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Unitarian Universalist  
Society of Geneva



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# Pioneer Newsletter

## July ~ August, 2021

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## **UUSG Re-Opening: Let's Get This Party Started!**

Homecoming is around the corner, and we are all excited to, once again, be together in our wonderful church building and seeing everyone in person.

To make that happen safely, smoothly, and inclusively, the Re-Opening Task Force is monitoring the news and the environment (the delta variant, potential return of mask mandates, the everchanging number of positive cases in our county), and while all of that will influence our final plans, right now... we are all systems GO!

In early August, the Task Force will meet to discuss the essential elements of the re-opening to be sure they are receiving the needed attention, including music, religious education, and of course, our Homecoming picnic.

### **Here's what we do know:**

1. Homecoming Sunday, September 12, is happening! There will be a worship service! There will be a picnic in Wheeler Park! More details soon.
2. Attending the Sunday morning services remotely will continue to be an option into the foreseeable future. The Board has committed to a big technology upgrade that will keep our "hybrid" worship services inclusive, interactive, and high-quality.
3. Religious education programming will begin on Homecoming Sunday!
4. The Facilities Team, Rev. Scot, and other church members are working towards a Sanctuary refresh that will maintain our historic

charm and provide an updated look.

5. Following guidance from the UUA, CDC, Chicago Public Schools, WHO, and others, face masks will be required in the building for everyone. We are so grateful that a large percentage of our congregation are vaccinated, but we know that those under 12 are not yet even eligible to receive a vaccination, and more, that there are members and guests who are not fully vaccinated. For now, we are asking that everyone mask up, regardless of their vaccination status, to help us welcome everyone safely.

### **Congregational Meeting**

We will have 3 all-congregation meeting options (via Zoom) to provide an open forum for people to ask questions and learn more about the re-opening. You need not attend them all, but we are hoping that you will join us for one. Those dates are:

- Wednesday, August 11 at 7:00 p.m.
- Thursday, August 12 at 7:00 p.m.
- Friday, August 13 at noon

The Zoom Link is for all three meetings is below, and on our calendar:

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88524354138>

Meeting ID: 885 2435 4138

This is a work in progress, and we appreciate your patience and understanding!


Rev. Scot Hull, Minister & Molly MacKay Zacker, Board President

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## Re-Opening Congregational Survey

To help us with our Fall planning, we would appreciate some feedback about your plans for attendance. [Please take our survey here.](#)




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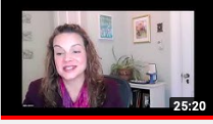
**Sermon - Fathers Day 06-20-21**  
19 views · 1 month ago




**Sermon - Juneteenth 06-13-21**




**Sermon - Pride Sunday 06-06-21**



**Sermon - Diversity is Not the Point: Lessons from Tulsa...**



**Sermon - UU History 60th Anniversary 05-16-21**



**Sermon - Mother's Day Service 05-09-21**

## UUSG YouTube Channel - Sermons and More

Did you know UUSG has a [YouTube channel](#)? We post Rev. Scot's sermons, many of our guest speaker's sermons, UUSG member testimonials, and more! Thinking of inviting a friend to UUSG? Sharing a video is a great way for them to get an introduction to our church community. Remember to subscribe!





## Volunteers Needed for Youth Programs

As we approach Homecoming Sunday on September 12 with excitement and cautious optimism, we have numerous critical roles to fill to meet the needs of our youth. Please help UU youth by volunteering your time and talents in any of the following ways:

### Teachers

For the 2021-22 school year, we are shifting to a middle hour RE program, so no more missing the church service (we continue to offer two services, before and after RE). Every classroom has two teachers, typically teaching twice per month. Everything you need is provided, from curriculum to on-the-job training. You can start as the assistant teacher until you get to know the ropes. Grade levels of need include K-2, 3-5 and middle school.

Number needed: 2 for a bi-weekly commitment

### Arts & Exploration (A&E) Volunteers

For our kids in K-5 who are unable to sit through an hour of church, we will offer A&E. This program will provide parents with their usual time to themselves during the service while providing the youth with social engagement. Ideas include play outside, go on a scavenger hunt, make a craft, do a puzzle, play a game and more. Further details can be found [here](#).

Number needed: 6 people to offer a once per month commitment

### Substitute Teachers

On occasion, one of our regular teachers may not be available or not feel well the morning of church. In that case, we need a list of volunteers to call upon. Once a background check has been completed, your name can be part of this list.

Number needed: 6

## Nursery Care Employees

Upon reopening, we will need two nursery workers to be present for the duration of Sunday mornings. This is a paid position and ideally one of these people will be a consistent face in our nursery each week. The minimum age is 18 years. If you or anyone you know may be interested, please pass this on. The pay is \$13/hour. Job Description and further details can be found [here](#).

Please contact Becky Hruby, Director of Religious Education for Children and Youth, at [dre@uusg.org](mailto:dre@uusg.org) if you are interested in helping or simply learning more about any of these opportunities.



## UUSG Music

Guests in the pulpit this July have praised the thoughtful pairing of music to sermon themes.

Pianist Sandra Anderson and Music Director and vocalist Cynthia Spiegel teamed up several times for gorgeous collaborations, plus exquisite solo pieces by Sandra.

Michael Mackey on guitar led us with his spirited singing of the song of praise and doxology. And we enjoyed guest videos from other UU congregations.

Wonderful pianist Lynn Fisher McCanne brought distinctive color to her solos, and accompanied outstanding vocal duets by Cynthia and Kelly Herz. A harmonious combination featured Tom Zimmerman and Andy Montgomery on vocals and guitars. Bringing us the song of praise and doxology were the terrific trio of Geoff Pynn on keyboard, Tracey McFadden on guitar, and Andy on vocals.

We were treated to the dynamic father-daughter duo of Tracey and Kristen McFadden on vocals and guitars, including a great rendition of "Try a Little Kindness."

We capped July with the return of our talented UUSG Choir, plus exceptional piano pieces played by Angela Salvaggione. And she accompanied Cynthia, who introduced two hymns she'll be teaching us all in person later in the church year. In addition, Cynthia played her own

arrangement of a piano piece, and later provided not only vocals but simultaneously accompanied herself on recorder thanks to Zoom magic.



## Our House - Sanctuary Refresh

In August, several members of the Facilities and Technology Teams, along with other volunteers, will be refreshing the sanctuary. The goal is to have a renewed, welcoming sanctuary completed by the time in-person services are conducted again. The Reopening Taskforce and Board of Directors will reassess our re-opening plans in August.

The budget for this year included funding to install technology to “live stream” our in-person services. As a result, the Technology Team will be installing video equipment to broadcast and record “live” services, similar to our current Zoom services.

Also, a team of volunteers from the Facilities Team will paint the walls and wainscoting. This team will be led by Sean Hruby, one of our members and a professional painting contractor. It is time to repaint the sanctuary’s interior since it was last painted 12 years ago.

Lastly, Rev. Scot requested that we add more color to the sanctuary to provide more visual interest and energy. We’ll accomplish this by adding colorful banners that are easy to change as needed.

Our plans have been endorsed by the Board and the Heritage Team, and we are busy working on the details. More to come next month!





### **Summer 2021 Family Ministry Event!**

We've had a wonderful time meeting this summer! Open to all, we hope you will join us for our last event in August:

#### **Sunday, August 15, 1-3pm at Pottawatomie Park**

Meet at the small playground across from the mini golf course, between the bathrooms and parking lot. While there, enjoy two shaded playgrounds, the Fox River Trail, pavilion, mini golf and snack bar. UUSG will pick up the tab on an ice cream at the snack bar.







## Green Sanctuary Team News

First, one new item:

CLIMATE: More than 200 communities in the Chicago region devise a collective climate action plan that they say is the first of its kind in the U.S. ([WBEZ](#))

And then some pretty amazing stories you may have missed from earlier this summer:

[Climate is a corruption Story.](#)

[It's not the heat, it's the humidity.](#)

["Are we thinking about climate migration all wrong?" Hint: yes we are](#)

[The Utilities knew too.](#)

[So big it's boring: The Rise of Utility Scale Solar](#)

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## Social Justice News

**July 31 9-12: Northern Illinois Food Bank** - Help the hungry by packing food. Children ages 8 and up are welcome to volunteer with a parent. Please wear close-toed shoes. 273 Dearborn Ct., Geneva. [Sign up here.](#)

**August 7: Lazarus House Homeless Shelter** – Sign up to prepare sack lunches for 17 or to fix a casserole and salad for 12 or to stay overnight. 214 Walnut St., St. Charles. [Sign up here.](#)

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### Take Action in support of Actions of Immediate Witness Passed at the UUA Convention

- Make sure our US Senators know that you appreciate their support of the For the People Act and the John Lewis Voting Rights Act, both of which are essential for eliminating voter suppression, ensuring fair legislative districts, demanding transparency with respect to ethics and campaign finance, and more! [Contact for Senator Duckworth](#) , [Contact for Senator Durbin](#)
- [Participate in For The People Phone Banking](#) sponsored by Common Cause. You would be trained to call voters in targeted states and connect them to their Senators to support the For the People Act and eliminate the filibuster.

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### Take Action to tell the St. Charles School Board that you support Culturally Responsive Instruction

School districts in Illinois are receiving pressure from individuals who

oppose offering Culturally Responsive Instruction. At the most recent St. Charles School Board meeting, 150 members of the public showed up, with 2 to 1 voicing opposition.

Plan on attending the next St. Charles School Board meeting: 7-9 pm Monday, August 9, Haines Center 305 S. 9th St., St. Charles

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### **The Diversity Equity and Inclusion Committee Needs YOU!**

Anyone who is interested in helping plan and coordinate the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) initiatives at UUSG is invited to volunteer for the DEI committee by sending a message to [DEI@uusg.org](mailto:DEI@uusg.org).

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### **The Inclusion Book Club**

Join Rev. Scot, Lisa Gades, and UUSG members and friends in a monthly exploration of diversity, equity, and inclusion. Our meetings are on the third Tuesday of every month at 7pm; the next one is August 17. The next book will be [Rage Becomes Her](#) by Soraya Chemaly.

Anger in women and girls has long been less acceptable than anger in men and boys. And yet, anger is also a powerful signal that something is wrong, and action needs to be taken. Chemaly's book is important for anyone raised to suppress their anger and who now seeks to use it as a catalyst for change. [See Chemaly's TED Talk here](#). UUSG will have a limited number of copies of the book available. Please check with Christine to learn more or to sign up at [office@uusg.org](mailto:office@uusg.org). [Zoom Meeting Link](#). If you visit [uusg.org/calendar](https://uusg.org/calendar), and click on the event, the Zoom link will always be located there.

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## Styrofoam Recycling

**Sunday, August 1** is the next date for pick-up of styrofoam for recycling. The first Sunday of each month, 4pm is the pick-up date/time. You may drop off packages with styrofoam at the church in the **designated blue and black bins on the south side of the Pioneer House** starting the Thursday prior to the first Sunday of each month following the guidelines below. Please note the location; we understand some have left the styrofoam on the front porch. Alternatively, you may also drop packages off on the front porch of Styrofoam coordinators Diane and Roger Gallentine at **1871 Allen Drive in Geneva** during the same times. Email us at "[rgallen123@hotmail.com](mailto:rgallen123@hotmail.com)" or call at 630-677-6058 with any questions.

All styrofoam must be in bags (not in individual pieces) with food service styrofoam and packaging styrofoam in different bags. Food packaging must be washed or we will not be able to accept it, and it will go in the garbage bins. We take all contributions to the Dart recycling pick-up in North Aurora each month.

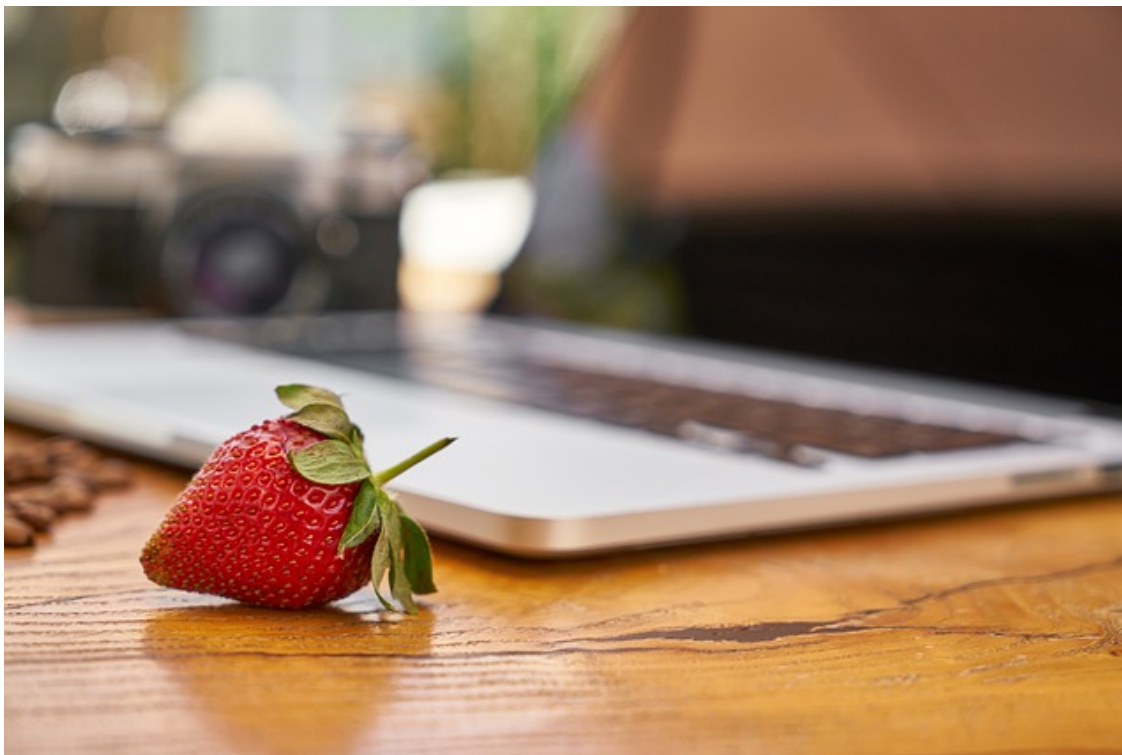
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## Summer Care and Conversation with Julia Jones!

Have something you're wrestling with? Something sitting on your heart? Some question burbling in your soul? Or maybe you just want someone to bounce it all off of? I mean, it has been a year, right? This summer, we are delighted to have this support from Julia Jones! And every hour that we make use of her compassionate ear will count towards the fulfillment of her educational requirements. At the very least, you'll have a nice conversation with a compassionate listener! For details, or if you would like to schedule time with Julia, please reach out to her at [jjones@meadville.edu](mailto:jjones@meadville.edu).

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## Summer BYO Lunches on Zoom!

Julia Jones, Meadville Lombard seminarian and spouse to Reverend Scot, will be hosting our summer lunch program. No agenda. No requirements. Come if you can, when you can. Just bring yourself, your concerns, your questions, your stories, your jokes—and your lunch—and join her (and your congregational friends!) in our virtual courtyard for an hour of conversation, connection, and community. Wednesdays at noon! [Zoom Meeting ID: 885 8448 0784](#).

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### Beyond Our Walls for August: Hesed House

Hesed House is a national model for ending homelessness – one person, one family at a time. They are the second-largest homeless shelter in the



State of Illinois, and the largest shelter outside of the city of Chicago. The culmination of nearly three decades of strategic evolution.

Their highly skilled professionals collaborate to provide the tools necessary to help individuals and families break free of the shackles binding them to homelessness. With the help of professional staff, alliances with outside agencies over a thousand people are served through Hesus House's shelter and three housing programs annually. At their Comprehensive Homeless Resource Center, people receive support related to housing, support systems, life skills, legal issues, physical/emotional abuse, mental/physical health, and much more.

[Please give generously here](#). Thank you!



## Building Now Open for In-Person Meetings

The Re-opening Task Force and the Board of Directors are BEYOND ELATED to announce that the building is now open for in-person meetings! [Please use the Room Request link here](#). There are a few guidelines that we all must abide by for the safety of our staff.





- Mask wearing is mandatory.
- Building usage is restricted to the Common Room.
- No food or drink consumption is allowed.
- The restroom closest to the kitchen is designated as the "Visitor Restroom" and the ONLY bathroom that should be used by any non-staff members



- Cleaning supplies will be clearly visible in the Common Room. It is necessary to wipe down all “used” surfaces after use.

Please abide by these guidelines; all of us want to be together but we need to keep in mind that the safety of our staff and congregants is of the utmost importance and our #1 concern. Thank you!

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