

# The Grapevine Newsletter



December 2012

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**Member of The Unitarian Universalist Association**

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Visit our Website at [pullmanmemorial.org](http://pullmanmemorial.org)

## Minister Musings

by Lee Richards

Gifts. The best gifts are ones you didn't even know you wanted. I'm discovering our church community holds a cornucopia of gifts, and gift-givers.

Things happen behind the scenes all the time - toilet paper rolls appear as if by magic, cleaning at all levels happens, floral arrangements make weekly appearances, furniture gets rearranged to accommodate activities. Others research our church history, tackle repairs or improvements to the building, and work to raise funds. People step forward to offer their talents, such as creating and conducting new worship service experiences. And some make it their "mission" to grow the church, inviting friends and family to come check us out.

Over and over again I witness the results of such gifts, even if I don't catch the elusive "Santa" who brought them. This community is special for the degree to which we all think about each other, and think about how to make things even better by giving more of ourselves than just a weekly pledge. There is Love here, and it shows.

This month you'll note many events happening at Pullman Memorial. Some are intended to energize you, others to relax and "reset" you. All are intended to care for your soul during the dark days of December. Consider these opportunities to engage with your community as a gift. May you feel the love.

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### Service Schedule – Sunday at 11:00AM

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<u>Date</u>	<u>Minister</u>	<u>Notes</u>	<u>Coffee Hour</u>
Nov. 29	Sarah Diemer	Vespers Service 8:00 PM every Thursday.	
Dec. 2	Rev. Don Reidell		Come Early – Stay Late: Enjoy Coffee & Bagels before and after each service.
Dec. 9	Lee Richards	"Crossing the Line"	
Dec. 16	Susan Daiss	"Light and Dark"	
Dec. 21	Sarah Diemer	"Yule" Celebration of Season	
Dec. 23	Lee Richards	"Getting God"	
Dec. 23	Lee Richards	"Christmas Candlelight Service" @ 7 pm	
Dec. 30	Lee Richards	"Fireside Service"	

## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

**Thursday, Nov. 29** – Vespers service @ 8 pm with Sarah Diemer. A time for quiet meditative reflection in the company of others.

**Sunday, Dec. 2** – worship service @ 11 am with Rev. Donald Reidell.

**Monday, Dec. 3** – Potluck supper @ 6:30 pm. Bring a dish to pass, and enjoy good food and conversation in a relaxed atmosphere. Everyone invited.

**Tuesday, Dec. 4** - "Harvesting Justice Dinner" @ 6:15 pm. Rural Migrant Ministry will honor Librada Paz. Location: Temple B'rith Kodesh, 2131 Elmwood Ave, Rochester. Info at [www.ruralmigrantministry.com](http://www.ruralmigrantministry.com)

**Thursday, Dec. 6** – Vespers service @ 8 pm. A time for quiet meditative reflection in the company of others.

**Sunday, Dec. 9** – Finance committee meeting @ 10 am.

**Sunday, Dec. 9** – “Crossing the Line” worship service @ 11 am with Pastor Lee Richards. Communities, almost by definition, are exclusive. One is either “inside” or “outside.” Let’s look at how breaking the barriers creates an inclusive community.

**Sunday, Dec. 9** – “Handbell Choir Concert” @ 7 pm. The Orleans County Genealogical Society presents the St. Cecilia Handbell Choir of Holy Family Parish in our sanctuary, along with organ accompaniment by Harriett Greaser for some selections.

**Thursday, Dec. 13** – Vespers service @ 8 pm. A time for quiet meditative reflection in the company of others.

**Sunday, Dec. 16** – Board of Trustees meets @ 9:15 am.

**Sunday, Dec. 16** – "Light and Dark" worship service @11 am. Chaplain Susan Daiss will look squarely at the deepening darkness of these days as a metaphor to meditate on "the dark night of the soul" and its role in leading many of us to - or, back to - church. Our reflection will not abandon us to the darkness, however, but will explore the "light" that draws us in.

**Wednesday, Dec. 19** – NO Movie with the Minister. Movie night returns in January after the holiday excitement wears off.

**Thursday, Dec. 20** – Vespers service @ 8 pm. A time for quiet meditative reflection in the company of others.

**Friday, Dec. 21** – “Yule” worship service @ 7 pm with Sarah Diemer. An earth-centered celebration of the season.

**Sunday, Dec. 23** – “Getting God” worship service @ 11 am. Finding God, knowing God, living with God, *being* God – how should we be in right relationship with the greatest of all mysteries? Some reflections by Pastor Lee Richards.

**Sunday, Dec. 23** – “Christmas Candlelight Service” @ 7 pm. Prepare your soul for the coming holy day with music and poetry in this special vespers service.

**Tuesday, Dec. 25** – Last day for newsletter submissions. Please send your articles and news in advance of this date, if possible.

**Thursday, Dec. 27** – Vespers service @ 8 pm. A time for quiet meditative reflection in the company of others.

**Sunday, Dec. 30** – “Fireside Service” @ 11 am. This annual event in the church parlor offers a different setting and format for coming together in blessed community. Pastor Lee Richards will help us situate ourselves between the year just past and the year ahead.

**Thursday, Jan. 3** – Vespers service @ 8 pm. A time for quiet meditative reflection in the company of others.

**Saturday, Jan. 12** - Board Retreat, 9 am to noon.

**Wednesday, Jan. 16** – Movie with the Minister @ 7 pm. “Murderball” Think you know what the limitations are of being a quadriplegic? Think again. Free admission & popcorn.

**Sunday, Jan. 27, 2013** – Book Discussion group @ 12:30 pm. This month we’ve agreed to all read the same book: “I Don’t Believe in Atheists” by Chris Hedges.

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## JOYS & SORROWS

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•Charlie Proctor, Alan Nugent's life partner, had a stroke on November 15th and has been at Cape Canaveral Hospital in Florida. A few days later, there was another set-back when he suffered a heart attack as well. However, he has been making good progress and hopefully will soon be going into a rehabilitation unit. Our thoughts are with Alan at this difficult time. If you wish to send a card, please see Chris Loss for the address.

•Eileen DellaCosta – has been ill with an infection over the past few weeks and is doing a bit better. Here's hoping for a speedy recovery for her.

•Debby Rodriguez – her joy is that everyone she knows in the areas hit by hurricane Sandy are fine! And on another note, she wanted everyone to be mindful that as we celebrate Thanksgiving that we remember the native Americans who didn't fare so well from their encounters with the Europeans.

•Craig Smith – we sang 'happy birthday' to him on November 18!

•Sarah Diemer – is thankful that her two week stint with 'writer's block' is now over! That's a scary thing when you make your living writing!

•Andrea Rebeck – is grateful for the beautiful weather we've been having in this area lately, and is thankful to all the volunteers who have made their way to New York City, New Jersey and other areas hard-hit by the mega storm Sandy.

•Dennis Seekins – suspects that about 90% of us are very happy with the elections results!!!

•Sarah Diemer – is happy that three states voted affirmatively for marriage equality. We are getting there slowly!!

•Diana Dudley – took the scenic route to Boston via train (11 hour trip!) to see her three adult grandchildren. They are all doing very well. She attended a UU church while in Boston!

•Pastor Lee Richards – it was his great joy to participate in his first Samhain service recently.

•Sara Phillips – is proud to report the marriage of her daughter, Katie, to James Sconfitto on October 27th!! And the newlyweds were able to go on their honeymoon to New Orleans even though their wedding took place

only a day before hurricane Sandy hit. But unfortunately, on the way home, they were robbed in their hotel room!! At least the robber didn't get everything of value and they were not harmed.

•Beth Allen – reported that her cousin's daughter was able to have her wedding in New Jersey despite hurricane Sandy.

•Andrea Rebeck – was thrilled on October 28 to see Rev. Maureen Thitchener in the pulpit and credits Maureen and her late husband Carl with her decision to become a UU!!

•Sarah Diemer – is trying to be modest, but has made an astounding achievement in the literary arena! She is now represented by two agents!! This is truly amazing and we wish both Sarah and Jenn all the best as they see their hard work paying off!!!

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## PULLMAN PLAUDITS

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Sarah Diemer for leading a Samhain Service on Oct. 31, and for starting a weekly vespers service on Thursday nights.

Dennis Seekins for contacting referrals and vetting potential building contractors.

Bill Lattin for assisting with installing new speakers in the church sanctuary, and setting up the social hall for Thanksgiving potluck.

•Monica Beck and Diana Dudley – for reprising the song 'Jean' in honor of what would have been Jean Bistoff's birthday on November 6th. It was lovely and brought a few tears to some eyes.

•Beth Allen – for being honored as 'Fabulous Female of the Year' in Batavia recently. About nine members of the church came out to share in her honor and celebration, and a special thanks to Debby Rodriguez for helping to orchestrate that. It was a lovely time...great food, Beth did a wonderful job with her speech!

•Beth Allen – for the special service that she did on November 4th, highlighting the blessings hidden in mental illness and raising awareness!

•Beth Allen – for the lovely prints, pictures, and other art work she had on display recently!

•Sherry Hagmier and Debby Rodriguez – for making turkeys for our Annual Thanksgiving dinner! They were perfect!! And thanks to Jenn and Sarah Diemer for the tofu turkey, which was also very delicious!

- The whole congregation – for making the Thanksgiving dinner on November 18th such a wonderful time and bringing so many great dishes to pass! And many thanks also for the way everyone pitched in to clean up!

- Alan Nugent – for doing this Newsletter despite his life partner’s recent stroke and hospitalization!

- C.W. Lattin – for all the behind the scenes work he does every Sunday and for every event!!

- Betty Knight – who has been collecting coats from the congregation to donate to Matt’s Coats for Kids, which will be distributed to needy families at the Brockport Elks Lodge on Friday December 2nd from 1 pm to 7 pm and on Saturday, December 3rd from noon till 4 pm.

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## **Come Early, Stay Late**

Hospitality is about making it easy to attend services. 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!

## **Year-end Gifts and Donations**

Just a quick reminder that December 31st is the last day to make a charitable donation for income tax purposes. If you’ve reached the end of the year and find you’ve got a little something leftover, why not throw a little love at your favorite church? Checks can be written and sent to PO Box 87, Albion, NY 14411, or electronic donations using credit cards, PayPal or bank transfer can be accomplished online at [pullmanmemorialdonations.com](http://pullmanmemorialdonations.com)

Thinking more long term? You can show your love even after departing this earth with planned giving. Contact Pastor Lee Richards or Sara Phillips for a Planned Giving Packet which describes the easy process for leaving a legacy gift to your church community.

## **Shop for Yourself or Others**

The Pullman Memorial Universalist Church Online Store is open for business. This fundraiser venue offers a variety of Pullman collectibles, books, postcards, movie DVDs, and more. Check it out at [pullmanmemorial.com](http://pullmanmemorial.com), and watch for more items to be listed in coming weeks.

## **Upgrading our Sound System**

The hearing assistive system is ready for use. We have six hearing assistive devices on hand. They look like, and work like, little FM transistor radios. Each has an on-off switch and volume control, plus a choice of earplugs or headphones. We provide labeled ziplock plastic bags to our regular users so you can, in essence, have and identify your own device. The bag system will allow you to maintain your individual settings and keep your device from entangling with others while in storage.

## **Pullman Pastor’s Blog**

What are you missing? About once a week Pastor Lee posts a short reflection on the internet regarding some subject matter that captures his attention. Recent posts have been about bacon and burgers, centering with Samhain, who’s missing from our table, the possibly fatal love of books, and the difficulty of letting go.

The Minister’s Musings column appears on the first page of the monthly newsletter. In between, check out Lee’s explorations and ramblings on the weblog. And please, feel free to leave your own ideas in the comments section after an article. The direct url for the blog is [pullmanpastor.blogspot.com](http://pullmanpastor.blogspot.com), or get there by a link on our main church website.

**NEW** >>>> 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.

## **PullmanMemorial.org**

Have you spent some time looking through our website lately? There is an amazing amount of information to be discovered there. Photos, videos, sermons to read or listen to, links to other websites, descriptions of our building and organ, info for first-time visitors, lists of recommended books and movies, testimonials, UU quotes, minister biographies, an archive of past newsletters, current events, history, and so much more!

What's more, new information is being posted weekly. Be sure to check it out for yourself and also suggest it to your friends. Next to word of mouth, it is our best advertisement of what PMUC has to offer.

### **Electronic Donations & Automatic Pledges**

PMUC offers the easy option of making electronic donations and pledge fulfillment via the internet.

If you go to the website [pullmanmemorialdonations.com](http://pullmanmemorialdonations.com) you'll find several choices available for making financial contributions to our mission. (You can also click on the "Donations" tab at the top of any page in our main website.)

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.

### **Historical Postcard Views of Albion, New York**

*How much would **you** expect to pay for a beautiful, full color book with life-sized reproductions of 200 historic postcards? \$39.95? 29.95? Would you believe this gem can still be had for a mere \$20 while supplies last? **But WAIT, there's more..***

Act now and you can get your book signed by the author, county historian C.W. Lattin. You can own one of these limited edition marvels, or obtain one or more for a gift, *but only if you act NOW*. This book is moving toward a sell-out and when they're gone, they're gone.

Proceeds from the sale of this book will help keep our historic church "picture-perfect" for years to come so don't put it off or you may miss out. Books are available at the church, in our online store ([pullmanmemorial.com](http://pullmanmemorial.com)), and select area stores.

### **UUSC Guest at Your Table**

Each December we invite people to consider supporting the social justice work of the Unitarian Universalist Service Committee. On Sunday, Dec. 2nd, small "piggy bank" boxes will be distributed. It is suggested that you keep your family's box on the kitchen table as a reminder to give a little something each time you have a meal.

This year's focus for the UUSC is on rebuilding sustainable communities in Haiti, farmworker rights, fair treatment in the restaurant industry, helping people recover from the trauma of natural disasters, and protecting civil rights. There is so much work to be done that it may seem your coins or dollars won't make much of a difference but that is not the case. The truth is that all of our donations added together become a powerful force for doing good in the world.

Boxes (or a check made out to PMUC with the notation "UUSC" on the memo line) will be collected at the fireside service (Jan. 2) and the following Sunday, Jan. 13. Thank you.

## Eye on the Board

After checking a number of referrals, the board feels confident they have found a reputable contractor to make repairs to our roof. The Building and Grounds committee will now seek a more precisely detailed contract itemizing the exact work to be done and the costs involved. With the loan check coming from NYSCU we should be able to have the work done as soon as the weather allows in the spring. B&G is also continuing to research air conditioning for the sanctuary.

Our piano was repaired and tuned and sounds much better. The hearing assistive devices are working and the whole sound system will be fine-tuned once the extension speakers are wired. Lee and Louise are putting together an adult RE program for the spring on the subject of "happiness." New members were provided with information packets and books on Nov. 11. Board members have agreed to be mentors to new members. Gifts will be purchased for the children, and Jim Knight will make contact with our shut-ins before Christmas. The board chose to help sponsor "Human Rights Day" on Dec. 10th.

Complete minutes are available upon request.

### Pastoral Care

One of the advantages of having a called minister is the 24/7 availability of a listening ear. Pastor Lee Richards is 100% committed to helping parishioners when stuff hits the fan. You are encouraged to call Lee and share what's going on, or pull him aside during coffee hour. Lee wants to know about the difficulties people are facing. Sometimes just talking about your troubles with a minister will help with finding a solution.

Lee can be reached at 585-436-1786, or on his cell at 585-729-8167. He also has a toll-free number: 877-265-1709.

Lee is also available for home and hospital visits, or can meet with people in the pastor's office at the church.

Pullman Memorial Universalist Church

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