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Member of The Unitarian Universalist Association

Minister: Lee Richards, (585) 454-9450, pastor.lee.richards@gmail.com

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Minister Musings -- by Lee Richards

Religious but not spiritual? The last few months I've been speaking to the "SBNR" craze that's been going around. "SBNR" (Spiritual But Not Religious) is how many people describe their faith beliefs nowadays, as a way to say that they have a belief in God or a higher power or a universal energy and don't need to attend a church or synagogue or mosque to further develop or express their beliefs.

The twist on this idea - Religious But Not Spiritual - was put forward in a blog by a UU atheist just recently. The writer stated that she attends church religiously, participates fully in the many events offered there, faithfully pledges her time, talent and treasure and yet, does so even though she is adamant about being non-spiritual. She needs church in her life but doesn't need, or want, God.

When I presented about Humanism in our summer salon series I pointed out that many humanists also identify as atheists, but many more consider themselves to be religious humanists. Indeed, most all major religions have their humanist factions - Buddhists, Taoists, Hindus, Muslims, Christians, and Jews. The spiritual teachings of these religions leave lots of room for celebrating human relations and not just God-Human interactions.

But can a person be religious and not spiritual? What is that atheist getting from her participation at church if she is not feeding her soul? Because, for me, feeding the soul may be the very heart of the definition of spirituality. Most everyone knows that I am an atheist and a humanist. Obviously, I attend church religiously, and I get so much out of my interactions with others at church that I can't imagine not attending as often as possible.

I believe that when we take time to listen to others, to care for and about others, we are being spiritual. So, are you spiritual but not religious, or religious but not spiritual, or are you spiritual AND religious? Wherever you fall in the Venn diagram I believe that church has something special to offer toward making your life better. I'll see you there!

Service Schedule – Sunday at 11:00AM

Aug. 4	Summer Salon "Catholicism" with Hunter Dudkiewicz	Mid-summer picnic
Aug. 11	Summer Salon "Taoism and Buddhism"	2nd Sunday Stroll @ 9:00
Aug. 18	Summer Salon "Science of Mind" with Andrea Rebeck	BoT meets @ 9:00 am
Aug. 25	Summer Salon "Baha' I Faith" with Robert Remley	
Sept. 1	"Sunday Sundae"	
Sept. 8	"Water Communion"	

~ Childcare is available during Sunday services ~

Wednesday, July 31 – “Open House” from 9:30 am to noon. Church is open for touring.

Sunday, Aug. 4 – Summer Salon: “Catholicism” @ 11 am with Hunter Dudkiewicz.

Sunday, Aug. 4 – **Special Congregational Meeting & Annual Summer Picnic** @ 12:30 pm in Bullard Park, Rte. 31, Albion. A quick vote will be taken regarding the authorization of reincorporation of the church, followed by a potluck picnic. The church provides meats, condiments, dinnerware and assorted drinks.

Monday, Aug. 5 – Potluck Supper @ 6:30 pm. Bring a dish to pass and enjoy good food and conversation with others.

Wednesday, Aug. 7 – “Open House” from 9:30 am to noon. Church is open for touring.

Sunday, Aug. 11 – Second Sunday Stroll @ 9 am. NOTE earlier time for this event. Enjoy walking with fellow liberals before the Sunday service.

Sunday, Aug. 11 – Fundraising committee meets @ 9:30 am. (Finance committee will meet next month)

Sunday, Aug. 11 – Summer Salon: “Taoism and Buddhism” @ 11 am.

Wednesday, Aug. 14 - “Open House” from 9:30 am to noon. Church is open for touring.

Saturday, Aug. 17 – **Workbee**, from 10 am to noon. An opportunity to “give back” by taking a couple of hours to help clean in and around the church building. If you can bring a few cleaning supplies you think may be useful it would be appreciated. Of course, bagels and coffee provided.

Sunday, Aug. 18 – Board of Trustees meets @ 9 am.

Sunday, Aug. 18 – Summer Salon: “Science of Mind” @ 11 am with Andrea Rebeck.

Monday, Aug. 19 - Bereavement Support Group @ 7:30 pm. Grief is experienced individually but handled better communally. Join Pastor Lee on the 3rd Monday of each month for assistance in working through feelings of loss in an atmosphere of safe sharing with others on the same journey.

Wednesday, Aug. 21 - “Open House” from 9:30 am to noon. Church is open for touring.

Sunday, Aug. 25 – Summer Salon: “Baha’i Faith” @ 11 am with Robert Remley.

Sunday, Aug. 25 - Newsletter deadline. Please try to get submissions in before this date if possible.

Wednesday, Aug. 28 - “Open House” from 9:30 am to noon. Church is open for touring. NOTE: this is the last Wed. open house of the season.

Wednesday, Aug. 28 – 4th Wednesday Walkies @ 12:30 pm. Meet at the church. Join other Universalists in going “walk-about.” A great way to get some exercise while communing with nature and fellow liberals.

Sunday, Sept. 1 - “Sunday Sundae” @ 11 am. Our annual Labor Day weekend service offers a reason to stay home - ICE CREAM! We convene back in the sanctuary for worship at 11, and then it’s a make-your-own ice cream sundae social at noon.

Monday, Sept. 2 – Potluck Supper @ 6:30 pm. Bring a dish to pass and enjoy good food and conversation with others.

Sunday, Sept. 8 - “Water Communion” @ 11 am. Everyone is invited to bring a small sample of water that represents their summer, and add it to a communal bowl to symbolically mingle our stories and lives together. Water may be from someplace you traveled, your backyard, or even your own tap. Extra water will be available if you should happen to forget yours.

Joys and Concerns

Sarah Diemer – was ill recently with an infection, which culminated in her requiring dental surgery. And not only does she not have health insurance, but was unable to work for awhile. C.W. Lattin suggested that a collection be taken to help her with the costs of the procedure and the church was very, very generous! What a caring church family this is!! Pastor Lee took her the gift and said that Sarah practically fainted!

Pastor Lee – announced that the Orr family has a new bundle of joy! Jennifer, John, Tyler, Ryan, and Ben are pleased to welcome Jack into the family! He arrived in mid-June. Congratulations on this new addition to an already wonderful family!!

Gay Smith – let us know that Tyler had traveled to Boston to sing at the North Church!!

Sara Phillips – has new digs!! She announced that the stress is over...she and her husband, Tom, have finally moved to their new home in Spencerport! What a relief after months and months of packing and signing documents and selling the old house and so on!!

Darrell Dyke – said that back in his home town in Maine, a voice for the homeless and down-trodden was lost. A dear friend of his was killed in an unfortunate wood chopper accident. Our condolences, Darrell, on your sad loss.

Chris Loss – was very happy to see Candy Nutty and Sara Burroughs in attendance at the Patriotic Service on July 7th.

Dennis Seekins – is happy that he has a lifetime of being outside and enjoying doing what he wants to do!

Betty Knight – is personally disappointed with the outcome of the Trayvon Martin case in Florida and feels that justice was not done.

Sarah Knight – shared that her nephew, Colbern, was up for a visit from Georgia and it was so good to see him. He has graduated from High School and will be attending Georgia PolyTech.

Ed Reulbach – announced that his father died on Thursday, July 18th of a heart attack at 88 years old. Ed said that he was a cool guy in many ways, but had been living with Alzheimer's disease for awhile. Ed, we are thinking of you and your family at this sad time!

Debby Rodriguez – was happy to say that her youngest granddaughter just turned one! She shares a birthday with her Great-Grandfather! Debby also added that she has been on a family visiting marathon lately!

Sara Phillips – one week ago Sunday was her mother's birthday (Doris Brown), and Sara just celebrated her own birthday as well. Happy birthday to two lovely ladies!!

Dr. David Bell – was a guest speaker here on Sunday, July 28th to talk about Sufism. He said that when he first walks into a church, he takes note of what the vibe/environment is like and this church has one of the nicest environments that he has ever encountered. Many thanks, Dr. Bell!

Pullman Plaudits

Pastor Lee Richards – did a fine job with the joint service with BUUF and the Patriotic services, both held at the Cobblestone church!

Andrea Rebeck and Louise Richards – who put in a lot of work on the application for the EPF grant, event though we have decided to wait on this.

Betty Knight, Monica Beck, and Louise Richards – who have been working hard on an upcoming project for the spring, a possible wine-tasting event!

Chris Loss – who sang 'Let There Be Peace on Earth' at the Patriotic Service.

C.W. Lattin – who has been here every Wednesday for an open house. People have been coming out for tours every Wednesday! He also found time to varnish the front doors!

Gay Smith – has done a lot of work and research regarding our reincorporation, and the 501C3 status.

Kasandra Connor – is our childcare provider and has been here for several Sundays now!

Sarah, Betty, and Jim Knight – did a great job at the Summer Salon on July 21st. They were here to talk about the Church of the Sub Genius, and the court case that traumatized this family for three years.

Dr. David Bell – did a fantastic job at the Summer Salon on July 28th. He is with the Waterport Mosque and was here to talk about Sufism.

Louise Richards – has been doing a lot of research on funding possibilities for this church!

Pastoral Care

One of the advantages of having a called minister is the 24/7 availability of a listening ear. Pastor Lee Richards available for home and hospital visits, meeting with people at the church, or just chatting by phone.
Lee can be reached at 585-454-9450, or on his cell at 585-729-8167.
He also has a toll-free number: 877-265-1709.

Mt. Albion Cemetery Tours

The historic cemetery on Route 31 will be featured for Sunday tours during August when County Historian Bill Lattin leads groups on the outings. Bill will cover different sections of the cemetery for each tour, which begin at 6:30 p.m. at the main entrance chapel. There is no cost to attend, and the tours will go on rain or shine for Aug. 4, 11, 18 and 25. The cemetery opened in the 1840s and was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1976. The 70-acre cemetery was designed to create a park-like atmosphere. Rufus Bullock, a native son and former Georgia governor, is among the notable dead buried in the cemetery. Nine former congressmen also have been laid to rest in Mt. Albion. Many Universalists, and members of the Pullman family, are interred there.

Erie Canal Exhibit and Summer Saturday Programs

This summer the Cobblestone Museum will host a special display of historic photographs focusing on the Erie Canal. This collection of photographs was taken in 1913 in order to document when the canal was undergoing enlargement and when the bridges were being replaced. These images have been housed in the office of the Orleans County Historian and have now been enlarged and mounted to be shared with the public. The interpretive panels were provided by members of the Albion Central School eighth grade class.

In addition to the exhibit there will be a series of programs highlighting the canal. All of these programs will be held in the Cobblestone Church and are free to attend. The August programs include: Saturday August 3rd 2:00pm “Erie Canal Overview” presented by C. W. Lattin, Orleans County Historian. Learn about the canal through stories and images. Saturday August 10th 2:00pm “Life on a Canal Boat from a Female Perspective” presented by Dee Robinson, Town of Gaines Historian. Discover what life was like on the canal from a woman’s point of view.

The Erie Canal Exhibit and Summer Saturday Programs are made possible in part by a grant from the Erie Canalway National Heritage Corridor in partnership with the Hoag Library. Make sure to visit the Cobblestone Museum this summer to enjoy these special events.

Special Congregational Meeting

The Board of Trustees has called for a special congregational meeting to be held on August 4th at 12:30 pm at Bullard Park (just prior to our annual summer picnic). Our church was incorporated in August of 1891 but the need has arisen for us to reincorporate under modern (21st century) rules. An affirmative majority vote by the congregation is required to be able to legally file the paperwork, so this meeting is called for the sole purpose of obtaining that vote. All members are urged to attend and cast a ballot, and then we can relax and enjoy the picnic.

Come Early, Stay Late

Having a quick bagel and coffee ready to grab on a Sunday morning can sometimes make the difference in deciding to roll out of bed and show up at church. So come a few minutes early, grab a bite, and then stay after the service for our usual social hour. We’d love to see you at church!

Book Discussion

Our popular book discussion forum returns in September - so start reading! Our format for the September 22nd group is to choose any book on the theme or topic of fear/courage. Select a book about fear that has given you pause for thought and then come share what you learned with others.

Bereavement Support Group

Grief is experienced individually but handled better communally. Pastor Lee is offering an opportunity for people who have experienced a loss to come together in a safe environment on the 3rd Monday of each month at 7:30 pm. Stories encouraged, and feelings lovingly accepted. Tears okay, and tissues provided. Loving support offered for, and by, others on the same journey to wholeness.

Pullman Pastor's Blog

by Lee Richards

Sticky friends and a busy church life, church family vs. spiritual community, suicide vs. being alive, small vs. big, and how theology distorts simplicity - these were all topics for the pastor's pen this past month.

The Minister's Musings column appears on the first page of the monthly newsletter. In between, I invite you to check out my explorations and ramblings on the weblog. And please, if you feel so moved, leave your own ideas in the comments section after an article. The direct url for the blog is pullmanpastor.blogspot.com, or you can get there by a link on our main church website at pullmanmemorial.org

SPECIAL >>>> No access to the internet but want to read my weekly musings? Subscribe to receive a paper copy by postal mail once a month. Send your name and address to: Lee Richards, 31 Ravenwood Ave, Rochester, NY 14619. This service is offered free of charge as a means for staying connected and promoting Unitarian Universalist thought.

Electronic Donations & Automatic Pledges

Our website pullmanmemorialdonations.com offers several choices for making financial contributions to our mission. Drop-down menus provide a variety of monthly and weekly automatic options. Alternatively, you can make one-time donations in any amount, learn where to send a check, or inquire about planned giving. All major credit cards are accepted, or you can fund your contribution with a bank transfer or a PayPal account.

Of course, cash and checks still work OK, too. The offering plate will continue to circulate during a Sunday service to provide an opportunity for "instant wallet withdrawals." But if you prefer to plan ahead and pay online then please check out our donations webpage.

Childcare Available During Services

Kasandra Connor is now available to provide childcare for Sunday morning services. Kasandra is finishing a program in education at Genesee Community College.

Eye on the Board

No formal actions were taken due to the lack of a quorum, but reports were given and much discussion was had. Plans were made for the annual church picnic (Aug. 4th at Bullard Park) which will be immediately preceded by a special congregational meeting to vote on reincorporating.

Pastor Lee discussed the UUA recommendation that churches prepare plans for emergency situations using guidelines in a FEMA publication. Lee suggested we find one volunteer who would be our "security person" and undertake implementing the safety measures as well as taking responsibility for a number of other security/safety tasks in and around the building.

Following reports from the treasurer and finance committee, information from a recent fundraising meeting was discussed, including a decision to not seek an EPF grant this year but to work towards doing so next year (the delay will allow us to be better prepared). A wine tasting fundraising event, crowdfunding via the internet, and a major donor program are all being considered.

Quotes are being sought from several sources to repair the broken front stone step, and to rehang one of the large social hall doors (to provide easier access to the sanctuary). Interior signage about calendar events was proposed, as well as improved advertising in local papers. Complete minutes are available upon request.

To help beat the summer heat, our new hand-held church fans...



Pullman Memorial Universalist Church
P.O. Box 87
Albion, NY 14411