

# The Grapevine Newsletter



February 2014

Published by **Pullman Memorial Universalist Church** Albion, NY

Member of **The Unitarian Universalist Association**

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

## Minister Musings – by Lee Richards

Don't read this column. Well, actually, I'm hoping you *will* read this column, but I warn you it may cause distress. You see, I'm going to talk about that most taboo of subjects - money.

Yes, it's that time again when your trustees are starting to make plans and budgets for the next fiscal year. To approach the task wisely requires input from you, church members and donors. Our annual pledge drive kicks off this month so we can have plenty of time to crunch the numbers - income vs. expenses - in preparing a budget.

Now let me say right up front that the generosity of Pullman Memorial members is legendary. Our Sunday offering collector reports that giving is up. Our treasurer reports that our fundraising efforts for repairs and restoration have been phenomenal (also helped along by some grant awards).

Beyond the monies, volunteer efforts have saved us *hundreds* of dollars in making repairs to the building, and in cleaning up and stocking up on essentials. Volunteers are also making our fundraising efforts pay off handsomely. As of the end of January we now have about 30 supplement hymnals available in the pews, thanks to an anonymous donor. And a new opportunity to leave a legacy while helping to restore the building will be announced soon, too.

So let me be clear. You folks rock! You have been, and are, doing great work on supporting your spiritual community. And I know many of you are already stretched financially which makes your pledge even more significant because you are doing the best you can given the circumstances of this economy.

When you get your pledge form I only ask that you not rush to automatically fill it in without first taking a few moments to consider how much this congregation is worth to you, and to the larger community it serves. I'm sure you'll agree you get a lot of value for your money, and your heart will continue to guide your generosity.

Oh, by the way, remember that pledges can be fulfilled automatically using our PayPal subscription service ([pullmanmemorialdonations.com](http://pullmanmemorialdonations.com)). However, we're not accepting Bitcoins at the moment. ☹️

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## Service Schedule – Sunday at 11:00AM

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Feb. 2	Don Reidell	
Feb. 9	Lee Richards	“What makes us human?”
Feb. 16	Kitty Forbush	“Slavery and Human Trafficking” (Chautauqua Sunday)
Feb. 23	Lee Richards	“Habits: Life's credits and debits”
Mar. 2	Susan Daiss	

~ Childcare available during service times ~

**MAKE NOTE: NO WALKIES OR STROLLS IN FEBRUARY**

Sunday, Feb. 2 – worship service @ 11 am with Don Reidell.

Monday, Feb. 3 – Potluck Supper @ 6:30 pm. Always good food and conversation. Dish-to-pass.

Saturday, Feb. 8 – Board of Trustees mini-retreat from 10-noon. Topic: policy manual.

Sunday, Feb. 9 – Breakfast with the Minister @ 10 am. Join Lee in the social hall for this annual tradition of a breakfast featuring fruit salad, eggs, bacon, croissants, oatmeal, and more before the Sunday service.

Sunday, Feb. 9 – “What makes us human?” worship service @ 11 am with Lee Richards. We used to think it was our use of tools, or our ability to communicate with language, but now we know other animal species have these abilities. So what really makes us *human*?

Sunday, Feb. 9 – Fundraising com. “check-in” in pastor’s study @ 12:10 pm.

Thursday, Feb. 13 - Intro to Unitarian Universalism @ 6:30 pm. A beginner's class to help increase one's understanding and comprehension of our faith in general, and of membership at Pullman Memorial in particular. Led by Darrell Dyke, with assistance from Lee Richards. Pizza and drinks provided - please sign up to help determine how much food to order. Sign up by replying to pmuc.albion@gmail.com, or on the sheet in the social hall, or by speaking to Darrell.

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Sunday, Feb. 16 – Board of Trustees meets @ 9 am.

Sunday, Feb. 16 – “Slavery and Human Trafficking” (Chautauqua Sunday) @ 11 am with Kitty Forbush. Follow-up presentation and discussion on the topic as was shown in November’s public screening of “Not My Life,” a documentary about this important contemporary issue involving adults and many children in the US and around the world.

Monday, Feb. 17 - 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, Feb. 19 - Movie with the Minister @ 7 pm. We’ll lighten things up a bit for February with a highly rated Pixar film, “Up.” This computer animation has love and laughs, dreams and drama, adventure and antics. It’s a pretty good bet that after viewing you’ll be left feeling “up.” Free admission and popcorn.

Sunday, Feb. 23 – Fundraising com. meets in the parlor @ 9:30 am.

Sunday, Feb. 23 - “Habits: Life’s credits and debits” worship service @ 11 am with Lee Richards. Almost everybody has a habit, or two, or more. There are good habits, and bad habits. If you’re going to have them, then let’s explore how to tip the balance sheet to the positive side.

Sunday, Feb. 23 - Newbery Book Discussion @ 12:30 pm. “Bud, Not Buddy” by Christopher Paul Curtis.

Sunday, March 2 - worship service @ 11 am with Susan Daiss.

Saturday, March 15 - Pullman Pourings Winetasting @ 7 pm. “Pull a cork for Pullman!” See info elsewhere in this newsletter.

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## JOYS & SORROWS

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-Gay Smith - had a pleasant surprise over the holidays that her son, Matt, is now engaged! Congratulations!!

-Jim Knight - was very happy to have acquired a brass plate that had in the past been attached to a Pullman car! And he donated it to the church! He said it was so nice to find a relic from our founder! Many thanks, Jim and Betty!

-Dennis Seekins - was pleased to let everyone know about a great music club that he and Jan found recently! The Sportsman's Tavern, off 190 and pretty easy to get to, boasts of some wonderful jazz musicians. Road trip!!!

-Louise Richards - was proud to say that PMUC has been given a grant of \$500 by the Medina Sandstone Society, which came as a surprise because we thought we were not within the location parameters to be eligible! Many thanks to the efforts of Gay Smith, Andrea Rebeck, C.W. Lattin, Louise Richards, and Pastor Lee Richards for their persistence and efforts!!

-Pat Cammarata - wanted everyone to know that she is so glad this church community is here because if not, she would be un-churched! We are so glad you are here, Pat!!

-Darrell Dyke - was listening to NPR on the radio and heard voices from Farmington, Maine which made him nostalgic for home.

-Tobin Moon Carson - her three oldest sisters recently lost their mother, which was very sad. But it was remarkable how they all worked together in shifts so that their mother could stay home despite her Alzheimers.

-Liz Schaal - she has an elderly friend who is dying of cancer but recently all of his neighbors visited him and he had a great few hours with them. He perked up and enjoyed himself! What a gift neighbors can be!

-Pastor Lee - was overjoyed to see our friend, Hunter, with us for the Fireside Service. Hunter has finished his first semester in college. (Some of us may remember that Hunter was a guest speaker over the summer!)

-Chris Loss - had a joy that on Christmas day, her grandsons, Caden and Carson, spent the night at her house..and they all slept near the Christmas tree and chatted for a long time. They talked about how great Christmas was and how they didn't want the day to end...magical times!!

-Gay Smith - had a joy and a sorrow. A pipe in their bathroom broke this morning, which is a real downer, but on the other hand, now she will get her new bathroom that she has been wanting!

-Craig Smith - said he has been the breadwinner since the family moved up North, but now Gay will be looking at a new career selling insurance! Gay is very excited. We all know that she is very talented and will do very well in this new endeavor!!

-Andrea Rebeck - was proud to have played at the Eastman School of music in a dulcimer jam session! She said her debut here helped her have the courage to do this! Of course, Andee, feel free to play for us anytime!!

-Debby Rodrigues - was out using her snowblower and some neighbors came over and decided to pamper her a bit and fix a few things around the house and yard. Again, some neighbors are worth their weight in gold!

-Louise Richards - said that yesterday (January 11th) at the Amherst Church, her mother's Memorial service was held. It was so nice for her that everyone at the service affirmed how her mom was a "smart, groovy, and delightful" gal. And she and Lee were surprised to find that our good friend Rev. John Rex presided at the service...which was a very pleasant surprise. And Louise, know that everyone at PMUC is thinking of you and Lee at this very difficult time!

-Tobin Moon Carson - was very proud to tell the congregation (on January 12th) that 12 years ago today, her son Aiden was born. He showed up during a blizzard at 6:30 a.m. and the midwife wasn't even able to get there on time! She's also glad to have some time off to spend with both boys. Happy birthday, Aiden!

-Monica Beck - was pleased that her daughter, Fiona, performed for Solo Fest and received a 97 out of 100. Great job, Fiona!

Craig Smith – is proud that Tyler has already been accepted at several colleges he has applied for, and they are waiting on three more. He will also have a few scholarships!!

Chris Loss – is very proud of her grandson, Caden (8 years old) who just was awarded his yellow belt at Tae Kwon Do. This is a special honor because he only recently had received his white and yellow belt. Caden was a bit nervous during the questioning phase of his testing, but his instructors said that this means that he cares a great deal about what he's doing. He was praised for his hard work.

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### PULLMAN PLAUDITS

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Gay Smith - for writing the Grant that was submitted to the Medina Sandstone Society and resulted in us being given a grant for \$500, which will be used to restore our front step.

Dennis Seekins - has been reading Mark Twain to the older children!!

Andrea Rebeck - was down in the basement and made some assessments on what needs to be done there, and she also took another look at the Bero report, which was done awhile back, and found it very useful.

Craig Smith - has repaired a pipe that was leaking and has made some other repairs, plus rewired the sound system to eliminate the "buzz."

Debby Rodrigues - continues to collect tin and aluminum cans and items!

C.W. Lattin - was able to replace an older window in the kitchen with an almost identical replica and made some other repairs so that a Health inspection would pass!

Susan Daiss - who did a wonderful job with Peg Wilson's Memorial Service.

Jim Knight - for donating a Pullman Car relic to the church!

Jim and Betty Knight - are doing a phenomenal job pulling together the Pullman Pourings wine tasting event coming up in March! We will have four local wineries, Kirby Farms, Oliver's chocolates, cheese, and music!!

Louise Wu Richards – is promoting our church far and wide with the Pullman Architectural Newsletter.

An anonymous donor has donated supplemental hymnals to the church. They now appear in almost every pew!! Many thanks!

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### 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, get a bite, and then stay after the service for our usual social hour. We'd love to see you at church!

### Newbery Book Discussions

Our book group meets on the last Sunday of each month and we're reading the same titles for each discussion. The focus this spring is on Newbery award winning books. Books written for children and youth sometimes yield amazing truths that are missing from adult publications. Next up is "Bud, Not Buddy" by Christopher Paul Curtis, on February 23rd at 12:30 pm.

### Bereavement Support Group

Grief is experienced individually but handled better communally. Pastor Lee is offers 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.

### **New to UU Class**

Are you still wondering what it means to be a Unitarian Universalist - what we believe, what we do, where we came from, how to explain yourself to others? Here's your chance to learn more about UUism in general, and about Pullman Memorial in particular. Darrell Dyke has agreed to lead a class, with the first session scheduled for Feb. 13th at 6:30 pm. Pizza and drinks provided - please sign up in advance to help determine how much food to order. Sign up by replying to [pmuc.albion@gmail.com](mailto:pmuc.albion@gmail.com), or on the sheet in the social hall, or by speaking to Darrell.

### **Winetasting @ Pullman in March!**

Our adventures in fundraising to repair and restore our beautiful building continue! Our fantastic special events committee at Pullman is pulling together an evening of wine tasting and revelry for connoisseurs, cognoscente, and grape nuts everywhere who love wine and love the idea of conserving significant architecture.

Save the date - Saturday, March 15th, from 7 to 9 pm, right here at Pullman. Tickets are \$20 single, or 2 for \$30, with a complimentary wine glass for each ticket holder.

Tickets are on sale online at [pullmantickets.com](http://pullmantickets.com), and soon to be available at Bindings Bookstore 28 W Bank St, Albion, NY - open M/T/Th/F 10am to 6pm, and W/Sat 10am to 4pm (Sun/closed). Tickets also on sale at the door the day of the event.

Pullman Pourings Wine Tasting will raise funds for the restoration of our historic church built by famous Albion resident, 19th Century industrialist George M. Pullman, maker of the Pullman luxury train car. Tastings from Niagara wine trail wineries, local artisanal food producers, live music, and more. Come, feel the first hint of spring...and pull a cork for Pullman!

### **Summer Camp for UU Youth and Families**

Registration for UU summer camp experiences for our youth and families is under way. Sessions fill quickly at many of the UU Camp and Conference Centers and now is the time to register to avoid waiting lists.

Many youth from the region attend Unirondack, a UU Camp and Conference Center in the forever-wild Adirondacks in upstate New York. The camp provides an opportunity for children and families to live our UU values in a creative, accepting and nurturing community outside the doors of our congregation. For more information about Unirondack, and to register for summer camp or weekend programs, visit their website at <http://www.unirondack.org/>.

Other Camp and Conference Centers in the region include Rowe, Ferry Beach, Star Island, and Murray Grove. In addition, for folks looking for experiences further from home, there is DeBenneville Pines in California, U-Bar-U in Texas, Unistar in Minnesota, and The Mountain in North Carolina.

### **METAL Recycling Drive**

Have any scrap metal lying around the house? Save any clean, washed metal but separate aluminum from the rest. Bring to the church and leave in the library room. Proceeds going to the church. **SPECIAL INCENTIVE!** Debby Rodriguez has offered to match the amount received from the recycling center every month that the total is \$10 or higher.

## **Sermons**

Missed a sermon, or want to partake of one again? You can find many sermons by Pastor Lee available on our website, in either text or MP3 format (<http://pullmanmemorial.org/sermons/>). There are also a number of sermons by other ministers, including some older ones by the Reverends Lewis H. Robinson and H. Kelsey Bicknell. **NEW:** a selection of sermons from Lee's current series on the psyche are now being made available in print format - look for them in the literature rack of the social hall's vestibule.

## **Pullman Pastor's Blog, and a disappointing lack of nudity**

by Lee Richards

My recent essays have looked at NOT making New Year's resolutions, magnetic relationships (when opposites attract), dying young, and defining God as Love. Here's an interesting tidbit - the number of visits skyrocketed when I posted the blog about relationships, and most were coming from porn sites! Apparently my mention of the actress Kaley Cuoco made these other websites think I had something worth seeing - which I'd like to think I do - but I imagine most were disappointed to land on the site and see a picture of a couple in condiment costumes instead of a naked girl.

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](http://pullmanpastor.blogspot.com), or you can get there by a link on our main church website at [pullmanmemorial.org](http://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](http://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.

### **Pastoral Care**

You are encouraged to call Pastor 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 585-454-9450, or on his cell at 585-729-8167, or at his a toll-free number: 877-265-1709. Lee is also available for home and hospital visits.

## **Eye on the Board**

Your trustees had a jam-packed meeting on January 19th! Presented here are some of the highlights (complete minutes are always available upon request).

The date of the next annual congregational meeting was set as May 4th. Committees are encouraged to start preparing budget requests for next year.

A lot of the board meeting centered on finances. The treasurer reported income via collections, grants, memorial gifts, and earnings from our endowment holdings are all trending upward. However, a few bills, such as for organ tuning, have been higher than budgeted. The congregational vote to sell some poorly performing stock passed. Chris Loss was charged with fulfilling the treasurer's check-writing duties while Andrea is unavailable later in the spring, and Diana Dudley was also authorized to be a third person to sign checks as a backup.

The fundraising committee is planning a wine tasting event for March 15th from 7-9 pm. Four wineries have agreed to be present, and seven other vendors will table their wares. Music and food demonstrations will also be enjoyed. This committee was also granted authorization to begin a program of granting naming rights to donors.

Buildings and grounds: Andrea Rebeck "surveyed" our building and noted a number of issues needing to be addressed, some of which were identified in the Bero condition report done several years ago. On the good news side she noted that Dick Hoffman had made many repairs listed in that same report.

## **It Is Enough**

by Anne Alexander Bingham

To know that the atoms  
of my body  
will remain

to think of them rising  
through the roots of a great oak  
to live in  
leaves, branches, twigs

perhaps to feed the  
crimson peony  
the blue iris  
the broccoli

or rest on water  
freeze and thaw  
with the seasons

some atoms might become a  
bit of fluff on the wing  
of a chickadee  
to feel the breeze  
know the support of air

and some might drift  
up and up into space  
star dust returning from

whence it came  
it is enough to know that  
as long as there is a universe  
I am a part of it.

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