



THE PIONEER

November-December 2011

Paper Pulpit

the Rev. Dr. Lindsay Bates, Senior Minister

I understand that Scot blew the whistle on me ~ thank you to all the kind folks who in varying ways suggested that working on our December services might not be the best way of spending my vacation. Not to worry ~ I've had a lovely time on Cape Cod, playing with Miss Delilah the Cat, catching up with various family and friends, eating far too much, exercising far too little, and relaxing a lot. Things needed to get done for UUSG, and I'm blessed with work that I [usually] love. So, no guilt, please – on either side!

There are some changes coming in our December Holidays worship. The No-Rehearsal Pageant is still No-Rehearsal, but the script is new, based primarily upon the Winter Solstice materials from *In Nature's Honor*, a Skinner House (UU) publication by Patricia Montley. There are some odd props that will need to be built, some costumes I don't think we have, and some special music I'd like to include. While it's not going to require a rehearsal, I'd still love to have some Readers lined up ahead of time. And some musicians ~ if anyone out there is familiar with Peter Mayer's music and would like to help lead "Where Is the Light" (we have the sheet music and permission to use) and perhaps learn another of his Winter Holy Days songs from the CD (since I can't find the music for that one), or be a song leader for some of the other songs that use familiar melodies, please let me know.

(Junior & Senior High folks, I'm explicitly including you in the above invitation ~ if you'll be around on December 18 and would enjoy being a reader/musician/song leader at either or both Pageant services, I would love to include you!)

Our Family Service for Christmas Eve is moving **up** an hour, to 4pm. Quite a few parents let us know last year that the 5-to-6 o'clock time slot was just a bit too late to work well with supper and other family plans. If you're bringing younger children to Christmas Eve worship, be sure to mark your calendars with the new time: 4 o'clock on December 24. (This service also has new material planned, in addition to the Gospel stories that are, of course, central to Christmas.)

Our Choir is preparing wonderful music for the 8pm Candlelight Service. Seating for this service is limited and we've often had to turn people away or put latecomers in the Common Room. If you want to be guaranteed a place, join the Christmas Eve Choir! At 10pm we have our Meditational Service ~ much of the same material used at 8, but with different music. Susan Urban and Phil Cooper are bringing the gift of special Christmas music by Dave Carter to the 10 o'clock service, and pianist Dean Malambri will have meditative interludes as well.

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We'll celebrate Advent on December 4 and Hanukkah on December 11. Christmas Day and New Year's Day are both on Sundays this year. Many of you will be away, I know ~ but many will also be in town and wanting to share the holidays with others. So on December 25 and January 1, we'll combine a Holiday Potluck Brunch with seasonal music, readings and reflections, welcoming all ages to come together and celebrate.

May your holiday preparations go smoothly, your gatherings be both peaceful and fun, gifts both given and received be perfect in spirit if not in color or size, and Thanksgiving's gratitude stay with you and the joys of December's many celebrations lift you up and carry you merrily along!

Peace! **LB**

Religious Education Announcements

Church School Administrator Notes: A Message from Deb Askelson

It has been delightful to meet the wonderful people at UUSG! I have felt welcomed and suspect visitors feel similarly when they attend services and activities here. There have been plenty of opportunities to learn about the happenings at UUSG and the Church School Administrator position during my first month here. There is a lot going on, such as the study groups and active committees!

My first priorities have included creating an office space that is welcoming to you all, getting to know the overall functioning of UUSG & its database to get LRE-related information in order, and meeting some of the LRE teachers and volunteers.

I am planning to meet one-on-one with all LRE volunteers and teachers, write volunteer job descriptions, look for volunteers to further help support the LRE program, communicate with teachers and parents about LRE programming, and assist with the library and curriculum materials, along with other duties. There is much to learn with this vivacious congregation! I look forward to getting better acquainted with UUSG members and guests of all ages in the days ahead.

If you have any suggestions, questions, or comments, please call me at 630-232-2350 x224 or email me at LRE@uusg.org. My office is between the library and Lindsay's office on the main floor of Pioneer House, and my workdays are Sundays, Mondays, Tuesdays, and Thursdays.

YRUU News

YRUU had 18 youth and 3 adults attend Fall CON in Wausau, WI on October 11-13. CON is a district-wide youth conference which serves about 250 area UU youth with fellowship, worship, and workshop offerings during a weekend-long event. Our youth presented 2 of the workshop offerings, Candy Mountain and Sleeping Bag Yoga. Thank you, Kat Zimmerman, Lily Phillips, and Claire Zinser for organizing the workshops. Thanks also to Nancy Christensen, Anne Heavey, and Zia Karim for driving.

YRUU had its first Potluck & Day of Service on November 5, 2011. We made lunches for Lazarus House, did some yardwork for UUSG, and collected items for youth in need.

We also had an Eid al-Adha celebration and special presentation by Moez Sadiq on November 6th. Thank you, Moez and Laura Bartoszek, for the wonderful food.

As part of an ongoing service project, YRUU is collecting 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. Giftcards and checks (made out to UUSG with YRUU clearly written in the memo line) will also be gratefully accepted.

YRUU is planning its second Potluck & Day of Service for December 9, 2011 at 6:30 pm, where we will have a local youth speak about her personal story of immigration and learn about Children's Advocacy Centers.

Our common read this fall is "Acts of Faith" by Eboo Patel, which we recommend for any teen or adult.

Please mark your calendars for the YRUU Service, scheduled for February 26, 2012.

Parents' Group

The Parents' Group will meet again on Sunday, December 4 at 12:30 pm. Childcare will be provided, but please sign up in the Common Room or online at <http://content.uusg.org/parents-group/> so we have enough childcare providers.

Registration Forms and More

Please turn in the required forms for each child attending 2011-2012 LRE classes (nursery through grade 12) if you have not already done so:

- Church School Registration Form
- Emergency Contact Info & Consent-to-Treat Form

If you have a child in grades 6 – 12

In addition to the 2 forms listed above, since the students leave the church on field trips, we also need a copy of:

- 2011-2012 Student ID
- Medical Insurance Card (front and back)

Our goal is to have all forms for each current student on file in the LRE office by the end of December. Your efforts in making this happen are much appreciated.

Junior High Group— Exploring Neighboring Faiths Field Trips

The 6th, 7th, and 8th grade classes will be going on field trips to explore other faiths beginning in January or early February, so the LRE office must have all required student paperwork listed above (registration, emergency info & consent-to-treat, current year student ID copy, and medical insurance card copy - front and back) on file for the student to attend any field trip at a "Neighboring Faith" location. Each field trip will have a separate permission slip with the "Neighboring Faith's" name and contact information; chaperone names; and dates and times leaving and returning to UUSG. Details will follow in an email/letter to parents as well as in the next Pioneer for this wonderful opportunity for our junior high students.

If you have any questions or concerns call Deb Askelson, Church School Administrator, at 630-232- 2350 x224 or email at LRE@uusg.org.

"Munch & Learn" Lecture Series

Our monthly lecture series will continue on Sunday, December 11 at 1pm. *Green Fire: Aldo Leopold and a Land Ethic for Our Time* is a 72-minute documentary connecting legendary conservationist Aldo Leopold with modern environmental projects. Sign up in the Common Room or by emailing LRE@uusg.org.

RE Music

Our preschool through fifth graders gave a heart-warming performance of "A Place in the Choir," composed by Bill Staines, during services on November 13. Many thanks to our youth participants for sharing their voices in song and to all others who support this music ministry of our young people.

OWL News

All 7th-9th grade youth are invited to our OWL (Our Whole Lives) Sexuality and Relationship curriculum which will be offered as church overnights on January 13-14, February 24-25, March 16-17, and April 27-28.

Please contact Elba Karim at if your youth intends to participate. Special permission forms and advanced registration is required.

Our Teachers

Many thanks to our outstanding LRE classroom teachers and the time, talent, and effort they have put in thus far. Please extend a "thank you" to these talented people for all they do for our LRE students!

Pre-Kindergarten

Tracy Rosenkrans
Mick Jaggard
Sharon Hansen
Katy Pokorny
Cathy Newman Holmes

Kindergarten – Grade 2

Becky Hruby
Mylane Bryant
Karen Laukaitis
Julie Wegerich
Diane Handler
Jennifer Klein

Grades 3-5

Buffy Higgins
Kim McDuffee-Dotson
Alice Martin
Jenny Montgomery
Shawn Thornton
Hillary Accarizzi
Kerri Trejo

Grades 6-8

Nancy Christensen
Christy Hickey
Steve Cordogan

Grades 9-12 (YRUU)

Elba Karim
Zia Karim
Laura Laughlin
Bill Pokorny

If anyone has been omitted, please accept our apologies and let us know so we be sure to give proper thanks!

Reminder to Teachers Our Mid-Year Teacher Meeting is coming up on Monday, January 30 at 7:30 pm. Please be taking notes about how your class is going, as teachers 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.

The 2011 Cookie Walk

It started as a small bake sale and now our Cookie Walk is in its 29th year! This year's Cookie Walk will be held **this Friday, December 2**, and as always, we need bakers and helpers. If you are new to our community and aren't familiar with the Cookie Walk, talk to someone who's been around a while. It's a cherished tradition here at UUSG—in one evening, we sell over 500 dozen beautiful holiday cookies!



We still need volunteers to help with the following:

- * Bake cookies (6, 12, or 18 dozen)
- * Help prepare for the event on Thursday, December 1, 6:30-8:30pm
- * Work at the event itself. Two shifts are available: 3:45-5:30pm and 5:15-7pm.

If you can help with any of the above, please let us know by sending an email to office@uusg.org or signing up online at <http://content.uusg.org/cookie-walk/>.

If you're baking...

- Please make festive holiday cookies (the plain ones, as tasty as they may be, just don't sell as well).
- Bring your cookies in disposable containers (shirt boxes, disposable plates, etc.— things that you do not want back and are recyclable).
- Bring two identical sets of whatever you bring so that we can put one plate or box on each table.
- **Cookie drop-off** will take place on Thursday, December 1, from 6:30 to 8:30pm.
- If you can't drop your cookies off Thursday evening, please contact Katie in the office (630-232-2350, office@uusg.org) to make other arrangements.

If you're setting up...

- We set up on Thursday evening before the walk from 6:30pm to 8:30pm.
- Set-up includes assembling boxes, setting up tables, arranging the cookies, etc.
- You may sit or stand as you prefer.

If you're helping at the event...

- **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.
- 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.

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

Interested in Church Leadership?

This time of year, our Nominating Committee begins to go to work finding out which Board members plan to continue in the upcoming church year. Then they start to think about who in the congregation to approach to fill any openings.

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.

December Pioneer Deadline

Due to the holidays, the December Pioneer deadline is 9am on Monday, December 19 (note that this is a week earlier than usual).

Social Justice News

Recruiting Service Volunteer Participants (RSVP)

Thank you!

Thank you to everyone who made it possible for UUSG to send 27 packages to Chaplain George Tyger in Afghanistan! We appreciate the generous donations of items for the packages, cards, pictures, and money for the November "Beyond Our Walls" offering. Thank you to Kevin Beyer, Dan & Sandy Bottoms, Linda Burke, Dawn Christ, Lisa Gades, Maureen McKeough, Vohny Moehling, Jean Pierce, and Rej & Riley Rooney, who spent a Saturday afternoon packing boxes! You can see Chaplain Tyger at the following site, which describes a cigar ministry he has sponsored for soldiers in his unit:

<http://www.facebook.com/pages/Chap-Tygers-Cigar-Ministry/144189485648965>.

Note: While we were purchasing 50 pairs of boot socks for the packages, we happened to meet a Cub Scout leader. Thanks to his efforts, Chaplain Tyger will receive an additional 14 boxes!

December 2011: Illinois Youth Center

In December, the RSVP is our annual party for boys who do not get other visitors at the Illinois Youth Center (IYC) in St. Charles. We have already submitted the names of volunteers who are participating so that the state can run background checks prior to our party on Saturday, December 17. This year we have purchased 3 computers to present to the center.

Volunteer Needed: The Social Justice Committee is looking for one or more people who can "rehab" used computer towers. If we can find someone who is willing to donate their time and expertise, we'll pay for needed parts. The Youth Center would really benefit from having like-new hard drives.

Volunteers Needed: Please contact Jean Pierce at socialjusticechair@uusg.org or 630-232-2350 if you can help assemble gift bags at 10 am on Saturday, December 17 for the IYC party that afternoon.

January 2012: Gift Bags for Seniors

On Saturday, January 28, from 2pm to 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, please contact Lisa Gades, visit the UUSG website at <http://content.uusg.org/rsvp-program/>, or see the Social Justice bulletin board in the Common Room.

Thank you for your continued support!

Date	Location	Ages	Requirements	Activities
Saturday, January 28 2-3:30pm	UUSG	All ages	Willingness to help seniors	Prepare gift bags for seniors

More Social Justice News

Become Part of UUSG's Social Justice Network

Would you like to get up-to-the-minute notices about social justice opportunities? Are you looking for people to join you in attending an "Occupy" rally or preparing a dinner for Lazarus House? Would you like to get updates on the progress on the local Habitat for Humanity project? Do you have a great idea for a Social Justice project—like writing letters in support of Medicare?

While you're thinking about it, become part of the UUSG Social Justice Network by emailing Jean Pierce (socialjusticechair@uusg.org) right now!

Mark Your Calendars! Free *Saturday Flick* on January 21

The Social Justice Committee is pleased to announce that *The Interrupters* will be shown free of charge in a theater at the Randall 15 IMAX in Batavia at 8:30am on Saturday, January 21.

The film follows former gang members from Ceasefire Chicago who courageously intervene to prevent violence between rival gangs.

Last year members of Ceasefire joined us for our holiday party at the St. Charles Youth Center. We were privileged to witness the hope they brought to the boys. We saw Cobe Williams (who is featured in the documentary) sit down with residents of the center, ask them about their plans following their release, and promise that he would work with them to help them find employment. Cobe proudly introduced a boy who had been incarcerated at St. Charles the previous year. Now, with the help of Ceasefire, the boy had a job and a car.

Cobe has agreed to meet with movie-goers for a Q&A during a reception following the screening on Saturday morning, January 21. This program is being sponsored jointly by the UUSG Social Justice committee and by the office of State Representative Linda Chapa LaVia, who has proposed legislation to fund Ceasefire.

Handmade Crafts & Fair Trade Items in IYC Sales

Sales benefiting the Illinois Youth Center (IYC) project have already begun. They will continue during social hours following each service through the first two weeks of December.

This year, Sherri Casterline has created spectacular sea glass jewelry and Al Drover has contributed his artistic skills for UUSG holiday cards and note cards. We will even personalize your cards with your imprinted name. In addition, we have an exciting assortment of fair trade items including drums and beadwork from Indonesia, hand-knit hats & socks from Nepal, and Equal Exchange chocolates, teas, & coffee.

Advocate for Clean Air Standards for Cars

Social Justice Action Alert

The President has proposed clean car standards that should almost double fuel efficiency by 2025 and the auto industry has agreed to them. But the Government Oversight and Reform Committee has expressed concern that the agreement was reached privately and that more voices need to be heard. In addition, the Union of Concerned Scientists has identified some ways in which the agreement does not go far enough.

Please take a few minutes to look at the website created by The Union of Concerned Scientists at http://action.ucsus.org/site/R?i=63cuJTp6z9LSI_gqIPFj0Q. Then use the link on their website to register your opinion about whether and/or how clean air standards should be strengthened.

Giving "Beyond Our Walls"

In October, we collected \$1,255 to purchase items and ship packages to our troops.

Circles of Life

We lost a beloved member of our UUSG community in November. Helen Hawkins died peacefully, with her family and Lindsay at her side. Our loving thoughts are with her nephew Todd, his wife Janie, and their children. On Wednesday, November 30, we'll gather to remember Helen. There will be a visitation from 9:30am to 11am and a memorial service in our Sanctuary at 11am. After the memorial service, there will be a graveside service at Union Cemetery on Route 25 in St. Charles, which will be followed by a luncheon in our Common Room. If you can help with set-up, clean-up, or by bringing food, please contact Katie at 630-232-2350 or office@uusg.org.

Our thoughts are with Michael McCarthy and his family on the loss of Mike's mother, and with Lisa Rittenberry and her family—Lisa's mother-in-law passed away this month. We also send our condolences to Sandy Anderson-Cordogan, Steve Cordogan, and their 2 boys on the loss of Sandy's father.

Report from the Welcoming Congregation Team

We were pleased with the participation of 32 members and guests at our pot-luck and discussion event held on November 11.

Those gathered had a great time at the potluck followed by an engrossing presentation by Lori Fox on transgender identity. Lori's explanation of transgender issues and sharing her own experience led to a good discussion by those attending.

As we progress in our quest for "the rainbow chalice," our team is planning for more events in the new year which will be posted in future newsletters.

Luncheon Invitation

On Monday, December 12, the UUSG Women's Guild will be lunching at 12pm at Villa Verone Restaurant 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.

New Members

The following people signed "The Book" in November and become official members of UUSG—welcome home!

Sara Hoerdeman
John Towell
Beth Towell
Dana Utroska
Shirley Yingst

Its Time for us to Sing!

Please join the UUSG Teen/Adult Choir for the Christmas Eve 8:00 PM Candlelight Service. All are welcome!

Rehearsals are:

Saturday, December 3, 12:45-2:15pm
Sunday, December 11, 12:45-2:15pm
Sunday, December 18, 12:45-2:15pm

Vocal warm-ups and dress rehearsal:

Saturday, December 24, 6:30pm

Please RSVP to our director, Ruth Cavanaugh choir@uusg.org.

Other upcoming choir opportunities:

Sunday, February 19, 2012
(Rehearsals: Sundays, Feb 5 & 12)

Easter Sunday, April 8, 2012
(Rehearsals: Sundays, March 25 & April 1)

Care to be added to the choir email contact list? Would childcare make this a possibility for you? Please let us know with an email to choir@uusg.org.

Mitten Tree

Check out the mitten holiday tree in the Common Room! The Hospitality & Fellowship Committee invites you to donate new or gently used mittens or gloves for children.

Feel free to place them in the "mitten basket" or hang them up yourself with the clothespins. Mittens will be donated to Hessed House and other local organizations that serve homeless children.

Volunteer Headquarters

Volunteer Appreciation

We send our heartfelt thanks to:

Our November Greeters: Lynn & Llona Steele, Sally Jones, Glenda Peck, George & Gail Tattersfield, Don & Nancy Smith, and all our last-minute recruits

Our November Social Hour Hosts: Sandy & Dan Bottoms, Betty Bristol, Tracy Paszkiet, Dick & Shirley Yingst, Pat Ward, and Louise Haslett

Patrick McGleam, who covered our back hallway windows with plastic to keep the cold air out this winter

Doreen Christiani, for donating a much faster computer to the church library so new items can be entered more easily

Coffee in December—Saved!

Many thanks to those who volunteered to host social hour in December: Tracy Paszkiet, Nancy Goodfellow, David & Renee Tomell, and Dick & Shirley Yingst. If you enjoy a hot drink between worship services in December, please take a moment to thank these folks.

It's not too early to sign up for January! Sign up at <http://content.uusg.org/greeters-and-social-hour-hosts/> or in the Common Room. Regular host Glenda Peck says: "Hosting Coffee Hour is one of the best ways to get to know people in our church. You get to visit, receive thanks, and feel appreciated. What better way to serve?"

Friendly Faces

Sign up to welcome church members, friends, and visitors in December by going to <http://content.uusg.org/greeters-and-social-hour-hosts/>.

Northern Public Radio

Many thanks to everyone who donated to NPR through UUSG this fall! With a \$250 match from the Communications Committee, we were able to purchase 32 slots, which will be used to publicize upcoming fundraisers (including this Friday's Cooke Walk).

Make Your Appreciation Known

Do you know someone who should be thanked? Yes, you do; we all do!

Let Katie know—she can be reached at 630-232-2350 or office@uusg.org.

So, Anybody Sew?

We'd like to replace the shower curtain that hides the AV closet (just outside the Sanctuary) with some regular fabric.

We have the fabric, so all we need is someone to sew the curtain. If you'd like to volunteer for this project, talk to Katie (office@uusg.org or 630-232-2350).

Choir Appreciation

Did you get a chance to hear the UUSG Choir with the UUSG String Quintet along with Cynthia Spiegel, soprano soloist?

A special thanks to our wonderful choir:

Sopranos—Melanie Abercrombie, Sara Hoerdeman, Olivia Flanigan, Emily Clark, Doria Spiegel

Altos—Ann Drover, Sophia Spiegel, Beth Towell, Pat Vary

Tenors—Jacob Flores, Bob Brubaker, Melissa Auer, Evan Pierce, Steve Hanson (also rehearsal accompanist extraordinaire)

Basses—Steve Clark, John Towell, Mark Adams, Mark Alleman, Tom Haslett, and our Music Director, Tracy Rosenkrans!

Thank you also to the String Quintet—Wendy Evans-Glazier, Larry Glazier, Tracy Rosenkrans, Kathryn Siegel, Elena Spiegel—and to the anonymous donor that made it all possible!

If you'd like to be put on the choir e-mail list, please contact director Ruth Cavanaugh at choir@uusg.org.



Green Corner

Make Yours a Green Holiday Season

Eco-Happy Gift Giving tips from Spiritual Green Connection and www.ecocycle.com

Share your talent A “green gift certificate” for your time or talents—like knitting, babysitting, yard work, errand runs, window caulking, baking, household repairs, or labeled “You name it.”

Buy local Consider gifts purchased from locally-owned shops, grocers, and bakeries, or from a local organic farm. Perhaps produce shares to a local CSA (Community-Supported Agriculture).

Give gifts that keep giving Choose holiday gifts that will help your loved ones reduce consumption all year long, such as potted herbs; a steel, reusable water bottle; a new or refurbished bike; bus passes; a bike tune-up; a compost bin; or a pack of rechargeable batteries with a recharger.

Contribute in a loved one's name You can improve the lives of those in need around the world by giving donations as gifts. Consider www.kiva.org, where your donation becomes a small loan to entrepreneurs around the world; www.heifer.org, where you can purchase a cow, goat or even honeybees to help families become self-reliant; and any & all Equal Exchange items (<http://shop.equalexchange.com/>).

Give memories instead of stuff Experiences are more memorable than stuff. Give the gift of an activity, such as tickets (and anticipation) for a movie, play, local musical event, or a dinner at an organic restaurant (such as Prasino in St. Charles or Niche in Geneva), or perhaps a massage.

Greeting Cards Consider creating your own cards on the internet and sending them out, stamp and paper-free and instantly received. (More than 1.5 billion holiday cards are sent in the US, which require 300,000 new trees to be harvested each year.)

GSC Meetings

The Green Sanctuary Committee now meets at 12:30pm after services on the first Sunday of each month.

We enthusiastically welcome anyone interested in our committee to come share your ideas with us. The meeting location is posted on the bulletin board in the Heritage Room foyer.

Special Speaker

Mark your 2012 calendars on Thursday, January 19th, at 7pm, for a community welcoming meeting sponsored by Spiritual Green Connection and other groups. (Spiritual Green Connection is a group of local greening churches; UUSG is one of them.)

Jennifer Jarland, Kane's new Conservation and Recycling Coordinator, who spoke in October at UUSG for the “From the Earth” Harvest Supper, will be speaking to many of Fox Valley's green groups at the Batavia Public Library.

Future plans for Kane County and new recycling news will be shared. Sponsors will feature information booths.



More Green Corner

Shopping Online

Green Friends, shopping online for nature gifts not only helps the area or wildlife you designate, but it builds awareness and appreciation in your named gift recipient and gives you satisfaction in making your green commitment to others in this way.

For this holiday season, the Nature Conservancy (www.nature.org/gifts) suggests conservation gift ideas in someone's name, such as: adopting an acre in Australia or within the endangered Everglades; adopting a coral reef; protecting oceans and coasts; helping to secure clean drinking water in Africa, Haiti, or Ecuador; helping to preserve migratory bird habitats or the U.S. Southern Forests; etc.

The Natural Resource Defense Counsel (www.NRDCGreenGifts.org) has ideas for more than 50 green gifts that reflect their mission to safeguard the Earth—people, plants, animals, and natural systems on which all life depends. \$25 will buy a Green Teacher Kit for a NRDC-designated classroom in need; a \$20 gift can help save a songbird for a bird lover; and other reasonable gift amounts can protect whales, polar bears, grizzlies, wolves, and even bees.

Equal Exchange might usually suggest to us great coffees, teas, and cocoa, but for a creative and appealing variety of gift ideas, check out Equal Exchange and Fair Trade websites. The Elgin UU Church bulletin board had this site, showing a great variety of useful gift options: <http://www.fairtradefederation.org/ht/a/GetDocumentAction/i/17662>.

Other Sources for Green Gifts

www.vivaterra.com offers handcrafted and nature-inspired gifts for your home & more.

www.abundantearth.com offers a huge selection of products for home and gifts

www.greenhome.com is an online "department store" for natural, organic and non-toxic household products.

www.thegreenguide.com has a buying guide for everything from appliances to cosmetics to kids' supplies.

www.ecomall.com is a directory of organic and earth-friendly products and companies.

Healthier Holiday Foods

Make it a goal this year to serve & consume "climate-friendly" holiday meals.

Buy local, organic & seasonal veggies, fruits, & grains, grass-fed dairy, and whole foods.

Avoid distant imports, factory-farmed animals & dairy, grains like corn and soy produced by GMOs, processed foods, and heavily packaged foods.

Eating less meat overall is best, but grass-fed, free-range organic options are fine, too.

Reduce packaging and always bring your own reusable shopping and produce bags.

Reduce waste and share leftovers.

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

Sunday, December 4 & 11 Lindsay will be in the pulpit

Sunday, December 18 Our annual Holiday Pageant at both services—this year's event will be something new!

Friday, 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 to better accommodate families)

8 pm Candlelight Choir Service

10 pm Candlelight Meditative Service

Sunday, December 25 Holiday Potluck Brunch with seasonal music, readings, and reflections, welcoming all ages to come together and celebrate.

Sunday, January 1 More brunching, singing, reading, and fellowship for all ages

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)

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

Winter Weather Closing Policy

Because we're a regional congregation, with many of our folks traveling a considerable distance to get to Geneva, we do have a policy for winter weather. If the wind chill in the greater Chicago area is colder than 40 degrees below zero, or if travel advisories have been issued because of snow or wind, we cancel all church events, including any committee meetings, office hours, Sunday morning religious education, and Sunday worship.

During the week, if you're not sure about the severity of the weather, please check with your group's convener before heading for a winter meeting.

If Sunday activities are canceled, we'll try to get that information onto our homepage (www.uusg.org) and the Congregational Administrator's voicemail message (call the church office at 630-232-2350 and then press 1-0-0 to hear the message). But when in doubt, please stay home!

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.

Circle Suppers

Thank you to all who signed up for the UUSG Circle Suppers. We have 43 regular participants (single or couples) and 4 people have signed up as alternates. We will now work on setting the schedule for the four suppers to be held January - April 2012. Look for the Circle Supper schedules to be sent out in the second week of December. Questions? Contact Jim Burke.

October Financial Summary

In October, we recorded \$25,996 in income and \$24,955 in expenses.

Overall, at 33% through the year, our income is at 35% while our expenses are at 25% of what we budgeted for the year.

Other items of note for October:

- We received a \$530 refund from our insurance company.
- We collected \$255 to publicize UUSG on our local NPR station.
- Our mortgage balance (for the western property) is \$109,042.

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).

A Time To Get Or Give

Often the Holiday Season is when many families act on giving to others and/or doing household projects. Why not consider the Northern Fox Valley Habitat ReStore for both of these?

ReStore Elgin is a building materials reuse center benefiting our local HFH organization. ReStore accepts donated new and gently used goods from retailers, manufacturers, distributors, contractors and homeowners. All items are then sold at greatly reduced prices to the general public. A summary of what the ReStore currently offers can be seen at <http://habitatnfv.org/~habitat/sites/default/files/accepted%20materials%20052011.pdf>.

The store is located on Route 31 in Elgin, IL at 800 N. State Street. Detailed hours and other information is available at both 847-742-9905 and <http://www.restoreelgin.org>.

Pottawatomie Habitat for Humanity

Phase I (demolition) on the current house is winding down. Saturday richness has been enhanced via the intended homeowner, Beverly, joining us on a regular basis. The reward of volunteering has also been supplemented by several generous lunches provided by our very own Yuriko Ferrell. Both of these benefits are exciting reasons to join us and share in the satisfaction of giving support to those in need.

Phase II (a new addition) is close to commencement. The County should receive the required documents shortly and their approval is expected as soon as the end of this month. Then, weather depending, we could be involved with the erection of the 10' x 12' room addition in December, which will then allow us to work inside throughout the winter on updates in the existing portion of the house.

There will be lots to do and everyone with a willingness to join us can make a contribution (no experience is required). A commitment to participate on a regular basis is NOT requested. Just trying it once, however, has "hooked" many people to return again.

Please contact either Nancy Goodfellow or Hal Schulman should you desire additional information or to confirm your participation. As a reminder, preparing lunches for the work crew is another valuable means of volunteering—and this can be offered by a group of people so the full load is not on only one individual.

New UUs Sessions Summary

A big thanks to all who participated in the recent Fall "New UUs" Sessions! The presentations included Jim Frazier's history of Unitarian Universalism, Mick Jaggard's history and walking tour of our church, Al Drover's "UUSG Ministers on a Stick", Bill Pokorny's explanation of how things work in our church, George Tattersfield's financial talk, and last, but not least, Dr. Lindsay Bates' explanation of our Faith Traditions along with her own personal spiritual journey.

Our participants were: Dawn & George Christ, Kathy Cornell, Janie Doutsos, Jerre Henriksen, Vera Lind & Aaron Fogleman, Alice Martin, Jill Thiel, Kerri & Mike Trejo, and Tad Vogl.

Steeple Walk

If you enjoyed the music of Kristin McFadden and her "Cardboard Heart" friends at our Veteran's Day services, you might like to attend the Steeple Walk on Sunday afternoon of December 4. This talented group will again be performing at UUSG. There will be four churches with entertaining music that afternoon. Tickets are \$12 each. Contact Gail Tattersfield for ticket information.

DECEMBER 2011

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<p>27 <i>Senior Minister on Vacation</i> 8:00 AM Choir Rehearsal 9:30 AM & 11:15 AM Worship & Church School; Social Time at 10:30 AM 11:15 AM Big Ideas Covenant Group 12:45 PM Sandel's "Justice" Study Group 2:00 PM Sanctuary Reserved for Private Recording</p>	<p>28 Sanctuary Reserved for Private Recording <i>Senior Minister on Vacation</i> 9:00 AM PIONEER NEWSLETTER DEADLINE</p>	<p>29 Sanctuary Reserved for Private Recording <i>Senior Minister on Vacation</i> 6:30 PM Canvass Committee Meeting 7:30 PM Compassionate Communication Study Group</p>	<p>30 <i>Church School Administrator's Day Off</i> <i>Senior Minister's Day Off</i> 11:00 AM Memorial Service for Helen Hawkins (Visitation at 9:30am, luncheon to follow service) 6:00 PM Pioneer Mailing Prep 7:00 PM Tish Hinojosa Concert 7:00 PM UU Buddhism Meditation and Study Group 7:30 PM GAS AA</p>	<p>1 <i>Senior Minister's Sabbath</i> 9:15 AM Simple Living Circle 6:30 PM Cookie Walk Set-up 7:00 PM Youth Outlook (youth can begin arriving at 6:30pm) 7:15 PM WomenSpirit Rising</p>	<p>2 <i>Church School Administrator's Day Off</i> <i>Congregational Administrator's Day Off</i> 4:30 PM Cookie Walk</p>	<p>3 <i>Church School Administrator's Day Off</i> <i>Congregational Administrator's Day Off</i> 9:00 AM - 3:00 PM Pottawatomie Habitat for Humanity Workday 9:30 AM Music Rehearsal 12:45 PM Choir Rehearsal</p>
<p>4 9:30 AM & 11:15 AM Worship & Church School; Social Time at 10:30 AM 11:15 AM Big Ideas Covenant Group 12:30 PM Green Sanctuary Committee Meeting 12:30 PM Parents' Group Meeting 12:30 PM UU Atheism/Humanism Study Group 12:30 PM Welcoming Congregation Team Meeting 2:00 PM Steeple Walk</p>	<p>5 7:30 PM Technology Committee Meeting</p>	<p>6 <i>Congregational Administrator Out of the Office</i> 7:30 PM Program & Administrative Councils</p>	<p>7 <i>Church School Administrator's Day Off</i> <i>Congregational Administrator Out of the Office</i> <i>Senior Minister's Day Off</i> 7:00 PM UU Buddhism Meditation and Study Group 7:30 PM GAS AA</p>	<p>8 <i>Congregational Administrator Out of the Office</i> <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</p>	<p>9 <i>Congregational Administrator Out of the Office</i> 6:30 PM YRUU Potluck & Service Project</p>	<p>10 <i>Church School Administrator's Day Off</i> <i>Congregational Administrator Out of the Office</i> 9:00 AM - 3:00 PM Pottawatomie Habitat for Humanity Workday</p>
<p>11 <i>Congregational Administrator Out of the Office</i> 9:30 AM & 11:15 AM Worship & Church School; Social Time at 10:30 AM 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 12:45 PM Choir Rehearsal 12:45 PM Communications Committee Meeting 1:00 PM "Munch & Learn" Lecture Series 2:00 PM Lay Ministers' Meeting</p>	<p>12 <i>Congregational Administrator Out of the Office</i> 12:00 PM Women's Guild Luncheon (off-site) 7:00 PM Reiki Discussion Group 7:30 PM LRE Committee Meeting</p>	<p>13 <i>Congregational Administrator Out of the Office</i> 7:30 PM Board of Directors</p>	<p>14 <i>Church School 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</p>	<p>15 <i>Senior Minister's Sabbath</i> 7:00 PM Youth Outlook (youth can begin arriving at 6:30pm)</p>	<p>16 <i>Church School Administrator's Day Off</i> <i>Congregational Administrator's Day Off</i> 7:00 PM Friday Flicks</p>	<p>17 <i>Church School Administrator's Day Off</i> <i>Congregational Administrator's Day Off</i> 9:00 AM - 3:00 PM Pottawatomie Habitat for Humanity Workday 12:30 PM RSVP: Holiday Party at the Illinois Youth Center</p>
<p>18 9:30 AM & 11:15 AM Worship & Church School; Social Time at 10:30 AM 10:00 AM Hospitality & Fellowship Committee Meeting 10:45 AM Communications Committee Meeting 11:00 AM Visitors & Newcomers Mini-Orientation Session 11:15 AM Big Ideas Covenant Group 12:45 PM Choir Rehearsal 12:45 PM Visitors & Newcomers Mini-Orientation Session 7:00 PM Reiki Share</p>	<p>19 9:00 AM PIONEER NEWSLETTER DEADLINE 7:00 PM "The Bible for UUs" Study Group</p>	<p>20 7:00 PM Reiki Share</p>	<p>21 <i>Church School 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 GAS AA</p>	<p>22 <i>Senior Minister's Sabbath</i> 7:00 PM Youth Outlook (youth can begin arriving at 6:30pm) 7:30 PM Write Time Writers' Group</p>	<p>23 <i>Church School Administrator's Day Off</i> <i>Congregational Administrator's Day Off</i></p>	<p>24 Christmas Eve <i>Office Closed</i> 4:00 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> 9:30 AM Holiday Potluck Brunch</p>	<p>26</p>	<p>27</p>	<p>28 <i>Church School 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 (meeting off-site) 7:30 PM GAS AA</p>	<p>29 <i>Senior Minister's Sabbath</i> 7:00 PM Youth Outlook (youth can begin arriving at 6:30pm)</p>	<p>30 <i>Church School Administrator's Day Off</i> <i>Congregational Administrator's Day Off</i></p>	<p>31 New Year's Eve <i>Office Closed</i></p>

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Our Staff

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minister@uusg.org
Office Hours: by appointment

Katie Phillips, *Congregational Administrator*
office@uusg.org
Office Hours: Sunday-Thursday, 9am-2pm

Deb Askelson, *Church School Administrator*
LRE@uusg.org
Office Hours: Sunday-Tuesday, Thursday

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 19, 2011 at 9am. Please send all articles to BOTH office@uusg.org AND minister@uusg.org.