moehling, Jeanne Neltnor, Jerry Nordengren, Jean Pierce, Lisa Rittenberry, Shawn Thornton, Jan Pritchard Voogd, and Dave Willhite.

Letter from a Youth Center Employee

Hello,

My name is Mary Jane Murray and I am the Lead Drug Counselor on 2 of the Cottages at IYC-St. Charles and today your volunteers are, through their generosity and compassion, visiting some of my boys. I have worked in the field of addictions for 23 years but only in Corrections and here in Illinois for 3 years. I want to take this opportunity to thank you, on behalf of "my" boys and all those whom you are blessing at St Charles with your gift of Christmas Spirit.

I know that you have done this for many years and am sure you don't get the thanks you deserve. As we work with these boys we can only hope and pray that the good we do, the positive messages we give them along with education and behavior modification can elicit positive change. We do our best and I feel fortunate to have volunteers in the Community, such as yourselves, to help us help them through this difficult time of being incarcerated instead of being with family during the Holiday Season.

May you all have a Blessed and Happy Holiday Season with your own Loved Ones,

Mary Jane

Thoughts from a First-Time IYC Visitor by Vohny Moehling

Have you ever thought of attending the Illinois Youth Center December Holiday Party? If yes, here's my advice ... Sign up early and provide Jean Pierce with your social security number so a background check can be completed in time for the get-together. Dress casually, but warmly - the campus is frigid. Don't plan on bringing your purse, briefcase, or cell phone inside the IYC buildings. Prepare yourself for seeing rows of leg irons upon entry to the main building. Jean provides an activity schedule for the afternoon and assigns first-time visitors with seasoned UUSGers. We were told the IYC residents attending the party were chosen for their good behavior and that many received few visitors. Leave any other expectations at home and plan to go with the flow. I kept a low profile, did a lot of listening, and followed the lead of my seasoned partner, Shawn.

Some of the things I found out:

- many of the attendees had been incarcerated for less than 9 months and didn't know what our visit involved. Still, they had shined their shoes, coifed their hair and looked "party-ready."
- being able to choose from a variety of cookies and pop was especially appreciated. They couldn't quite believe that Jeannie Neltnor and William Elbert had made the cookies just for them.
- they were willing to participate in the activities
- many in attendance expected to be released in January 2010. Then they wanted to earn GEDs and go on to college. One kept repeating that he was going to be an "entrepreneur." He plans to own several apartment buildings and promised to set aside an apartment in each building for a homeless family. Another said he would become president in 2024, "just like Barack Obama."

I left hoping that their dreams come true.

More Social Justice News

Workshop on Socially Responsible Investing to be Offered at UUSG

Anyone who would like to attend a free workshop about Socially Responsible Investing is encouraged to contact Jean Pierce through the church office at 630-232-2350 or office@uusg.org. Bob Leoni is an enthusiastic advocate for the practice. Bob's work is founded on objective financial advice that focuses on creating, managing, and protecting wealth for families and individuals. His goal is to raise awareness about Socially Responsible Investing and leave people with the message that "your money has power, and your investments have influence." The workshop will address the following topics:

- Socially Responsible Investing: What is it? How is it different?
- Examples: Does it really create change?
- Will I sacrifice returns?
- Where are the opportunities in 2010 for SRI?
- What's the first step I can take?

The timing for the workshop will be determined by participants.

NOTE: UUSG invests in a socially responsible way, and these investments have been paying off.

Helping Haiti In addition to the 18 people who packed meals for starving children in Haiti (see the RSVP article on page 7), 55 people signed the petition for the State Department to issue visas immediately to Haitian orphans who have been adopted by US citizens. Finally, \$4562 was mailed to Doctors Without Borders on Tuesday, earmarked for their Haitian Relief efforts.

February Friday Flick Premiering at Sundance!

On Friday, February 19 at 7pm, we are privileged to be able to show "The Oath." Directed by Laura Poitras and filmed in Yemen, this film is the second installment in a planned trilogy that includes her previous film "My Country, My Country." That film was nominated for an Academy Award, Independent Spirit Award, and Emmy Award. The world premier of "The Oath" is this month, as part of the prestigious Sundance Film Festival's U.S. Documentary Competition.

According to information provided by the film festival, "'The Oath' is the interlocking drama of two brothers-in-law, Abu Jandal and Salim Hamdam, whose associations with al-Qaeda in the 1990s propelled them on divergent courses. The film delves into Abu Jandal's daily life as a taxi driver in Yemen and Hamdan's military tribunal in Guantanamo Bay prison. Abu Jandal and Hamdan's personal stories—how they came to serve as Osama bin Laden's bodyguard and driver respectively—act as prisms through which to humanize and contextualize a world the Western media demonizes. As Hamdan's trial progresses, his military lawyers challenge fundamental flaws in the court system. As charismatic Abu Jandal dialogues with his son, Muslim students, and journalists, he generously unveils the complex evolution of his belief system since 9/11."

According to Poitras, "This is definitely the hardest film I've ever worked on. Working in Baghdad was much easier by comparison. The sensitivity of the issues in this film added a level of stress and anxiety that I've never experienced. Everyone who worked on the project took on this intense pressure."

Thanks to Laura's aunt and uncle, Gail and George Tattersfield, UUSG has the extraordinary opportunity to show this critically-acclaimed film even before it has been released to the public. In order to prepare for the large number of people anticipated at the screening, please sign up on the Social Justice bulletin board to give us an idea of how many to expect.

A Bit More Social Justice News

February RSVP

Thank you to our January 16 volunteers at Feed My Starving Children: Laura, Larry, Ian, Hannah, & Aron Bartoszek; Kevin Beyer & Lisa Gades; Monica Gephart; Maureen & Merryn McKeough; Vohny Moehling; Page Poris; Velma Powers; Julie Riffle & Thom Thomas; Lois Ulreich, and A.J. & Caleb Warren.

We packed 16,416 daily meals, enough to feed 45 children for an entire year! Response was overwhelming, and we are sorry that we had to turn some of you away. Please look for an opportunity to volunteer for this organization again in June, and watch the Pioneer for other monthly volunteer opportunities in the meantime.

In February, join us for BINGO and good conversation with the residents of the Provena Geneva Care Center! All ages are welcome to join us in playing BINGO and/or visiting residents. Provena provides rehabilitation services and intermediate & skilled nursing care for seniors. For more information, visit their website at <http://www.provena.org/seniors/body.cfm?id=1972&oTopID=201>

Date	Location	Ages	Requirements	Activities
February 20 2-4pm	Provena Geneva Care Center	All ages	None	Bingo, snacks, and conversations

Work for Social Justice and Get Paid – As a Census Taker

Will you be available to work 20-40 hours per week on evenings and weekends this spring? If so, you have an opportunity to become a Census taker.

This task is essential for social justice so that communities get their fair share of federal dollars for public programs in education, community health care, public transportation, housing, and other areas. Census counts also directly impact a community's political voice because the numbers inform voting districts and determine how communities are represented.

And yet, history has taught us that many communities are undercounted, or are at higher risk of not being counted at all. These communities include:

- People and families that live in rental property
- Transient communities, such as the homeless and migrant workers
- Native Americans and poor, rural communities
- Immigrants (census counts are for everyone, regardless of citizenship status)
- The elderly and people who live in group housing

For information, see www.2010.census.gov and call 847-628-9840 to find out when tests will be given in your area. Census takers in the northern Illinois region are paid between \$11.50 and \$18.25 per hour, and receive 4 days of paid training.

Giving “Beyond Our Walls”

Our regular December BOW collection was earmarked for Doctors Without Borders, so it made sense to take another collection for this organization after we learned about the devastation in Haiti.

On Tuesday morning, we sent \$4562 to Doctors Without Borders, earmarked for their relief efforts in Haiti. A few more donations have come in, so Katie will send another check next week. If you'd like to contribute, please write a check to UUSG with “Doctors Without Borders” in the memo line.

February Beyond Our Walls

Typically, Beyond Our Walls Offerings are collected on the 2nd weekend of each month. But recently we have had some atypical months.

In February, the collection will be taken on the 3rd weekend – February 20-21, when YRUU youth present the services and raise money for their annual summer Habitat for Humanity project. This summer, our crew will be returning to Grand Rapids, Minnesota, July 10-18.

Volunteer Headquarters

No More Coffee at Social Hour?!

Wow! The Social Activities & Hospitality Committee was thrilled to see that ALL of the January social hour hosting slots were filled before the end of December!

Since we finally may have struck on a system that works, we'll repeat the process for February social hours. Coffee will be available in February **ONLY if ALL of the February hosting slots are filled by the end of January.**

The remaining slots are:

February 6, 6pm
 February 7, 10am
 February 7, 12pm
 February 13, 6pm
 February 14, 12pm
 February 20, 6pm
 February 21, 10am
 February 27, 6pm
 February 28, 10am
 February 28, 12pm

Sign up in the Common Room or online at <http://content.uusg.org/greeters-and-social-hour-hosts/>.

Regardless of whether we have coffee or not, social hour still continues, and we hope you'll stick around to visit with old and new friends.



Greeting in January

January 24, 5pm
 January 30, 5pm
 January 31, 9am
 January 31, 11am

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/>.

Volunteer Appreciation

We send our heartfelt appreciation to:

Jeff & Christopher Stibal, who replaced exterior light bulbs on Christmas Eve.

Helen Hawkins' December chauffeurs: Jenny Montgomery, Jim O'Malley, Lou Pierce, Page Poris, Kathy Meier, Gloria & Stu Mansfield, Betty Bristol, Katie Phillips, Jenny Stewart, and Joan McInnes.

Molly Mackay Zacker, for picking up dish detergent for the church kitchen, and **Jenny Montgomery**, for delivering it.

Shawn Thornton, who donated some much-needed large binders to the church office.

Our January Lazarus House Volunteers: The Haslett and Brousse Families made dinner; Beth Johnson & her family made lunches; and Maureen McKeough stayed overnight. We need volunteers for the upcoming months—to sign up, see the Social Justice bulletin board or go to <http://content.uusg.org/lazarus-house/>.

Committee Connections

The Communications Committee and the Green Sanctuary Committee are actively seeking new members. If you'd like to know more about these or any other our committees, talk to Katie in the office or plan to attend the "Eat Your Heart Out for UUSG" Potluck on February 13, where you can learn more about all our committees (more details about the event are on page 4).

Volunteers for Blood Drive

UUSG is sponsoring a blood drive on Saturday, February 6 and we'd love you to join us!

If giving blood isn't your thing, please consider signing up to bring snacks and drinks for our brave donors.

More info about the drive is on page 10 and you can sign up to donate or bring food by contacting the church office or signing up in the Common Room.

Green Corner

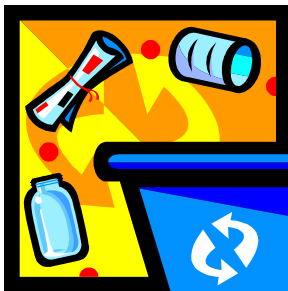
Why Recycle?

From Green Living Tips
(www.greenlivingtips.com)

We know recycling is beneficial, but here are some facts (some may be startling) that may make you think seriously about the importance of recycling.

1. About 40% of the waste in the U.S. is paper, but nationwide we only recycle about 25-30% of our paper waste.
2. Americans throw away close to the equivalent of 30 million trees a year, just from newsprint alone.
3. In America we discard enough motor oil per year to fill 120 supertankers.
4. In the United States right now, landfills are filling up and closing at the rate of approximately 2 per day.
5. By recycling an aluminum can per day we can save enough energy to operate a television set for 3 hours.
6. A glass bottle thrown away today will still be here in the year 3000.
7. In the United States, one in every six trucks is a garbage truck.
8. You would be able to circle the earth 436 times per year with the Styrofoam cups that are used in the United States.

These statistics are accurate and valid; they help to illustrate the importance of recycling in the United States. Start taking an active role in helping your community recycle to better your environment and prevent global warming.



Take Simple Steps to Live Green

From Conservation International
(www.conservation.org/act/simplesteps/Pages/simplesteps.aspx)

Green living is not only about people. It is also about plants, animals, and the places they live. Green living means thinking about climate change and energy use, as well as biological diversity and the well-being of those who draw their livelihoods from nature.

We know this takes effort. Here is a useful list of simple steps you can take to begin thinking greener, acting greener, and living greener.

1. Be Informed

The first step toward being a responsible green citizen is knowing the issues and taking time to think about them.

2. Travel Sustainably

Next time you go on vacation or need to take a business trip, consider ways you can cut down on carbon emissions.

3. Be a Green Consumer

It is becoming easier and easier to know what effects the things you buy have on the environment.

4. Eat Green

Environmentally-friendly eating habits are easy and healthy.

5. Explore Biodiversity

The diversity of nature is everywhere. So why not roll up your sleeves and see what's been living right outside your door?

6. Enhance Your Local Biodiversity

Contributing to diversity in your own neighborhood can go a long way towards feeling good every day.

7. Minimize Your Carbon Footprint

By reducing the energy and fossil fuels you use, you are saving the environment from further damage.

8. Offset Your Carbon Footprint

After you have done everything you can to minimize your carbon footprint, then you can think about how to offset what residual impacts remains.

9. Influence Your Friends, Family, and Community

A green You is a great role model for your friends, family, and colleagues.

10. Support Conservation International

By supporting CI you are maximizing your efforts by joining a larger team.

Circles of Life

We send our condolences to many UUSG members & friends this month—Mary Steskal's mother's died shortly before Christmas; our Senior Minister's dad passed away on December 23; Laura Laughlin's dad died on New Year's Day; and Lily Phillips's friend passed away in Texas. To everyone who lost family and friends this holiday season, our hearts go out to you.

We do have some good news from Bob Brubaker & Don Brod—they're recovering nicely from their surgeries and will soon be back with us.

Jim Jenkins' piece "Monkey Mind" was recently awarded "Best in Show" at the Water Street Studio Winter Show in Batavia. Many church folks attended the show last weekend and enjoyed seeing more of Jim's work and his studio.

We send our best wishes to Diana Carr, who recently moved to Denver with her new husband!

Sasha the Wonder Malamute will soon be even more wonderful! She's having her right hip replaced in mid-April and will be back to UUSG (she is a working breed, after all) in June or July. In the meantime, she's keeping the staff (and their blood pressure!) under control. Katie will be working from home for a few weeks in late April and early May while Sasha recovers—details on how to get ahold of her will be publicized later this spring.

Lastly, George Hickman sent us this note about his 90th birthday party: "To David DeCoriolis, the Board, committees, and all who prepared and participated in the celebration of my 90th birthday. The love and affection showered on me was heartwarming. I am glad that my children could witness the many hugs and good wishes that came my way. Regretfully, Mary could not live to see this day. She, who gave me such happiness, and who brought us to UUSG in 1982. Again, my thanks to all who made this day so special and filled with wonder for me."

Give a Little Bit...

Of your blood, that is! Heartland Blood Center will be bringing their blood drive coach to UUSG on **Saturday, February 6, from 9am until 12pm.**

You can sign up at the Social Justice bulletin board in the Common Room or by contacting Katie at office@uusg.org or 630-232-2350.

Taste of New UUs

Are you new to UUSG? Want to learn more about us and Unitarian Universalism? Then join us for a "Taste of New UUs," offered on Sunday, January 24 from 12:30pm to 3:00pm.

Rev. Dr. Lindsay Bates will lead the session with support from the Membership Committee. A light lunch will be served. Please RSVP to office@uusg.org or by signing up on the "Taste of New UUs" clipboard in the Common Room.

Childcare will be provided. Questions? Contact Jill Brown or any membership committee person during social hours.

Got a Song In Your Heart?

The UUSG Teen/Adult Choir will be singing on Easter Sunday, April 4, 2010. We welcome new and returning members!

Rehearsals are Sundays, 3/7, 3/14, 3/28 in the Sanctuary, 12:30-2:00 PM. (Note: No rehearsal 3/21) We warm-up at 8:15am prior to the Easter Services.

Please contact director Ruth Cavanaugh through choir@uusg.org if you plan to join us or would like more information.



A Chair to Spare?

We're looking for a small chair to place behind the piano for use by the pianist when he or she is not playing. It will need to be in a style that fits with the other two chancel chairs, but can be smaller (like a dining room chair). All three chairs will be recovered with matching fabric.

If you have a chair to spare, please contact Katie in the office. Thanks from the Sanctuary Aesthetics Committee.

Our calendar is provided on the next page, and is current as of January 20, 2010. For the most up-to-date calendar information, please visit our Website Calendar – go to www.uusg.org and follow the links to the Interactive Online Calendar. You can download a printable version if you like; the Calendar site has the instructions.

NEXT PIONEER DEADLINE

The deadline for submission to this monthly newsletter, the PIONEER, is generally 9:00 a.m. on the third Friday of the month.

The next deadline for articles is **Friday, February 19, at 9:00 a.m.**

FEBRUARY 2010

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
31 8:15 AM Teen/Adult Choir Warm-Up 9:00 AM & 11 AM Worship & Church School; Social Hours at 10 AM & NOON 9:00 AM YRUU Worship Overnight Planning Ends 11:00 AM Big Ideas Covenant Group 12:30 PM Taste of New UUs (snow date) 1:30 PM Poetry Reading Roundtable	1 1:00 PM Staff Meeting 7:00 PM AA Group Meeting 7:00 PM Adult RE - "Still Living in the Present Moment" 7:30 PM Technology Committee Meeting	2 7:00 PM Sacred Harp Singing 7:30 PM Program & Administrative Councils	3 <i>Senior Minister's Day Off</i> 12:00 PM "Healthy Habits" Group 7:00 PM UU Buddhism Meditation and Study Group 7:30 PM GAS AA 7:30 PM UU Paganism Study Group	4 <i>Senior Minister's Sabbath</i> 7:00 PM Youth Outlook (youth can begin arriving at 6:30pm) 7:15 PM WomenSpirit Rising	5 7:00 PM Special Presentation for 7-8 Grade Youth and Advisors	6 9:00 AM Blood Drive 1:00 PM Committee on Ministries Meeting 5:00 PM Worship (childcare available for young children); Social Hour at 6 PM
7 9:00 AM & 11 AM Worship & Church School; Social Hours at 10 AM & NOON 10:00 AM Canvass Crew Training 10:30 AM Finance Committee Meeting 11:00 AM Big Ideas Covenant Group 1:00 PM "Munch & Learn" Lecture Series 1:00 PM UU Atheism/Humanism Study Group	8 1:00 PM Staff Meeting 1:30 PM Women's Guild 7:00 PM AA Group Meeting 7:00 PM Adult RE - "Still Living in the Present Moment" 7:00 PM Reiki Discussion Group	9 7:30 PM Board of Directors	10 <i>Senior Minister's Day Off</i> 7:00 PM Compassionate Communication Study Group 7:00 PM UU Buddhism Meditation and Study Group 7:30 PM GAS AA	11 <i>Senior Minister's Sabbath</i> 7:00 PM Youth Outlook (youth can begin arriving at 6:30pm) 7:30 PM Small Group Ministry	12 7:00 PM Blue Papaya Meeting	13 5:00 PM Worship (childcare available for young children); Social Hour at 6 PM 6:30 PM "Eat Your Heart Out for UUSG" Potluck 6:30 PM Junior High Youth Group
14 9:00 AM & 11 AM Worship & Church School; Social Hours at 10 AM & NOON 10:00 AM Canvass Crew Training 10:00 AM Commit to Knit 10:15 AM Social Activities & Hospitality Committee Meeting 11:00 AM Big Ideas Covenant Group 12:30 PM Membership Committee Meeting 12:30 PM Social Justice Committee Meeting 2:00 PM Lay Ministers' Meeting 7:00 PM 2nd Sunday (Story Tellers) Covenant Group	15 <i>Acting DRE Off Today</i> 1:00 PM Staff Meeting 7:00 PM AA Group Meeting 7:00 PM Adult RE - "Still Living in the Present Moment"	16 7:00 PM Reiki Share 7:00 PM Sacred Harp Singing	17 Ash Wednesday <i>Senior Minister's Day Off</i> 7:00 PM UU Buddhism Meditation and Study Group 7:30 PM GAS AA 7:30 PM LRE Committee Meeting	18 <i>Senior Minister's Sabbath</i> 7:00 PM Green Sanctuary Committee Meeting 7:00 PM Youth Outlook (youth can begin arriving at 6:30pm) 7:15 PM WomenSpirit Rising	19 9:00 AM PIONEER deadline 6:00 PM Scanlan/Stewart Wedding Celebration Rehearsal 7:00 PM Friday Flicks: "The Oath"	20 10:00 AM Scanlan/Stewart Wedding Celebration 3:30 PM Small Group Ministry 5:00 PM Worship (childcare available for young children); Social Hour at 6 PM 6:30 PM Games Night!
21 9:00 AM & 11 AM Worship & Church School; Social Hours at 10 AM & NOON 10:15 AM Communications Committee Meeting 11:00 AM Big Ideas Covenant Group 7:00 PM Reiki Share	22 <i>Senior Minister on Vacation</i> 1:00 PM Staff Meeting 7:00 PM AA Group Meeting 7:00 PM Adult RE - "Still Living in the Present Moment"	23 <i>Senior Minister on Vacation</i>	24 <i>Senior Minister on Vacation</i> 6:00 PM Pioneer Mailing Prep 7:00 PM Compassionate Communication Study Group 7:00 PM UU Buddhism Meditation and Study Group 7:30 PM GAS AA	25 <i>Senior Minister on Vacation</i> 9:15 AM Simple Living Circle 7:00 PM Youth Outlook (youth can begin arriving at 6:30pm)	26 <i>Senior Minister on Vacation</i> 6:30 PM OWL Program Begins 7:00 PM Blue Papaya Meeting	27 <i>Senior Minister on Vacation</i> 8:00 AM Private Recital Rehearsal 4:00 PM OWL Program Ends 5:00 PM Worship (childcare available for young children); Social Hour at 6 PM 6:30 PM Small Group Ministry 7:00 PM Canvass Kick-off Party
28 <i>Senior Minister on Vacation</i> 9:00 AM & 11 AM Worship & Church School; Social Hours at 10 AM & NOON 11:00 AM Big Ideas Covenant Group 1:00 PM Private Recital 1:30 PM Poetry Reading Roundtable	1 <i>Senior Minister on Vacation</i> 1:00 PM Staff Meeting 7:00 PM AA Group Meeting 7:00 PM Adult RE - "Still Living in the Present Moment" 7:30 PM Technology Committee Meeting	2 <i>Senior Minister on Vacation</i> 7:00 PM Sacred Harp Singing 7:30 PM Program & Administrative Councils	3 <i>Senior Minister on Vacation</i> 12:00 PM "Healthy Habits" Group 7:00 PM UU Buddhism Meditation and Study Group 7:30 PM GAS AA 7:30 PM UU Paganism Study Group	4 <i>Senior Minister on Vacation</i> 7:00 PM Youth Outlook (youth can begin arriving at 6:30pm) 7:15 PM WomenSpirit Rising	5 <i>Senior Minister on Vacation</i>	6 <i>Senior Minister on Vacation</i> 5:00 PM Worship (childcare available for young children); Social Hour at 6 PM

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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 February 19, 2010 at 9am. Please send all articles to BOTH office@uusg.org AND minister@uusg.org.

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