



Published by: **Pullman Memorial Universalist Church** Albion, NY
Member of **The Unitarian Universalist Association**

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Visit our Website at pullmanmemorial.org

Minister Musings by Lee Richards

Testimonials. Last month in this column I wrote about how the mission of the church is to change lives. To help bring that point home I've asked each member of the Board of Trustees to take a turn in our worship services and relate how associating with PMUC has changed his or her life.

If you've been present, you may have noticed a common theme in their stories. For the ones who have thus far spoken, being a Unitarian Universalist, or even more so – being a member of Pullman Memorial Universalist Church – has allowed them to lead a more genuine life. Having been raised in another tradition (Catholic, Methodist, Episcopal, etc.) these folks found the religion of their upbringing to be lacking upon reaching adulthood.

It's not really a surprise. Most other denominations have a creed – a set of ready-made answers and beliefs – that members are expected to affirm. And as one matures, it is not uncommon to start questioning the pat answers. When told that Jesus performed miracles, or rose from the dead, a lot of people ask, "Where's the proof?" And the answer is often, "You must have faith to believe it is true."

I've spoken with a number of ministers and priests over the years. They tell me that the beliefs of their congregation's members often range over a wide spectrum, and that some – maybe even most – don't completely believe the creeds they recite. Thank God (or whatever higher power) that we UUs are allowed to be honest in our spiritualities!

Sometimes I find I must remind people that the "Seven Principles and Purposes" are not a creed, or even a set of beliefs to which one must ascribe in order to join our church. No, if you read the preamble that appears at the top of the "7 Ps" you'll notice the Principles and Purposes are a promise made to the UUA by congregations – not by individuals. As a member congregation of the Association we affirm worth and dignity, justice and equity, etc., but we do not require any individual church member to do the same.

Becoming a member of PMUC changes lives for the better when it allows someone raised in another tradition to live more honestly, more in harmony with themselves and their world. No mental gymnastics are required to try and justify an archaic tenet of faith. Rather, with the help and encouragement of others in the congregation, you are allowed to discover your own truths, and to become the best person you can be.

There might be no better testament than that. Let this church of open minds, open hearts, and opens arms lovingly embrace you as you change into the Genuine you.

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.

Service Schedule – Sunday at 11:00AM

<u>Date</u>	<u>Minister</u>	<u>Notes</u>	<u>Coffee Hour</u>
Mar. 4	Lee Richards	"The Gift of Giving" Breakfast with Minister at 9:45	
Mar. 11	Rev. John Rex	"AN EYE WITNESS ACCOUNT " Daylight Saving Time Begins	
Mar. 18	Lee Richards	"Our Living Tradition"	
Mar. 25	Margaret-Anne Milne	Church Music & the Organ	
Apr. 1	Rev. Donald Reidell	April Fool's Day	

Sunday, Mar. 4 – "Breakfast with the Minister" @ 9:45 am. Pastor Lee Richards (with some additional help) will feed the crowd. Come to church early today and enjoy a breakfast before the service.

Sunday, Mar. 4 – "The Gift of Giving" worship service @ 11 am. Lee Richards will help us think beyond the obligation of giving to understanding the role charity has in enriching our own lives. ALSO –a child dedication.

Monday, Mar. 5 – Pot-Luck Supper at 6:30 pm. Each month on the first Monday we get together to share our bounty. Everyone invited – you need not be a member of the church to join in on the good food and stimulating conversation.

Sunday, Mar. 11 – Building and Grounds committee meeting @ 9:30 am.

Sunday, Mar. 11 – Worship service @ 11 am with Rev. John Rex. "AN EYE WITNESS ACCOUNT" Twenty-five years ago, something happened in a WNY UU Church that was featured in news around the world, that was the subject of controversy, and that saved untold lives. Let us remember and celebrate.

NOTE: Daylight saving time begins today!

Sunday, Mar. 18 – Board of Trustees meets @ 9:15 am.

Sunday, Mar. 18 – "Our Living Tradition" worship service @ 11 am. The fifth installment in Lee Richards' series on the Unitarian Universalist basis for "doing church" explores how change is vital to keeping the message of Love relevant.

Wednesday, Mar. 21 – Movie with the Minister @ 7 pm. "The Last Supper" might be subtitled, "When Liberals Go Bad." Effectively using dark humor, it raises issues about the end justifying the means, who gets to pass judgment on another, right and wrong, and more. When you watch, you might be surprised at what evokes a laugh, and then stop to wonder – what if it was me?

Sunday, Mar. 25 – "Church Music & the Organ" @ 11 am. Margaret-Anne Milne, CAGO (Colleague of the American Guild of Organists) will present a worship service devoted to music using our wonderful organ. A little history of church music, a little music theory, and a lot of great sounds you won't want to miss! (Read more about our presenter further inside this newsletter)

Sunday, Mar. 25 – Book Discussion group meets after coffee hour (about 12:30 pm). This month's topic is "Love." We'll round out the "four imperatives" with a look at Love. Choose a book to read on the topic and then share with us how it impacted your spiritual life. Our approach to book discussions this year – rather than everyone reading the same book we invite you to consider a monthly topic as a guideline in selecting your tome. Each month will have a different theme/topic. In this way we can each bring a different viewpoint we've read about to the discussion. Future topics (not in order) may include Politics, Earth, Fire, Wind, Water.

Thursday, Mar. 29 – GUUSTO meets @ 7:00 pm, at First Universalist Church, Rochester, NY.

Looking ahead...

Saturday, Apr. 21 – To mark the release of a new history book, a reception, celebration, and book-signing sponsored by the Orleans County Genealogical Society, all day at PMUC. Our C.W. Lattin is one of the authors of the book!

Saturday/Sunday, Apr. 27-28 - St. Lawrence District Assembly in Rochester, NY. (link to a flyer is available on our church website)

There are no Joys & Sorrows or Pullman Plaudits in this issue. Look for their return next month.

Musical Biography – Margaret-Anne Milne

(Ms. Milne will be our worship presenter on Mar. 25) Margaret-Anne is currently organist for Community Worship services at Colgate Rochester Crozer Divinity School and active as an organist substitute in the Greater Rochester area. A music consultant for various groups and individuals, she is a specialist in hymnody and church music.

She served as Organist and Coordinator of Music Ministry for 25 years at Christ View United Methodist Church, Henrietta, planning and playing weekly service music, creatively playing hymns, and accompanying choirs and soloists. She taught adult classes in Hymnody, and recruited and coached vocal and instrumental soloists for summer music ministry.

A native of Geneva, NY, Margaret-Anne has played the organ for many churches in Rochester and the Finger Lakes area. She served as Organist and Music Director for Hedges Memorial Chapel for over 20 years and as Organist for the Garrett Memorial Chapel for six summers.

Margaret-Anne studied Music Theory and Harmony with Margaret Henry at the Eastman School of Music, Rochester, and participated in Improvisation Workshops at Eastman. Her organ studies were with Charlotte Morse Bullock, Geneva, NY, Dr. J. Kenneth Munson, St Lawrence University, Canton, NY, and David Craighead, Rochester, NY.

Margaret-Anne is certified as a Colleague of American Guild of Organists, (CAGO). She is currently a member, and served as Co-Dean, Sub-Dean, and Secretary of the Rochester Chapter, American Guild of Organists.

Her other music-related activities include serving as President of the Board of Directors, Board Member, and Advisor to the President of the Rochester Philharmonic League, and volunteering for its annual Young Artist Auditions.

In addition to playing the organ at Colgate Rochester Crozer Divinity School, Margaret-Anne has been the leader for their Carillon Initiative to "Bring Back the Bells," providing the neighboring community with daily 5 p.m. bell mini-concerts.

Unirondack

The Unitarian Universalist Camp and Conference Center in the Adirondacks is accepting registrations for summer camp. Some sessions are already full. If you are interested in this unique experience it is strongly urged that you check out the programs and register soon. Go to www.unirondack.org for more info.

Quick Links:

Lee's recent sermon about determining the ultimate question is available for reading online at our website:

<http://pullmanmemorial.org/sermons/>

Become a Fan of PMUC on Facebook at: <https://www.facebook.com/pages/Pullman-Memorial-Universalist-Church/139780039394697>

Or "Friend Me" (the pastor) on Facebook at: <https://www.facebook.com/pastor.lee.richards>

One of our church members has written a great book. Now there is an effort to raise funds to have it turned into a high-quality audiobook that would be available for free online. Can you help her reach her goal?

<http://www.kickstarter.com/projects/1723504596/the-dark-wife-audiobook>

Thinking about getting married? Check out: uuwedding.com

Look for other interesting links on the "Links" page of our website at: pullmanmemorial.org

Jean Bistoff, You Were Loved



The last person who personally knew founding members of this church passed away on Feb. 17, 2012. A funeral for her was held at Pullman Memorial on Feb. 22nd, and many, many people attended to wish her spirit – now released from its earthly shell – a good journey.

Jean Helen Bistoff was born on the family farm in Albion in 1918 to Fred Brown and Josephine (Farr) Brown. Jean grew up attending the Pullman Church with her parents, grandparents, and other relatives. Upon her marriage, she moved away for a period of years, but after her husband died she returned to Albion, and to her beloved church. She was a pillar of the church and served in any capacity needed. She was also active with the Child Welfare Association and the Cobblestone Society.

Her daughter, Chris Loss, wrote, "From early on, we shared a love of this church. In my early years, she made me go when I wanted to stay home and play, but at some point, I was going because I loved to go. We worked together to keep the church going. We put up the Wayside pulpit, helped out in the Sunday School room, served on committees, helped with fund-raisers.

And we sat together in the same pew for 50 years until she entered the nursing home. We both served as Board Chairman on several occasions, as well as being the church secretary. This church meant everything to her, and it means everything to me, as well. I miss so much the partnership we had in this endeavor. And I promised her before she died that I would keep working for this church and keep it going and vital in any way I can."

Jean's granddaughter Kathy wrote, "Gram is more than just the person standing in front of me; she is fresh picked rhubarb dipped in sugar during the summertime, she is stained fingers from picking sweet black caps, she is pear trees in the fall and a quiet walk down a country road. Gram is the constant, the always there, the foundation of which so much beauty has been made and continues to grow. Even though she has moved on and forward I know that I will see her again, and I know I won't have to worry about anything because she will have prepared the way for me. But until then, I will see her in the first shoots of spring, ladybugs on windows, jars of sun tea steeping on the back porch steps, and in the quietness and calm of an Indian summer breeze."

We are grateful for Jean having lived, and we celebrate her having lived among us. Her influence endures in the unending consequences flowing from her character and her deeds, it endures in our own acts and thoughts. We shall remember her as a living, vital presence. That memory will bring refreshment to our hearts and strengthen us in times of trouble.

In lieu of flowers, the family requested that donations be made to Pullman Memorial Universalist Church. Jean would have wanted it that way.

Eye on the Board of Trustees
-from the meeting on February 19, 2012

Treasurer's Report – 1) Under Accounts Receivable, Dick added back into the balance old outstanding, uncashed checks. 2) \$50.00 collected from the Genealogical Society will be sent to the Community Meals program. 3) Sara reported that \$229.00 was collected for the UUSC Guest at Your Table.

Moment of Silence – Bill Lattin requested a moment of silence to honor the memory of Jean Bistoff who was a pillar in the church for many decades.

Pastor's Report – In addition to his regular activities, Lee reported a number of hospital and nursing home visitations for pastoral care. He also did some research into Hearing Assistive Devices for the sanctuary to determine recommended type and estimated cost. A minimal set-up would be about \$900.00, but additional upgrades to the current sound system may be needed, with the total cost potentially \$2500.00. It was suggested to look for a used system.

Breakfast with the Minister – Lee is organizing a breakfast for March 4th at 9:45 am. Everyone is encouraged to come to church early and chow down before the service.

Internet Connection – Is now working. Craig Smith is donating a computer for the pastor's office.

Building and Grounds – No information yet regarding railings for the front steps. Dick continues to build up support columns in the basement. Clean-up efforts underway to prepare the church for the funeral on Feb. 22. Next committee meeting at 9:30 am on Mar. 11.

Membership– 1) Two new members with three children joined the church on Feb. 19. 2) Noted that no one person is currently tasked with maintaining contact with shut-ins, sending notes, flowers or other mementos to the ill or bereaving, or making outreach to visitors. It was suggested that Jenn or Sarah Diemer might be willing to do this. 3) The membership directory is under review for updating. 4) Discussed ways of encouraging members not seen in a while to come back to church.

Religious Education – It was noted that the Religious Education committee needed to identify a roster of teachers. Currently, the topic of the day's sermon or children's story will be used to start a conversation. Jim proposed renaming RE, and for now it will be known as "Children's Church."

Wayside Pulpit – Bill contacted a local painter about creating a set of shortened UU principles.

Fair Share – Annual dues for the UUA and St. Lawrence District together average about \$75.00 per member. Lee hopes to encourage members to increase their pledges for the next year so we can pay our full fair share.

Pledges- Sara Phillips keeps track of the year's pledges. People may request a report of their contributions for income tax purposes.

Strawberry Festival – Discussed replicating last year's activities

BUUF– Diana responded to an inquiry from David Markham about cooperating on a service but got no response.

GUUSTO– A working committee has been formed to work on migrant issues. Each congregation is asked to provide a rep for the committee. If anyone from PMUC is interested, contact Dennis Seekins.

"Help Us Help You"

PMUC's campaign to purchase an AED (portable defibrillator) continues. We've received about \$500 but we still need your help to reach our \$1350 goal. You can donate on our website <http://pullmanmemorial.org/> using PayPal or any major credit card and it will be earmarked for the AED. Or you can donate by check or cash - just be sure to notate "AED" so we'll know to add it to the special fund.

So Help Us Help You - after all, you never know what "heart-stopping" event may transpire when at church!

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