



THE PIONEER

November-December 2009

Paper Pulpit

The Rev. Dr. Lindsay Bates, Senior Minister

It's starting to feel like we're finding our balance again.

The Congregational Conversations were helpful – I hope to those who participated, but certainly to the Committee on Ministries, the Board, and me. Some of the issues people expressed concerns about are being addressed. Some of the frustrations are shared by the church's leadership. We're all, for example, eager (if that's the correct word) to see the full set of Exit Interviews. We weren't able to get the Board's interview scheduled until November; it took place on November 10. Allowing time for Ian Evison (our District Congregational Services Director) to write up his summary and for the Board to look it over and agree that it does indeed reflect what they said, we should soon have the notebook of information related to Adam's decision to leave UUSG ready for those of you who want to see it. Katie emailed Ian a couple days ago and expects to have the interviews within a week; she'll let everyone know when she has them.

If you raised an issue or concern – or you weren't at one of those gatherings but something is still on your mind – the opportunities for conversation do continue. Board members, Committee on Ministries members, Worship Associates (if your questions are specific to what goes on in the Sanctuary), and I are all available to listen and help get concerns addressed. It's amazing what we can accomplish when we're working together. But it's more than a little crazy-making to discover that someone is upset but not willing to talk with anyone who could help do something about it. I am grateful and appreciative beyond words for those few of you who have been willing to talk with me directly about things in sermons or the larger UUSG life that have bothered you – thank you! If we are unwilling or afraid to talk with one another, especially when we're dealing with differences of opinion or competing interests or matters that might not look easily resolved, then we are failing each other and betraying our Covenant. If we can't work together here at UUSG, we're not going to get very far persuading anyone "out there" to be more respectful or involved or compassionate or responsible. If we don't live it, we can't teach it.

Speaking of our Covenant, several folks have asked for copies of the Nov. 14/15 sermon on Congregational Peacemaking. Our sound system, alas, gave in to the forces of entropy and chaos, and we had neither amplification nor recording. But I do have the sermon text, now translated into English,

available to anyone who would like to read it. If you were one of those who asked for the transcript, let Katie or me know. We'll get it to you by hard copy or email, as you prefer.

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Let's end with some exciting good news. It's looking like we may indeed be a Teaching Congregation again! A Meadville/Lombard student, having heard good things (*very* good things) about us from our recent Ministerial Interns, has asked if we might be offering an Internship in 2010-11. Our Finance Committee and Board have agreed in principle that this should be possible. I've had time to think about the work involved and decided that, since it's something that I know I'm good at, you're good at, and we've all enjoyed greatly, I am indeed ready to take it on again. The student has visited UUSG and no one scared her away. If you have thoughts, concerns, would like to be considered for the Ministerial Internship Advisory Committee, please do talk with me.

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Paper Pulpit, continued...

And finally, Chip Roush, our Intern in 2003-04, will be back in our UUSG pulpit on Memorial Day Weekend! We got it lined up while he and I were in Oneonta, NY, celebrating Craig Schwalenberg's Installation. I'm hoping we might get all of our former Interns back for visits over these next couple of years – Lillie has retired, but Linda, Chip, Craig, and Bret are all out there doing good ministry. We're right to be proud of our part in their lives.

See you in church! **LB**

Religious Education Announcements and Upcoming Events

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

Upcoming Adult & Youth LRE Events

Nov 25, 7:00pm	Compassionate Communication Study Group
Nov 28, 6:30pm	Small Group Ministry
Dec 2, 7:30pm	UU Paganism Study Group
Dec 6, 1:00pm	UU Atheism/Humanism Study Group
Dec 6, 1:00pm	Munch & Learn Lecture Series: "The Principles of Relativity"
Dec 9, 7:00pm	Compassionate Communication Study Group
Dec 12, 6:30pm	Junior High Youth Group
Dec 16, 7:30pm	LRE Committee Meeting
Dec 18, 7:00pm	Friday Flick
Dec 19, 3:30pm	Small Group Ministry
Dec 19, 6:30pm	Games Night!
Dec 23, 7:00pm	Compassionate Communication Study Group
Dec 26, 6:30pm	Small Group Ministry

Weekly Adult RE Opportunities

Mondays, 7pm, "Still Living in the Present Moment"
Weds, 7pm, UU Buddhism Meditation & Study Group

A Reminder...

Our Acting DRE, Sandi Sumner, is on Medical Leave until Dec. 6.

If you are a teacher and need help finding a substitute teacher, please contact Jenny Montgomery. If you need information about a lesson or church school, please contact the LRE Committee Member who represents the grade level you are teaching.

For all other matters that you need resolved before December 6, please contact our Congregational Administrator at office@uusg.org or 630-232-2350.

It's time to welcome a Guest at Your Table!

On Saturday, November 22, 2009, we began our Guest at Your Table program. During worship services, UUSG members and friends received a Guest at Your Table box along with a copy of *Stories of Hope*, written to teach children, youth, and adults how the Unitarian Universalist Service Committee helps to change our world for the better. The stories introduce you to human rights champions, like Jacinta, a tailor and single mother of two in Kenya who is empowering other informal workers and street vendors to stand up for their rights. *Stories of Hope* is the focal point of the Guest at Your Table experience, connecting UUs to real people whose lives have been transformed by the shared struggle for human rights.

In each household, the colorful Guest at Your Table box, with photographs of special guests from around the world, is placed in a prominent place in your home, such as the dining room table. Over the next several weeks, get to know your special guests by reading their real-life stories from *Stories of Hope*. Families and friends will learn about real struggles for justice in the United States and around the world. When we share our blessings with our guests, we ensure that UUSC and people like Jacinta can continue their important work. And thanks to the Unitarian Universalist Congregation at Shelter Rock in Manhasset, N.Y., gifts of \$100 or more are eligible to be matched, dollar for dollar, doubling your good works!

If you miss picking up your Guest at Your Table box and *Stories of Hope*, you can do so by talking with Sandi Sumner, Acting DRE, at lre@uusg.org or 630-232-2350 x224. If you would prefer not to bring home a box, you can take a donation envelope (just see Sandi!) or support UUSC directly online at www.uusc.org.

The 2009 Cookie Walk

Check the Cookie Jar on the Volunteer Opportunities bulletin board in the Common Room to see how many cookies we have and how many more we need to reach our goal of 600 dozen cookies!

As of Tuesday, November 24, we have 318 dozen cookies made and 282 dozen to go!

Help us reach our goal by signing up at Clipboard Central in the Common Room or at <http://content.uusg.org/cookie-walk/>.

You can help by doing any of the following:

- * Bake cookies (6, 12, or 18 dozen)
- * Help prepare for the event on Thursday, December 3, 6:30-8:30pm
- * Work at the event itself. Two shifts are available: 3:45-5:30pm and 5:15-7pm.



If you plan to bake cookies

If you elect to bake, we ask that you make festive holiday cookies (the plain ones, as tasty as they may be, just don't sell as well). As in prior years, please bring your goodies in disposable containers (shirt boxes, disposable plates, etc.— things that you do not want back and are recyclable). And, since we now have two duplicate tables of cookies for the Cookie Walk (to reduce the wait time for the cookie walkers), we ask that you provide two identical sets of whatever you bring so that we can put one on each table.

Cookie drop-off will take place on Thursday, December 3rd, from 6:30 to 8:30pm.

If you plan to help set up

We set up on Thursday evening before the walk from 6:30pm to 8:30pm. The set-up includes assembling boxes, setting up tables, arranging the cookies, etc. The tasks are simple, we go at a leisurely pace, and talk a lot. You may sit or stand as you prefer. Broken cookies may be sampled this night only.

If you plan to help at the event

Helping at the event itself is a little more hectic, but something everyone should experience at least once! There are a couple of sitting jobs, but for most of them you must stand. This includes a variety of tasks such as keeping the cookie tables filled with cookies, taping boxes, recycling containers, and handing out gloves. It's great fun!

Two shifts are available: 3:45-5:30pm and 5:15-7pm. Note that parking can be difficult for the second shift. You might want to arrive earlier to ensure you can find a place to park.

Questions? Need a Recipe? Contact Elba Karim or Sherri Casterline.

CLIP 'N' SAVE: Plan to Join Us for Our Winter Holiday Services & Celebrations

Saturday, November 28, 2 PM through 8 PM A special Holiday Celebration for all ages, decorating our sanctuary, Common Room and other parts of our buildings for as many Winter Holidays as we can, with a special "Hanging of the Greens" service of songs and stories at 5pm and a "Stone Soup Potluck" at 6pm

Sunday, November 29 Regular worship services with a sermon by the Rev. C. Scot Giles

Saturday, December 19, & Sunday, December 20 Our annual Holiday Pageant at all services

Thursday, December 24 – Christmas Eve Services

5 PM – our "Family Friendly" service especially for young children

8 PM – Candlelight Choir Service

10 PM – Candlelight Meditative Service

Saturday, December 26 & Sunday, December 27

All-church Boxing Day Potluck & All-church Post-Boxing-Day Potluck

Last Chance: Get to Know Your Fellow UUSGers at Circle Suppers!

Deadline -- November 29, 2009

Circle Suppers involve revolving groups of participants who take turns hosting or providing a part of the meal for each of four monthly Suppers. Participating pairs or singles will be grouped with different participants for each of the four Suppers, which are held in January, February, March, and April. The designated guests at each Supper will be pre-assigned the tasks of bringing salad, entrée, or dessert. Designated hosts may provide hors d'oeuvres, bread, or vegetable, etc., as well as china, glassware, flatware, and a place to dine. If you wish to have wine or other adult drinks, BYO.

"When I was a new member, the Circle Suppers provided a great way to meet fellow UUSGers," said one participant, "I've gotten to know so many people and made several dear friends as a result."

If you would like to participate in the Circle Supper 2010 Program, as either a "single" or a "pair" (multiple singles may sign up together), and as either a regular or an alternate participant, please complete a sign-up form at church, sign up online at <http://content.uusg.org/circle-supper-sign-up/>, or contact Jim Burke.



Luncheon Invitation

On Monday December 14th, the **UUSG Women's Guild** will be lunching at 12:30pm at the Mill Race Inn in Geneva.

UUSG members & friends of all ages & genders are welcome!

If you'd like to join us, sign up in the Common Room or contact Katie Phillips at 630-232-2350 or office@uusg.org.

Saturday Worship Service Update

There had been plans to reevaluate our Saturday services at the end of this fall, based upon attendance. There are several reasons, but the basic one is this: the services tend to be better when there are more of us. This fall we have numbered 35 or more only 30% of the time. 2/3 of our Saturdays, we have been fewer than 30. So we need to be asking, do we really have enough interest to justify continuing Saturday services?

However, we also know that there are many who cannot attend on Sundays, and that not a few of our Saturday regulars have been dealing with – or worried about dealing with – various entertaining versions of influenza or other life challenges.

Therefore, we will postpone any decisions about changes until the end of the church year. If Saturday is an option for you, please do attend when you can, encourage your friends to join you on Saturday evening, and if you have any suggestions that might make the Saturday service hour more appealing, please do let Lindsay or Katie or any Board member or any Worship Associate or any member of our Committee on Ministries know.

(And just in case you'd not yet heard, we are indeed experimenting with returning special Social Hour snacks to the Saturday services ONLY, for those who especially enjoy preparing that form of hospitality. William's pies, Kevin & Linda's wine & cheese, the occasional pot of soup, a pile of special cookies – Saturdays only, until we again have enough Sunday volunteers willing to make it happen then as well.)

Sing With Us!

The UUSG Teen/Adult Choir would like YOU to consider joining us in song! Our next singing opportunity is the 8pm Christmas Eve Candlelight Service.

Rehearsals are on:

Sunday, Dec. 6, 12:15-1:30pm, downstairs
 Sunday, Dec. 13, 12:15-1:30pm, Sanctuary
 Sunday, Dec. 20: 12:15-2:15pm, Sanctuary

Vocal warm-up on:

Thursday, Dec. 24, 6:30pm Sanctuary

We will be wearing black that evening, with our green stoles. Please contact director Ruth Cavanaugh (choir@uusg.org) if you'd like to participate.

Social Justice News

Current Status of Congregational Peace Commitment

Based on feedback received in October, below are the latest drafts of the Inward and Societal parts of the Congregational Peace Commitment. Your input is always welcome. Please either contact Jean Pierce through office@uusg.org or 630-232-2350. You can also give input online at <http://content.uusg.org/peacemaking-pledge/>

A) Inward Peacemaking

We seek to develop peace and acceptance within ourselves. To this end, we recognize the importance of

- * Taking time to look within, to know and respect our own needs and feelings, and to develop a sense of centeredness around our own deepest values
- * Educating people of all ages about effective approaches to inward peacemaking.

In addition, we support efforts of the church to

- * Provide opportunities for learning how to deeply meditate and for practicing it
- * Sponsor groups which focus on meditation

D) Societal Peacemaking

We endorse changes needed to end oppression and/or violence, and we seek to act as a conspicuous witness for peace in our society. To this end, we support efforts of our Lifespan Religious Education to provide education which

- * Challenges racism, classism, sexism, etc.
- * Promotes respect and acceptance rather than glorifying verbal and physical violence.

Furthermore, we support efforts of our Social Justice Committee to

- * Conduct collections for organizations which seek to build a just and peaceful society by promoting economic justice and human rights and by caring for those who are victims of injustice and violence.
- * Provide opportunities for people to volunteer for organizations which promote justice in our society
- * Promote events such as movies, speakers, and peace vigils which focus attention of the community on justice and peace.
- * Collaborate with other churches and organizations which promote justice and peace.

Many Liked it HOT!

The Chili Supper on November 14 may be considered a joyfully chaotic successful FUNdraiser. Ten chili chefs contributed their talents and recipes to the event. (**Warning:** each chef retained the right to creatively enhance the chilis which we actually tasted!) Four of the chilis received much coveted prizes (smiling chili antenna toppers). Ryan Wheeler won the award for the spiciest with his *Chipotle Chili*, Jennifer Briggs cooked the best example of Universalist with her *All-American Chili*, Emily Smith earned an antenna topper for *Spamalot Chili*, and Melissa Auer prepared the best vegetarian chili with her version of the *Kowalski Family "Tulsa" Chili*.

During the evening, people contributed \$474 to Feed My Starving Children. These funds will provide more than 2700 meals for malnourished children around the world. The next opportunity for UUSGers ages 8 and older to assemble these meals at the Aurora facility will be on Saturday, June 19 from 11:30am to 1:30pm.

Special thanks are due to the following people who helped with the planning, setting up, and cleaning up for the event: Betty Bristol, Doreen Christiani, David deCoriolis, Ann & Al Drover, Louise Haslett, Hillary Johnston, Jeanne Neltner, Linda O'Neill, Glenda Peck, Jean Pierce, Rhonda Robinson, Tracy Rosenkrans, Hal Schulman, and Gail & George Tattersfield.

A Little More Social Justice News

Volunteer Opportunities for Illinois Youth Center Project

People have already begun work planning and preparing for our annual gifts and party for boys incarcerated at the Illinois Youth Center in St. Charles. This year the party is scheduled for Sunday, December 20. We'll gather at the church at 12:15pm that day. People are welcome to participate in the project in a variety of ways. Please sign up on the Social Justice bulletin board or contact Jean Pierce **before December 11** through office@uusg.org or 630-232-2350.

- (1) If you are 21 or older, you may join us at the **party**. As always, men are particularly encouraged to sign up for the event.
- (2) Beginning the last weekend of November and for 3 weekends, we will sell ornaments, fair trade products, and homemade crafts to raise money for the event. Please consider **contributing crafts** and/or helping us **sell items** during coffee hours. We particularly need help selling items on Sunday, December 13.
- (3) Volunteers are needed to **purchase items** for the boys and for the party.
- (4) During the 10am social hour on December 20th, volunteers will **pack 35 gift bags** for boys who attend the party that afternoon.
- (5) On the first weekend in December, we will ask people to contribute to the **Beyond Our Walls** collection for the project

Fair Trade Sales Expand for the Youth Center Project

November 28 through December 13, roasted nuts, cranberries, chocolates, teas, and coffees from all over the world will be sold during social hours. Sorry, no sugarplums, but do check out the new "Chocolate Minis" snack bags. At the same time, other fair trade items will also be available for purchase: ornaments, gift boxes, and note cards from Bangladesh as well as greeting cards from Egypt.

These sales serve two purposes – not only can you be sure that the people who worked hard to produce these items receive a fair price, but also proceeds will go to purchase gifts for boys at the Illinois Youth Center. We are fortunate that UUSG is one of the few places in the area where fair trade coffee is sold year-round.

Huge thanks are due to Laura Bartoszek, who kept our shelves stocked with fair trade items for a number of years. Now, Vohny Moehling has assumed that responsibility for the Social Justice Committee. Vohny can be contacted through the office at 630-232-2350.

Social Justice Action Alert: Help stop Catastrophic Climate Change

Sign Oxfam's Petition to be presented at the United Nations Climate Conference in Copenhagen this December. Add your name and demand a global deal to save our planet from catastrophic climate change.

Tick tick tick... Climate change is putting life on earth in peril. There is still time to build a greener, safer world. But the clock is ticking. In December, world leaders will meet in Copenhagen to decide our destiny. We call on our leaders to sign a global climate deal that is:

AMBITIOUS enough to leave a planet safe for us all.

FAIR for the poorest countries that did not cause climate change but are suffering most from it.

BINDING with real targets that can be legally monitored and enforced.

Your action will join the efforts of millions of people from around the world who are joining together to pressure world leaders to sign a safe and fair deal at the United Nations Climate Campaign in Copenhagen in December 2009.

Please click on the link below, together we can make a difference!

<http://e-activist.com/ea-campaign/clientcampaign.do?ea.client.id=142&ea.campaign.id=4195>

Tracey McFadden, for the Social Justice Committee

Another Social Justice Opportunity

November and December RSVPs

Thank you to everyone who volunteered at the Northern Illinois Food Bank on October 24: Larry Barnabee, Kevin Beyer, Lisa Gades, Jennifer Graham, Tim Graham, Timmy Graham, Laura Laughlin, Maureen McKeough, Vohny Moehling, Jeanne Neltner, Julie Overcash, Jean Pierce, Ellie Radvanovsky, Lauren Schrock, Mathew Schrock, Kat Zimmerman, and Tom Zimmerman. We packed an estimated 4 tons of food for delivery to families throughout Northern Illinois!

We will be assembling gift bags for needy seniors in the Kane and DuPage County area on November 28 at 1:30pm. 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. We are purchasing cough drops, lotion, Kleenex, greeting cards, ear muffs, and tea bags, which will nearly fill the gift bags, but you are invited to contribute small items to tuck in the corners of the gift bags from now until November 28. Suggested items include:

Chapstick/lip balm

Travel-sized tissues

Postage stamps

Hot chocolate

Puzzle books

Gift cards to Walgreens, Jewel, Target, Walmart, etc.

If you are able to provide any of the above items, please place them in the labeled basket in the Common Room. Gift bags are distributed through the Humanitarian Service Project. More information can be found at <http://www.humanitarianservice.org>

Sign up for these RSVP opportunities on the Social Justice bulletin board in the Common Room, register online at <http://content.uusg.org/rsvp-program/>, or contact Lisa Gades. Thank you for your continued support!

Date	Location	Ages	Requirements	Activities
November 28 1:30-2pm	UUSG Common Room	All ages		Pack gift bags for seniors
December 20 10:15-10:45am	UUSG Common Room	All ages		Pack gift bags for the Illinois Youth Center

Giving "Beyond Our Walls"

In November, we collected \$1036 for the Fisher House Foundation, which is currently building a "home away from home" for families of patients receiving medical care at Hines VA Hospital in Maywood. The house will be fully ADA accessible. Fisher House began constructing these homes in 1990, and since then has offered more than 2.5 million days of lodging to more than 120,000 families at military installations and medical centers.

During the recent "Some Like It Hot" Chili Supper, we collected \$474 for Feed My Starving Children. See page 5 for more details about this event.

The \$970 donated during our Thanksgiving collection will be used to purchase items for 115 Care Packages for Indigent Seniors in Kane and DuPage Counties. This project is being planned in cooperation with the Humanitarian Service Project, who has identified the seniors and will distribute the packages.

Green Corner

Recycle a Book, Save a Tree!

Friends of the Geneva Public Library Used Book Sale will be held on:

Thursday, December 3, 5-9PM,
Friday, December 4, 9AM-5PM and
Saturday, December 5, 9AM-3PM.

Pick-up tickets for opening night admittance will be available at the check in desk at 9am on December 3. Admission for the opening night will be at the outside the northwest alley door.

Holiday Tips from www.treehugger.com/giftguide/

According to the Environmental Protection Agency, Americans, on average, increase their garbage amount by 25% between Thanksgiving and Christmas. That's an awful lot of garbage! Below are some tips that we pulled from TreeHugger & Slate Magazine's "Green Challenge" that will help you in greening your holidays a bit more.

- Consider the benefits of buying locally-made goods.
- When shopping online or by mail order, consolidate your orders into as few shipments as possible.
- Could you reduce the number of holiday shopping trips you make, to save gas?
- If you're sending gifts by mail, choose small, light packages, which take up less space and fuel than big, heavy ones.
- Wrapping paper is a large part of holiday-waste stream. And if it's shiny or sparkly, it can't even be recycled. If every household wrapped three gifts in recycled materials (reused maps or cloth make great trimmings), we'd save reams and reams of paper. Other alternatives include buying gift-wrap made from recycled paper or hemp and flax. While you're at it, try Sellotape, which is made from biodegradable plant cellulose.
- Every year, 2.65 billion holiday cards are sold in the United States. If you're buying, choose cards made from recycled paper and avoid the shiny can't-recycle kind. Even better is to send e-cards.
- A deluge of catalogs has probably already descended upon your mailbox. It takes 14 million trees to produce the mail order books we receive annually. Encourage the catalogs you like to use recycled paper and get off the mailing lists of those you don't want.
- Christmas trees are a topic of much environmentalist debate. Fake trees are reusable but are made from petroleum-derived sources and often shipped from abroad. Real trees, for their part, are typically sprayed with lots of pesticides. Organic Christmas trees are tough to come by. Plus, of the 33 million real Christmas trees sold in North America every year, many end up in a landfill, emitting carbon dioxide as they rot. If you opt for a real tree, be sure to bring it to a local recycling center, where it can be chipped for mulch or used whole to stabilize wetlands. A better choice may be to purchase a live, potted tree, which can be planted outside after the holidays.
- Replace conventional incandescent holiday string lights with their light-emitting diode counterparts. These energy-efficient strings use up to 95 percent less electricity, last up to 10 times longer, and are safe since they produce very little heat. No matter what type of lights you use, limit yourself to keeping them on for four or five hours a day, and turn them off at night.
- Skip the tinsel and other decorations made from fossil-fuel-intensive plastics.
- If you're decorating with candles, choose ones made from soy wax or beeswax. Both are renewable resources, as opposed to regular paraffin candles, which are made from petroleum.
- For holiday parties, use real plates, glasses, and silverware instead of using the disposable kind.

Volunteer Headquarters

Volunteer Appreciation

We send our heartfelt appreciation to:

Our October & November Chauffeurs for the very busy Helen Hawkins: Page Poris, Jim O'Malley, Lou Pierce, Norlyn Dimmitt, Anne Veague, Kathy Meier, Beth Johnson, Gloria Mansfield, Jenny Stewart, Gail Tattersfield, Lisa McCarthy, and Jenny Montgomery. If you'd like to help, contact Kathy Meier at katem88@sbcglobal.net.

Our November Social Hour Hosts: Dan & Sandy Bottoms, William Elbert, Debbie Willhite, Doreen & Grace Christiani, Laura Bartoszek, Glenda Peck, Jinny Gilgan, Jeanne Neltner, Wendy Evans-Glazier, and Kevin Beyer & Lisa Gades.

David Tomell, for fixing a plumbing problem.

Gloria Mansfield, Deb Brod, KimiSu McDuffee-Dotson, and Brad Lipman, for handling all the office tasks while our Congregational Administrator was on vacation this month.

Tony Giamberdino, for his years of hard work and dedication as the chair of our Nominating Committee.

Tracey McFadden, for scrubbing and vacuuming the AV closet, and making sense of chaos.

Karin Kemp and Karen Moore, for making the beautiful displays in the urns outside the Sanctuary.

Bob Schwedler, Jeff Stibal, Eric Bodwell, and Zia Karim, for their help getting Katie's computer up and running again.

Congratulations to our wonderful choir for the November 15 services! Thank you for your donation of time and talent: Kristen McFadden, Melanie Abercrombie, Jean Pierce, Kelly Herz, Rhonda Robinson, Linda Valentine, Lynn Fisher McCanne, Ann Drover, Melissa Auer, Bruce Fackler, Lou Pierce, Mark Alleman, Mark Adams, and Al Drover! A special thanks to our guest singers: Cynthia Spiegel & Ron Turner. We look forward to singing the Christmas Eve Candlelight Service at 8:00 PM. If you would like to join the choir, please contact director Ruth Cavanaugh at choir@uusg.org.

Volunteer Opportunities

If you have questions or want to get involved, talk to Katie!

Keep the Cold Out We're looking for someone to spend a couple hours covering our Conant Room and hallway windows with plastic to keep the cold out this winter.

Get the Word Out The Communications Committee wants to continue sending regular press releases to the local newspapers, but we need a few more writers.

Interesting in Greeting? Here's your chance to welcome new and old friends to UUSG! We need greeters on:

November 29, 11am
 December 5, 5pm
 December 6, 9am
 December 6, 11am
 December 12, 5pm
 December 19, 5pm
 December 20, 9am
 December 20, 11am
 December 24, 5pm
 December 24, 10pm
 December 26, 5pm
 December 27, 9am
 December 27, 11am

Hosting Social Hour We need hosts on:

November 28, 6pm
 November 29, 10am
 November 20, 12pm
 December 5, 6pm
 December 6, 10am
 December 6, 12pm
 December 12, 6pm
 December 13, 10am
 December 13, 12pm
 December 19, 6pm
 December 20, 10am
 December 20, 12pm
 December 26, 6pm
 December 27, 10am
 December 27, 12pm

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/>.

Circles of Life

We were sorry to learn of the death some months ago of Renae Rebechini's mother; we've missed Renae here at UUSG, and we hope to see her and Bob back again soon.

We're wishing a fast and full recovery to Sandi Sumner, our Acting Director of Religious Education, whose recalcitrant rotator cuff is finally healing after surgical intervention. (If you can help carry things around for the Pageant on December 19 & 20, please let Katie know; she'll give the list to Sandi when Sandi returns at the beginning of December.)

We send our Official Congregational Congratulations and Best Wishes to the members of the Unitarian Universalist Society of Oneonta, New York, on the Installation of the Rev. Craig D. Schwalenberg as their new parish minister. Lindsay was in Oneonta the weekend of October 25 to preach the Installation Sermon and celebrate with Craig and Cheryl, as well as with Chip and Becky Roush. Our former Interns send UUSG their greetings; they and we look forward to future visits.

All joy and best wishes and congratulations to Carolyn Haslett and Christopher ("CJ") Lind, married here at UUSG by Lindsay on November 6!

We welcome our newest UUSG members, who signed The Book on November 22: Claire Zinser, Roxanne Willis, Emily Smith, and Steven Clark.

WomenSpirit Rising in December

We will meet on Thursday, December 3 at 7:15pm. As our regular meeting room is being used to set up for the Cookie Walk, we'll be around the corner at Crystal Life Technology (121 S Third St.). The topic for the evening is "Communicating with Nature."

The owner of Crystal Life, Atala Toy, is a UUSG member and is offering a generous holiday shopping discount to UUSG members & friends: Stop by her store on December 3 before 7pm and receive a courtesy discount on non-sale items - 10% will be deducted from your purchase, and 10% will be donated to UUSG!

Steeple Walk

UUSG is one of four churches participating in the **Geneva Steeple Walk** on the afternoon of **Sunday, December 6th**. There will be an opportunity to hear different kinds of music at each church. Michael McElvain will be performing with two fellow musicians at UUSG. Ruth Cavanaugh will present music with her group "Ensemble Ad-Hoc" at the United Methodist Church.



Contact Gail Tattersfield to purchase tickets. Tickets are priced at \$12 each and there are only 250 tickets available.

Holiday Staffing!

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

Thanksgiving Day
Thursday, November 26

Christmas Eve
Thursday, December 24

Christmas Day
Friday, December 25

New Years' Eve
Thursday, December 31

New Years' Day
Friday, January 1

Staff hours between Christmas Day and New Years' Day will be irregular. Please call first if you need to stop by during that time.

On the Art Wall

Deann Alleman's work is currently hanging on the Art Wall in the Common Room.

If you'd like to display your work in the upcoming months, please talk to Katie (office@uusg.org, 630-232-2350).

Our calendar is provided on the next page, and is current as of November 24, 2009.

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, December 11, at 9:00 a.m.**

PLEASE NOTE THAT THIS IS ONE WEEK EARLY DUE TO THE HOLIDAYS.

DECEMBER 2009

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<p>29 <i>Acting Director of Religious Education on Medical Leave</i> Advent 9:00 AM & 11 AM Worship & Church School; Social Hours at 10 AM & NOON 10:15 AM Fourth Sunday Forum: International & Congregational Peace 10:25 AM Chime Ensemble Rehearsal 11:00 AM Big Ideas Covenant Group</p>	<p>30 <i>Acting Director of Religious Education on Medical Leave</i> 1:00 PM Staff Meeting 7:00 PM AA Group Meeting 7:00 PM Adult RE - "Still Living in the Present Moment"</p>	<p>1 <i>Acting Director of Religious Education on Medical Leave</i> 5:00 PM Bilingual Special Education Program 7:00 PM Sacred Harp Singing 7:30 PM Program & Administrative Councils</p>	<p>2 <i>Acting Director of Religious Education on Medical Leave</i> Senior Minister's Day Off 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</p>	<p>3 <i>Acting Director of Religious Education on Medical Leave</i> Congregational Administrator Off Today Senior Minister's Sabbath 6:30 PM Cookie Walk Set-up 7:00 PM Youth Outlook (youth can begin arriving at 6:30pm) 7:15 PM WomenSpirit Rising (meeting off-site)</p>	<p>4 <i>Acting Director of Religious Education on Medical Leave</i> 4:30 PM Cookie Walk</p>	<p>5 <i>Acting Director of Religious Education on Medical Leave</i> 9:00 AM Reiki One Class & Attunement (registration required) 3:00 PM Lazarus House Food Preparation 5:00 PM Worship (childcare available for young children); Social Hour at 6 PM</p>
<p>6 9:00 AM & 11 AM Worship & Church School; Social Hours at 10 AM & NOON 10:25 AM Chime Ensemble Rehearsal 10:30 AM Finance Committee Meeting 11:00 AM Big Ideas Covenant Group 12:30 PM Choir Rehearsal 12:30 PM Social Justice Committee Meeting 1:00 PM "Munch & Learn" Lecture Series 1:00 PM UU Atheism/Humanism Study Group 2:00 PM Steeple Walk</p>	<p>7 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</p>	<p>8 5:00 PM Bilingual Special Education Program 7:30 PM Board of Directors</p>	<p>9 Senior Minister's Day Off 7:00 PM Compassionate Communication Study Group 7:00 PM UU Buddhism Meditation and Study Group 7:30 PM GAS AA</p>	<p>10 Senior Minister's Sabbath 7:00 PM Reiki Share--CANCELED 7:00 PM Youth Outlook (youth can begin arriving at 6:30pm)</p>	<p>11 9:00 AM PIONEER deadline (note date change!) 7:00 PM Blue Papaya Meeting</p>	<p>12 10:30 AM Committee on Ministries Meeting 5:00 PM Worship (childcare available for young children); Social Hour at 6 PM 6:30 PM Junior High Youth Group</p>
<p>13 9:00 AM & 11 AM Worship & Church School; Social Hours at 10 AM & NOON 10:00 AM Birthday Celebration 10:25 AM Chime Ensemble Rehearsal 11:00 AM Big Ideas Covenant Group 12:30 PM Choir Rehearsal 12:30 PM Membership Committee Meeting 7:00 PM 2nd Sunday (Story Tellers) Covenant Group</p>	<p>14 12:30 PM Women's Guild Luncheon 1:00 PM Staff Meeting 7:00 PM AA Group Meeting 7:00 PM Adult RE - "Still Living in the Present Moment" 7:00 PM Reiki Discussion Group</p>	<p>15 7:00 PM Reiki Share 7:00 PM Sacred Harp Singing</p>	<p>16 Senior Minister's Day Off 6:00 PM Pioneer Mailing Prep 7:00 PM Green Sanctuary Committee Meeting 7:00 PM UU Buddhism Meditation and Study Group 7:30 PM GAS AA 7:30 PM LRE Committee Meeting</p>	<p>17 Senior Minister's Sabbath 7:00 PM Youth Outlook (youth can begin arriving at 6:30pm) 7:15 PM WomenSpirit Rising</p>	<p>18 7:00 PM Friday Flicks</p>	<p>19 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!</p>
<p>20 9:00 AM & 11 AM Intergenerational Worship; Social Hours at 10 AM & NOON 11:00 AM Big Ideas Covenant Group 12:15 PM Holiday Visit to the Illinois Youth Center 12:30 PM Choir Rehearsal 12:30 PM Communications Committee Meeting 7:00 PM Reiki Share</p>	<p>21 First Day of Winter 1:00 PM Staff Meeting 7:00 PM AA Group Meeting 7:00 PM Adult RE - "Still Living in the Present Moment"</p>	<p>22</p>	<p>23 Senior Minister's Day Off 7:00 PM Compassionate Communication Study Group 7:00 PM UU Buddhism Meditation and Study Group 7:30 PM GAS AA</p>	<p>24 Office Closed 5:00 PM Family Service 6:30 PM Choir Rehearsal 8:00 PM Candlelight Service 10:00 PM Meditative Service</p>	<p>25 Christmas Day <i>Office Closed</i></p>	<p>26 <i>Office Closed & Staff Schedules Irregular</i> 5:00 PM Worship (childcare available for young children); Social Hour at 6 PM 6:30 PM Small Group Ministry</p>
<p>27 <i>Office Closed & Staff Schedules Irregular</i> 9:00 AM & 11 AM Intergenerational Worship; Social Hours at 10 AM & NOON 11:00 AM Big Ideas Covenant Group</p>	<p>28 <i>Office Closed & Staff Schedules Irregular</i> 1:00 PM Staff Meeting 7:00 PM AA Group Meeting 7:00 PM Adult RE - "Still Living in the Present Moment"</p>	<p>29 <i>Office Closed & Staff Schedules Irregular</i> 7:30 PM Last Tuesday Group Hypnosis</p>	<p>30 <i>Office Closed & Staff Schedules Irregular</i> Senior Minister's Day Off 7:00 PM UU Buddhism Meditation and Study Group 7:30 PM GAS AA</p>	<p>31 <i>Office Closed & Staff Schedules Irregular</i></p>	<p>1 <i>Office Closed & Staff Schedules Irregular</i></p>	<p>2 <i>Office Closed & Staff Schedules Irregular</i> 1:00 PM Committee on Ministries Meeting 5:00 PM Worship (childcare available for young children); Social Hour at 6 PM</p>

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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 December 11, 2009 at 9am. Please send all articles to BOTH office@uusg.org AND minister@uusg.org.

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