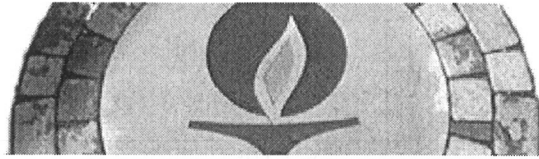




Unitarian Universalist  
Society of Geneva



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# Pioneer Newsletter

## March - April 2016

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### From the Pulpit

the Rev. Dr. Lindsay Bates

There's a note from the MOM team (Ministry on Ministries) [elsewhere in this newsletter](#), with the team's official charge and function described. Rev. Scott and I both hope that you'll remember these folks are here to help with communications and any concerns within the church community. They'll bring those concerns to us and help us find the best way to respond – a conversation, an action, whatever best addresses the need. Our preference, of

- Saying "Thank You!"
- UUSG Turns 175!
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  - Giving "Beyond Our Walls"
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course, is that you come to us directly – but we understand that that isn't always easy. So please know that you can always talk to MOM...

But you can also always talk with us clergy!

Many years ago, the Rev. Peter Lee Scott came up with a list of "When to Call the Minister." It's gone through many revisions as time has passed; here's one of the more recent iterations, adapted from the newsletter of the UU Congregation of Gwinnett in Lawrenceville GA, with some changes to match our Geneva possibilities:

- You don't know Rev. Scott or Rev. Lindsay, but would like to.
- You are upset with one of us, or would like to express appreciation.
- You have religious or spiritual or ethical or moral questions.
- You are seeking to deepen your spiritual practices.
- You would like to request prayers or Reiki for yourself or for a friend or member of your family who is in need of comfort and healing energy.
- You're dealing with a challenge that hypnotism might help you overcome

and you'd like to work with Rev. Lindsay.

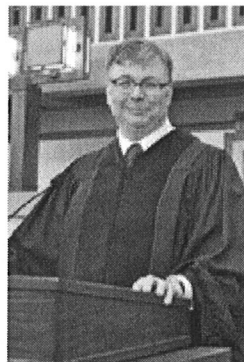
- You have problems with your job, children, marriage, parents, school, or anything else where a listening ear might help you sort through the issues.
- You are going to the hospital, having surgery, find out you have a serious illness or condition, or know of someone else in the congregation dealing with these experiences. (Remember that hospitals can no longer legally notify us of your hospitalization; you must let us know yourself!)
- Someone close to you has died or is critically ill or you're dealing with a significant loss or transition of any kind.
- You are planning to be married, separated, or divorced.
- You or someone close to you is dealing with questions about sexual or gender identity.
- You would like your child dedicated in a special blessing ceremony.
- You are pregnant and glad you are, or you are and

wish you weren't.

- You want to be pregnant but aren't, or you are considering adoption.
- You feel ready to join the congregation, or have questions about membership.
- You want to explore new ways to engage in congregational life.
- You have concerns or suggestions related to congregational life.
- You want to make a large donation to the church or remember the church in your will.
- Your life circumstances have changed and you want to be sure you still belong at UUSG. (Hint: You do. But if you want to talk about it, call one of us!)

Peace ~ Lindsay

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## Scott's REgards

the Rev. Scott Talbot Lewis

In February, I preached a sermon entitled "A Sanctuary." At the end of that sermon I posed a question – are we, the members and friends of the Unitarian Universalist Society of Geneva, willing and able to provide the location and volunteer support to provide a Geneva location for Youth Outlook, a local organization that provides support to LGBTQ youth?

The answer was a resounding and enthusiastic YES!

In the meantime, Lynn Steele, Kerri Trejo, and I have been doing the legwork to make this intention a reality. We still need volunteers! The volunteer training and commitment is extensive. Training involves a commitment to three 8-hour training sessions over three successive Saturdays.

I do understand the sacrifice that entails. Our church membership is comprised mainly of hardworking professionals who work long hours and savor our weekends as our time with family doing the things we enjoy. I get it! I feel the same way.

But our Board of Directors has laid down five goals for this year and to me the most important is: "Make a positive difference in our community." Offering a refuge for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Queer (LGBTQ) youth is about the most important thing we can do! Other UU congregations in our area are onboard!

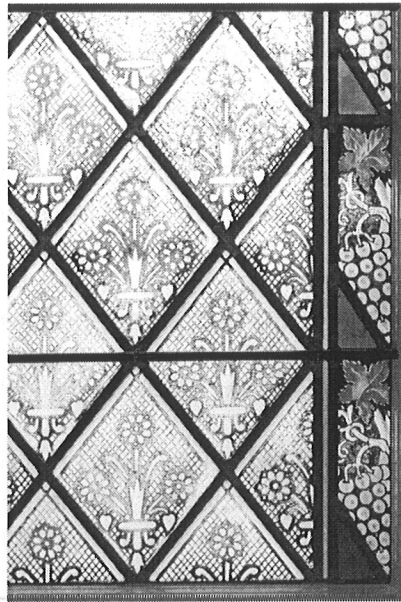
The program focuses on three main areas: youth development, parent support, and community education. We will be progressively more involved in that order as our ministry to the LGBTQ community grows and strengthens.

If you want to know more, come talk to me anytime, or better still attend one of the informational meetings scheduled in Naperville (on April 7 and 20) or DeKalb (on April 14).

You can come to me... But I will be making the rounds enlisting the support these kids need and deserve. We'll be working with Nancy Mullen, Executive Director of Youth Outlook, and Rachel Maley, Program Administrator, to provide the services that might save a young life.

With joy, love and gratitude,  
Rev. Scott

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## **boardblog: The Beginning of a Beautiful Spring**

We are really looking forward to April, with a variety of important and enjoyable happenings in the works. This coming Saturday, April 2, we will celebrate the UUSG Annual Day of Service with many of you. We hope to see you at the service activities, as we make very real our dedication to “promoting practical goodness in the world,” and to see you during the 5pm service in the Sanctuary and at the (delicious) dinner that begins at 6pm.

It’s so much fun, and so satisfying, to be part of a group of like-hearted people who are focusing a block of time and energy on doing something tangible to make the world a better place. This is one of our greatest strengths, and something worthy of a celebration. Thanks in advance to everyone who will be participating, and if you can’t join us this time, we hope you will be able to next year!

All of these happenings are part of the kick-off for the UUSG Annual Pledge Drive, which begins on April 2nd and wraps up on the 17th. Under the leadership of Kevin Beyer, Stewardship Team Leader, our wonderful Pledge Drive Team is gearing up to contact everyone (UUSG members and friends) to extend an invitation to get together for a brief in-person conversation.

We’d like to talk about the ways UUSG is meaningful in your life, share related joys & concerns, answer questions about the Pledge Drive, and encourage you to consider the importance of UUSG in your life as you decide on your pledge for the coming fiscal year.

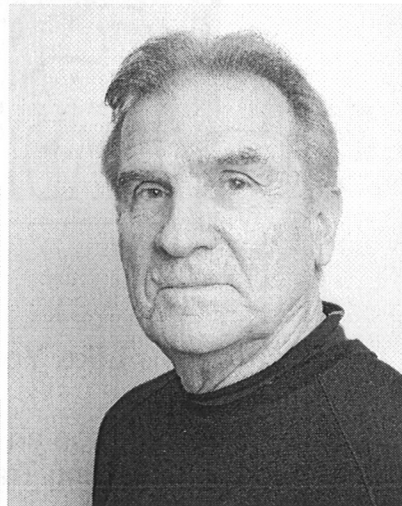
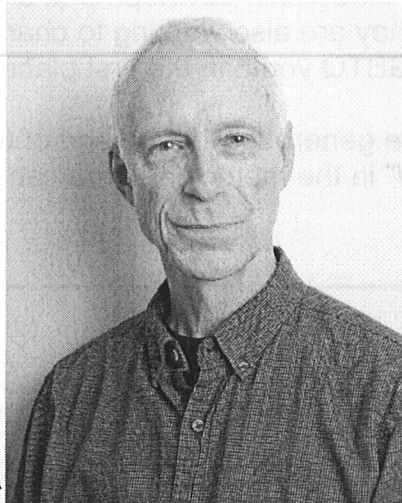
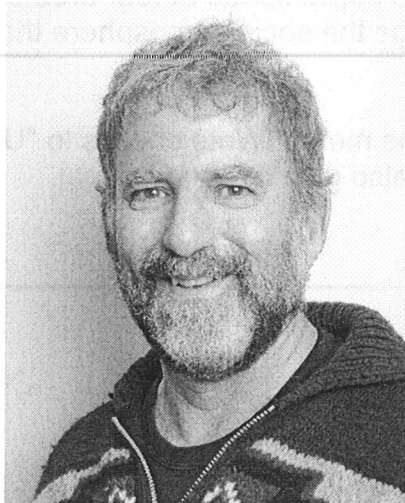
We are especially excited by our first-ever Matching Gift Challenge (thanks to Lisa Gades for this terrific idea!) – a unique fund that has been created by a group of UUSG members. This fund will match dollar-for-dollar every amount that is pledged above your last year’s pledge (or, if you didn’t pledge last year, your entire pledge!), up to a total of \$10,000 from the entire congregation. We hope this opportunity will stimulate everyone to rise to the challenge as we all make our decisions about our

pledge amounts.

Lots of other things are going on in April, of course, including Earth Day-related activities, the Tom Neilson concert at 7:30pm on the 9th, the Friday Flick on the 22nd, and all the usual and unique opportunities for engagement at UUSG. We look forward to seeing you on April 2nd, on Sundays and at other times, and we hope April will be the beginning of a beautiful spring season for all!

Questions or comments? Contact the [Board of Directors](#).

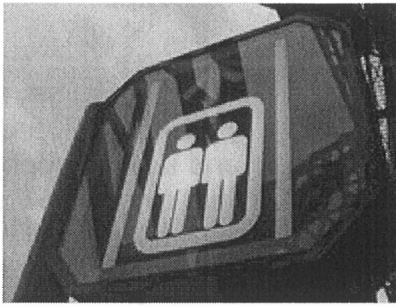
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### **Welcome Home!**

Our newest members – Dave Hanchette, Bill Koehl, Robert Savage, Julie Reynolds, and Steve Reynolds – signed “The Book” on March 13.

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## Supporting LGBTQ Youth

The "Beyond Our Walls" recipient for March is Youth Outlook, the only agency in the DuPage, Kane, and DeKalb counties of Illinois that is dedicated solely to serving LGBTQ youth. They provide wellness education, leadership development, and social space at four area drop-in centers. They are also working to change the social atmosphere that imperils LGBTQ youth in the first place.

Please give generously by the end of the month! Write checks to "UUSG" with "BOW" in the memo line. You can also give through Paypal.

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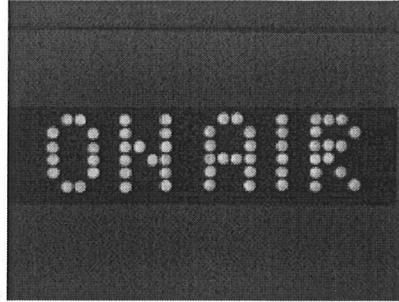


## Would You Like Your Own Hymnal?

A number of people have indicated an interest in owning their own copy of the gray hymnal "Singing the Living Tradition" and/or the teal hymnal "Singing the Journey."

We are going to place a bulk order with the UUA Bookstore and split the shipping, so if you'd like to order one (or more), send your request to Katie Phillips by April 1.

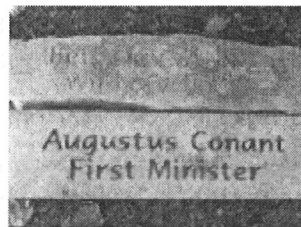
The gray hymnal is \$28 and the teal is \$18. Your total cost will depend on the shipping rate (which is determined by how many hymnals we order). Before the order is placed, you will be contacted with your total for final approval.



## Supporting NPR, Supporting UUSG

UUSG is a Corporate Sponsor of Northern Public Radio, which broadcasts WNIJ (89.5FM) and WNIU (90.5FM). As a sponsor, we can advertise UUSG fundraisers – including this summer’s Pizza Booth – on both stations.

To help us continue this important publicity, we’re asking for your help. Write a check to UUSG with “NPR” on the memo line, and the Communications Team will match your contribution (up to a maximum total match of \$250). You can also give through [Paypal](#). We’ll accept donations through the end of March.

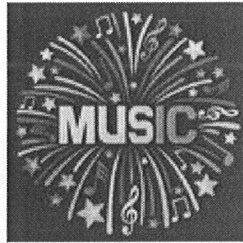


## Memorial Stones

On May 29, we’ll dedicate new memorial stones as they’re installed in the Memorial Garden.

If you would like to remember a loved one with a carved stone, talk to our Congregational Administrator, Katie Phillips, or give her an [order form](#) by April 1.

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## **A Musical March**

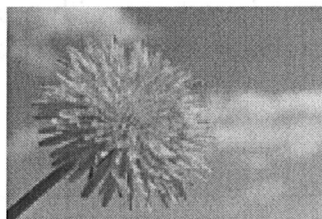
We've been treated to an eclectic treasure trove of music and song, beginning with the student-led YRUU service. From their ranks, the talented performers were Mary Phillips on violin, Alexander Cordogan on piano and violin, singer Mara Handler joined by Mary on ukulele, and guitarist Grace Christiani in a vocal solo, with the entire team singing the postlude.

Next, we welcomed back the terrific duo of guitarist Andy Montgomery and daughter Ellie Montgomery on piano, taking turns on lead vocals, while pianist Patricia Arzaga turned in a moving vocal solo of her own. The RE Music Program Students, led by Sandra Anderson-Cordogan, shared the charming song they had worked on.

The Taize service of chanted song was led by gifted vocalist Cynthia Spiegel, with accompaniment by Wendy Evans-Glazier on violin, Tracy Rosenkrans on double bass, Meredith Vandre on flute, and Geoff Pynn at the piano. Pianists sharing their expressive artistry were Dean Malambri at the Tenebrae service and Sandra Anderson-Cordogan on Easter Sunday.

In April, we can look forward to the musical talents of Tom Zimmerman, Lynn Fisher McCanne, Sandra Anderson-Cordogan, Quinn Welsh, and Lillian Lau.

Every weekend is a one-of-a-kind creation. Each of our musicians and groups carefully prepares music to fit the particular service, presenting a worship experience that we believe is unique to the area. To share your own special gift, offer suggestions, or express your appreciation of our work, please reach out to Music Director [Tracy Rosenkrans](#).



**Attention All Weeders!**



Spring has sprung at UUSG and so have the weeds! Our Groundskeeping Group is looking for teams of people to tend a section of church property Spring through Fall 2016 in our new "Adopt-A-Plot" program.

If you're interested in helping, click [here](#) and select the section you'd like to adopt. Your "Plot Captain" will contact you with further details.

If you have any questions, contact [Karen Laukaitis](#).

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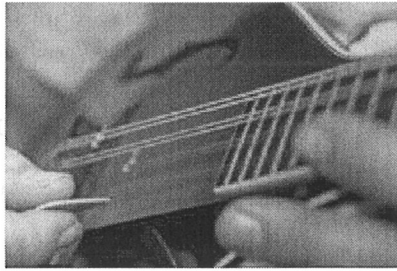
### **Commit to Knit**

Feeling blessedly lucky this month? Share your abundance by contributing needlework projects to women and children around the world through UUSG Commit to Knit and [Women4Women Knitting4Peace](#). If you have any interest or experience in knitting, crocheting, or quilting, please join us in making such items as scarves, shawls, baby blankets, bibs, toys, and sleeping mats.

We work mostly at home but also gather between services on the first Sunday of each month in the Common Room. Our next meeting is April 3, when we'll concentrate on making Peace Pals (stuffed toys).

Questions, suggestions, donations? Contact [Katherine Lyons](#).

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## Tom Neilson Concert

On April 9 at 7:30pm, UUSG will again welcome Tom Neilson, a popular folk musician who performs political satire, parody, and general social commentary. The concert will be performed in the UUSG Sanctuary. Tickets may be purchased at the door and will cost \$20. Doors will open at 7pm.

Using humor, compassion, and outrage, Neilson will perform songs about a variety of themes concerning the world and the environment. As one reviewer noted, "No worthy cause goes unnoticed by Tom." Another commented, "the sophistication of his writing brings together some of the finest components of song and comedy, and has resulted in his winning several music awards."

Most recently, Neilson won an Independent Music Awards Song of the Year for his song about whistleblowing, "It's a Crime." The song is linked to on [his website](#).

Known for his generous support of social change groups, Tom has agreed to donate proceeds from the concert to the Fox River Ecosystem Partnership, whose mission is to promote, preserve, protect, and enhance the natural, cultural, economic, and recreational resources of the Fox River Watershed.



## Get Involved With Interweave

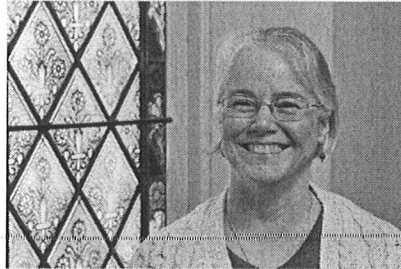
Interweave is a local group of LGBTQ members, friends and allies who meet once a month to have time together for discussions and special events.



They will meet at 12:30pm on Sunday, April 17 to discuss a drop-in center for Youth Outlook and plan for their June picnic.

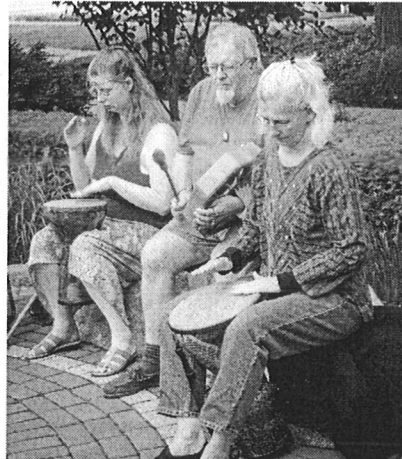
For more information, please contact Lynn Steele.

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### **Upcoming Staff Time Off**

- Our Senior Minister, the Rev. Dr. Lindsay Bates, will be on Retreat April 18-25.
  - Our Assistant Minister, the Rev. Scott Talbot Lewis, will be on Study Leave April 28 - May 1.
- 



### **Drumming as a Spiritual Practice**

The UUSG Women's Circle will host "Drumming As A Spiritual Practice" on Saturday, April 23, 1-4pm. This afternoon will provide opportunities for the women of the church to come together in companionship and to grow in their spiritual practice. Our April program is the last of the planned six sessions.

Along with the drumming experience, we expect to provide time for input

and planning possible future sessions of the Women's Circle Ministry.  
Please mark your calendars and join us!

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### **Special Budget Board Meeting**

All UUSG members are invited to attend a special Board meeting on  
Tuesday, April 26 at 7pm.

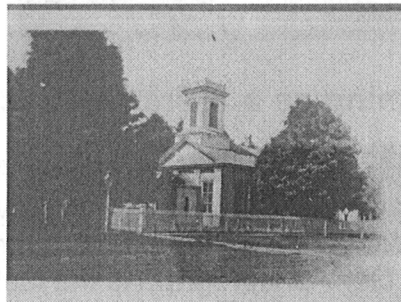
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### **Saying "Thank You!"**

If you would like to write "Thank You" notes to pledgers during this year's  
Pledge Drive, please sign up with an email to [Katie Phillips](mailto:Katie.Phillips@uusg.org).

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### **UUSG Turns 175!**

Seems like only yesterday it was 1842 and we were a religiously diverse group of Geneva settlers, no more than a couple dozen folk, signing our assent to the original Covenant of the First Christian Congregation of Geneva. Now we're looking at our 175th Anniversary in June 2017.

Clearly, there must be a party!

Planning is beginning for special activities in the spring and early summer of 2017, and we need some more idea-folks and organizers and volunteers to help make things happen.

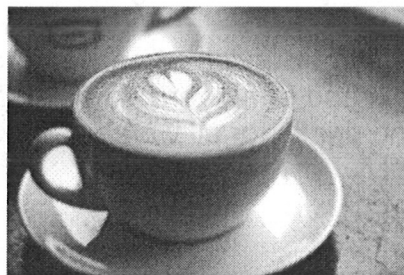
We've already got the Augustus Conant Pageant that Diane Handler created a few years ago lined up for the first weekend in June 2017. We're thinking it will happen on that Sunday morning, followed by our 175th Birthday Party.

Other ideas that have come up include a tea room during Swedish Days, docents in period costumes talking to visitors about our church's story during Swedish Days, a float in the Swedish Days Parade (since we're an important part of Geneva's story, maybe we could even arrange for Augustus Conant to be the Grand Marshall!).

Would you enjoy being part of the planning? Let Rev. Lindsay know that you'd like to be part of the team that makes it all happen. (And if there is no team, there will be no party. No one is going to be cornered into doing it all by him or herself!)

Sign up with an email to [Rev. Lindsay](#).

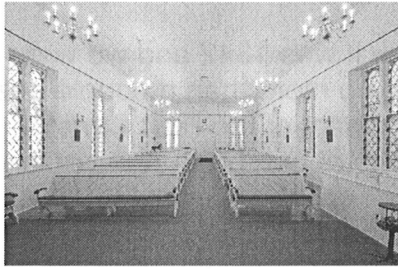
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### **Radical Hospitality**

Our Hospitality & Fellowship Team is in need of new members. If you love our Social Hours and holiday events, please join them. [Contact the team](#) for more info or to offer your help.

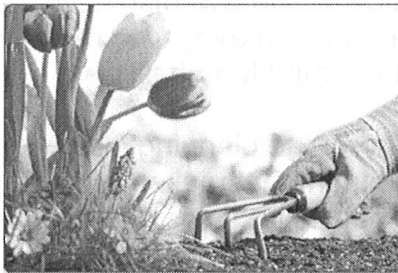
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## Mark Your Calendars: Annual Meeting

Our annual Congregational Meeting will be held on Sunday, May 15, immediately after the 2nd service. To ensure that we have enough voting members in attendance to form a quorum, please sign up [here](#) to tell us whether or not you plan to attend.

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## Spring Is In the Air

Our annual Spring Spruce-Up will be held on Saturday, May 21. We have lots of different jobs that need to be done including weeding, mulching, trimming and general tidying up. Even if you don't have a green thumb, please join us as we spruce up our UUSG grounds!

This is also our monthly Day of Service when we practice practical goodness in our own back (and front) yard. The Hospitality & Fellowship Team will provide food and drinks for all workers. Please arrive between 9am and 11am to help out.

Sign up [here](#).

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## **New2U Marketplace**

A fountain. An arbor. Glitter for your garden.

Check out the new spring things in the New2U marketplace.

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## **Food Bank in March**

The March 12 trip to the Northern Illinois Food Bank had great results! Together we packaged 657 Senior Boxes (containing 6,804 pounds of food) and 630 Children's Backpacks (containing 7,560 pounds of food).

Thank you to our volunteers: Allyson Armstrong, Kevin Beyer, Betty Bristol, Mylane Bryant, Quinn Bryant, Steve Bryant, James Carroll, Jamie Carroll, Elke Chateau, Griffin Johnson, Kate Johnson, Liam Johnson, William Koehl, Matt McGahan, Gary Noll, Kathie Noll, Page Poris, Hamid Rusef, Ramsey Ruseff, Bob Swanson, Jori Swift, Pat Vary, Chris Weithers, and Josh White.

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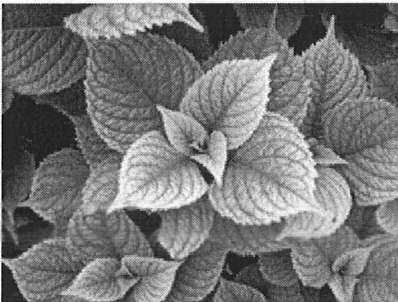


### **Circles of Life**

This month, we mourned the loss and celebrated the life of church member Kathy Basil, who passed away on March 1. We send our loving condolences to her family.

Our thoughts and prayers are also with Julia Friesen, whose father passed away on March 23.

On the other side of the circle, we welcomed a new baby into the world -- Michelle Irene Slaiher, Kathy Cornell's newest grandchild! Baby Michelle joined proud mom & dad Amanda & Jacques, big brother Elliott, and big sister Cynthia.



### **Green Corner: Earth Month Is Here!**

St. Paddy's Day is over, but green is still everywhere because this is a Celebration of Earth, all month at UUSG. In fact, church is a perfect place to start, as the whole month of Sundays – and even in-between – features the environment in some interesting and special way.

**Tom Neilson's musical program** on Saturday, April 9 is about eco-justice with Tom's own original lyrics, songs, and guitar. He can amuse and sober us, all in the same song, and will sound enjoyable throughout. Tickets are \$20 (and include refreshments). [Learn more about Tom.](#)

The next day, April 10th, during worship services you'll watch "**The Water Girls**" by a few RE kids with a realistic undertaking. And Social Hour's fare will be provided by Green Sanctuary Team.



We can appreciate more fully our most important survival resource, water, by watching an award-winning film, "[DamNation](#)," free of charge on the 22nd at 7pm. Water expert Jeff Mengler will introduce the film and lead an interesting discussion afterward. [Fox River Ecosystem Partnership](#) (FREP) is our month's beneficiary and is sponsoring this film along with three other local environmental organizations.

Of course there has to be a **green sale** during April, on the 24th. It features again our excellently hand-sewn reusable gift bags, some bird books, other green items, and – naturally – rain barrels because it's that time of year again. We will sell Equal Exchange coffees, teas, oil, and a variety of chocolate and cocoas. Have you noticed? GST sales always feature a discount to our buyers! And by the way, don't forget to observe the Green Sanctuary Team's bulletin board, which will vary topics throughout the month.

Finally, Green Sanctuary is again pleased to have in store for you – thanks to Trish Beckjord – the **native plant sale** in May (because April is still too early for them). We're hoping to see everyone enjoying themselves all through April, as together we wend our way through UUSG's annual Earth Month.



### **Giving "Beyond Our Walls"**

In February 2016, we collected \$1,051 for the first Young Adult Habitat for Humanity trip, which will take place May 25-29, 2016. The trip is open to members of the UUSG community ages 18-30.

For this first trip, they will be traveling to Boone County Iowa to frame a house for a family of 8. They will only be taking 20 people for this first trip, so if you are interested in going or would like more information, please contact [Lily Phillips](#).

We also collected \$1,595 for our high schooler's Habitat for Humanity trip.

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## Volunteer Appreciation

We give our heartfelt thanks to the following people:

Lisa Gades for planning and coordinating a “Day of Service” for us each and every month! [Learn more.](#)

Trish Beckjord and the Women’s Circle planning group for starting a successful new ministry focused on women's spirituality and friendship. Lots of time and effort have gone into these monthly sessions presented by UU women. Sessions have focused on meditation and everyday spirituality, with two more sessions coming in March and April. [Learn more.](#)

The UUSG Team that won 2nd Place in this year's Literacy Trivia Bee! Congratulations to Brian Joose, Julia Adams, and Michele Hoecker.

Greeters: YRUU Youth, Llona Steele, Elke Chateau, Kerri Trejo, Karen Laukaitis, Patricia Ward, Sandy & Dan Bottoms, Louise & Tom Haslett, Jason Sapet, and all our last-minute recruits

Social Hour Hosts: Parents of YRUU Youth, YRUU Youth, the WOW Team, the Welcoming Team, recent "New UUs" Program participants, and the Hospitality & Fellowship Team

Counters: Davis de Coriolis, Ellie Radvanovsky, Kevin O'Neill, George Tattersfield, Brad Lipman, Jamie Carroll, Patricia Ward, Karen Laukaitis, and the Finance Team





## Who You Gonna Call?!

Call MOM!

Our Ministry on Ministries team is here to listen and to help if you have concerns, questions, suggestions about anything at all here at UUSG. MOM's official charge is to strengthen the quality, effectiveness, and health of our congregation and our professional clergy by acting as a confidential sounding board. We serve as a kind of "spiritual personnel committee," facilitating communications between professional staff and congregation, committees, other staff in order to promote the overall religious health of UUSG.

So if you have a comment, a concern, a question, an observation you'd like brought to the attention of our ministers in particular or church leadership in general, but you aren't sure how to get that issue addressed, come to MOM. We're glad to listen and glad to help.

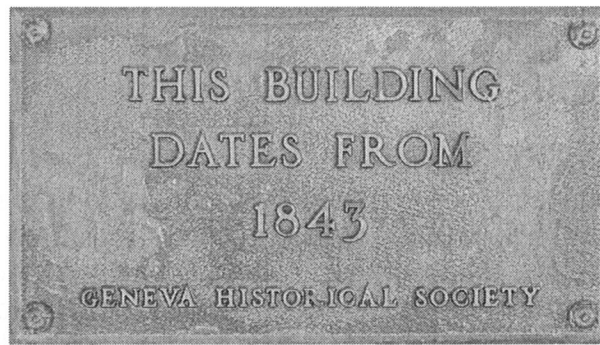
We're Deb Brod, Jim Frazier, Debbie Leoni, Patrick McGleam, Ellie Radvanovsky, Pat Ward and Molly MacKay Zacker. Rev. Lindsay and Rev. Scott are ex officio members. We're all in the Directory!



## Do You Paypal?

Did you know that you can pay your pledge via [Paypal](#)? Set it up today and then don't worry about having to write a check every month...

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## Board Meeting Summary

March 8, 2016

1. The Board approved several changes to the Bylaws which will be voted on by the congregation at the Annual Meeting in May.
2. The Geneva Historical Museum has approached UUSG to be one of three Emergency Command Centers if disaster struck the Museum.
3. Kevin Beyer described what he and Lisa Gades have organized for several activities planned for the Day of Service and the help needed from the Board.
4. The Pledge Drive is starting soon and volunteers are needed to take a short Training session at 11:30am on Sunday the 13th or the 20th. A successful drive depends on all of us.
5. Kevin O'Neill presented the first draft of the 2016-17 budget with a large deficit that must be reduced by both more cuts and increase in revenue.



Website



Podcast



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