

The Grapevine Newsletter



March 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

Minister Musings – by Lee Richards

February was a short month but the schedule was chock full of doings. The breakfast with the minister event served up more than food for the tummy, but also food for the soul. We had two people come forward to sign the membership book. We honored benefactors by naming a pew in their honor. We packed care packages for our college kids. An intro to UUism class was well attended. First Monday potluck rocked! Your board trustees put in extra time to work on a Saturday. And so on, and so on.

March is shaping up to be just as engaging, too. Especially, our Pullman Pourings Wine Tasting fundraiser on the 15th has some amazing aspects, including live music, four wineries, artisan foods, door prize, silent auction, and more! Sarah Diemer is starting up her popular meditation group again. The New UU Class continues. Our Chautauqua Sunday will feature a young UU entrepreneur who is saving the world one seed at a time. The movie with the minister will show that age does not define ability. And so on.

In my recent sermon about habits I said, “Attending church each week makes you feel good - and if by some chance it doesn’t then you need to find another church!” You’ve also heard me say, “We love to laugh, and live to love.” Well, I’ll think you’ll agree that the things happening at Pullman Memorial nowadays leave you feeling pretty good. I see it in the social hour - all the buzz and commotion as people smile and connect and linger. I see it in our sharing of food at potlucks, in carpooling together to go to a protest, in putting on fundraisers. There is laughter, and most especially, there is love.

As always, I am so grateful to be a part of this congregation. It makes me feel good to see all of you growing into your spirituality, and into your humanity. And even though I’m not much of a wine drinker, I will raise a glass on the 15th and make a toast: “To the most lovable liberals in western New York!”

Service Schedule – Sunday at 11:00AM

Mar. 2	Susan Daiss	
Mar. 9	Lee Richards	“Out of Time”
Mar. 16	Petra Page-Mann	Chautauqua Sunday – Fruition Seeds
Mar. 23	Lee Richards	“Why, or what, or who, do we worship?”
Mar. 30	Julia Hickman-Himes	

~ *Childcare available during service times* ~

MAKE NOTE: NO WALKIES OR STROLLS IN MARCH

Sunday, Mar. 2 – worship service @ 11 am with Susan Daiss.

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

Thursday, Mar. 6 – Meditation Group @ 7 pm led by Sarah Diemer. Free admission. Meets monthly on the first Thursday. Recharge your inner being in a guided group atmosphere. Followed by herbal tea.

Saturday, March 8 – Workbee from 10 am to noon. General clean up throughout the building, with a focus on prep for the wine-tasting event next Saturday. Bagels and coffee provided.

Sunday, Mar. 9 - Finance committee meets @ 10 am.

Sunday, Mar. 9 - “Out of Time” worship service @ 11 am with Lee Richards. Time is a difficult master – it influences most everything we do and we have almost no control over it. Let’s wrestle a little with time so we can turn it to our advantage.

Sunday, Mar. 9 - Fundraising committee check-in @ 12:10 pm in the minister’s parlor.

Thursday, Mar. 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 speaking to Darrell.

Saturday, Mar. 15 - Pullman Pourings Wine Tasting @ 7 pm. Experience New York wineries, artisan foods, and live music. Read more in this newsletter below, or check out our events page.

Sunday, Mar. 16 - Board of Trustees meets @ 9 am.

Sunday, Mar. 16 - Fruition Seeds: A Local Answer to the Global Seed Crisis @ 11 am. This Chautauqua Sunday program will introduce us to Unitarian Universalist Petra Page-Mann and her organic seed company from Naples, NY. Meet the next generation of agribusiness entrepreneurs.

Monday, Mar. 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, Mar. 19 - Movie with the Minister @ 7 pm. “Young at Heart” will lift your spirits no matter what your age. A documentary about a chorus of senior citizens from Massachusetts who cover songs by Jimi Hendrix, Coldplay, Sonic Youth, and other unexpected musicians. Free admission and popcorn.

Sunday, Mar. 23 - “Why, or what, or who, do we worship?” worship service @ 11 am with Lee Richards. Many UUs struggle with the term “worship” and feel it is an antiquated term, especially when the people filling the pews hold a wide range of faith beliefs ranging from Deist to Atheist. Today we’ll explore the concept of worship and what it means for Pullman Memorial Universalist in the 21st century.

Tuesday, Mar. 25 - deadline for submissions to the April newsletter. Send to: pmuc.albion@gmail.com

March 28-29 – UU District Assembly Annual Meeting in Erie, PA. More information at: <http://www.sld.uua.org/conggrowth/districtassembly.html>

Sunday, Mar. 30 - worship service @ 11 am with Julia Hickman-Himes.

Sunday, Mar. 30 - Newbery Book Discussion @ 12:30 pm. “Holes” by Louis Sachar.

JOYS & SORROWS

Craig Smith - is proud that Tyler has been accepted at several colleges so far and is waiting to hear from three more. He also has a few scholarships already. We are all very proud of Tyler and know he will pick a great school.

Chris Loss - was happy to report that her grandson, Caden, achieved his yellow belt at e Kwon Do recently. He's a hard worker.

Rich DellaCosta - talked about the recent passing of legendary folk singer and activist, Pete Seeger, and said that this amazing man helped him realize that one person can make a difference in the world. Some of Seeger's classic songs includes 'We Shall Overcome', 'Where Have All The Flowers Gone', and 'If I Had a Hammer'.

Debby Rodrigues - said when she was in Albany to protest fracking some months ago, she was only feet away from Pete Seeger.

Beth Allen - wanted to remind everyone as they look forward to the Superbowl this year, that it is also one of the largest magnets for human trafficking. Human trafficking carries a large cost to those forced into it, and to the larger society.

Sara Phillips - wanted to thank Pastor Lee and Louise for a fabulous breakfast on February 9th (Breakfast with the Minister). And it sure was wonderful!

Julie Andrews (on February 9)- wanted to wish her husband, John, a very happy birthday!!

Debby Rodrigues (Feb 9) - also wanted to wish her friend, Jim Hobbs, a happy birthday! And there is more cause for celebration because Jim received wonderful news at Roswell recently that he is still cancer free! We love to hear that kind of good news!!

Debby Rodrigues (Feb 23) - has a cousin who was diagnosed with breast cancer, had undergone a mastectomy, and then found out that she didn't have cancer after all!

Andrea Rebeck - has been working at the church with the Architect from Crawford and Stearns and has been looking around in the basement, and there are lots of problems down there. But it was a pleasure and a joy to work with Julie, who was also there.

Patty Adema - was pleased to report that her son, Matt, received a package at college from the church recently and it was very nice!

Gay Smith - said that Tyler will perform in the Kendall High School play Damn Yankees on February 28 and March 1st at 7 PM. Tickets are \$5 advance and \$6 at the door. Don't miss it...Tyler, once again, has the lead role, and it will be his last play as a High School student. So don't miss it!

Chris Loss - was happy to see Grace and Gary Kent being honored by having a pew named after them. In addition to the thoughtful monetary gifts they have given this church, they both work tirelessly for the community. Chris said that they both are an example for us all, true community heroes!

Debby Rodrigues - will be traveling to Washington D.C. to march against the Keystone pipeline. Go Debby!!

Diana Dudley - found out eight weeks ago that her daughter, Holly, was diagnosed with cancer. Holly moved out to California to be with her brother, who has been doing everything possible to help her out since then. She lives on the beach and takes walks daily in the sunshine. And now she seems to be improving since she has stopped losing weight and her bilirubin count is much better. Diana traveled out there to see her recently by train. We are very hopeful that she will continue to improve!! And Diana will continue to need messages of support as this has been very stressful!

PULLMAN PLAUDITS

Pastor Lee Richards and Louise, Liz Schaal, Chris Loss, David and Sherry Hagmier, and Monica Beck for their work on Breakfast With the Pastor. There were delicious scrambled eggs, bacon, oatmeal, and fruit salad, along with croissants and bagels. C.W. Lattin made the wonderful fruit salad. It couldn't have been nicer!

Darrell Dyke - facilitated the first UU class recently, with 12 people in attendance! Pizza was enjoyed by the group in addition to the joy of a good class. More classes have been scheduled.

Sarah Diemer - has plans to host her meditation group on March 6th. This will be held on the first Thursday of each month!

Andrea Rebeck - has been hard at work taking a good look at the situation with our basement! She has compiled a booklet of photos outlining some of the issues.

Jim and Betty Knight, Sarah Knight, Louise Richards, C.W. Lattin, Pastor Lee Richards, and others have been working very hard on the Pullman Pourings Wine Tasting event, scheduled for March 15 from 7-9.

Bonnie Beiswenger - was a guest organist recently and did a great job!!

Julie Andrews, Patty Adema, and Louise Richards worked on putting together care packages for our kids

in college who can't be with us, as a way to lift their spirits!

Congratulations to new members Monica Beck and Jim Hobbs, who joined the church on February 23rd. Welcome to our church family!

Gary and Grace Kent had a pew named for them on February 23rd due to their generous contributions to this church!

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. The selection for April is "Holes" by Louis Sachar, on March 30th at 12:30 pm.

Bereavement Support Group

Grief is experienced individually but handled better communally. Pastor Lee 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 second session scheduled for Mar. 13th at 6:30 pm. The focus for the evening will be UU history. 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, 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 continues! Our fantastic special events committee at Pullman has put 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.

"Pull a cork for Pullman" on Saturday, March 15th, from 7 to 9 pm, at the church. Tickets are \$20 single, or 2 for \$30, with a complimentary wine glass for each ticket holder.

Sample Niagara wine trail wineries, local artisan foods, and enjoy live music, all while supporting a great cause. Featured local vineyard tastings by Becker Farm's Vizcarra Vineyards, Lake Ontario Winery & Vineyards, Leonard Oakes Estate Winery, Schwenk Wine Cellars.

Food tastings by The Crooked Door Tavern, First Light Farm & Creamery, Fruition Seeds, Kirby's Farm Market, Oliver's Candies, Shirt Factory Cafe, and Watt Farms Country Market.

Tickets are on sale online at pullmantickets.com, and also available at Bindings Bookstore 28 W Bank St, Albion; and Fischer's Newsroom 105 N. Main St., Albion. Tickets also on sale at the door the night 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!

Naming Rights

On Sunday, Feb. 23rd, we celebrated Grace and Gary Kent as benefactors of our church. Over the past couple years, and wholly unsolicited, they have donated funds to the care and upkeep of PMUC. A brass plaque now marks pew number 28 in recognition of the Kents' generosity. We hope to have many opportunities to acknowledge this kind of generosity in the future.

If you'd like to know more about naming opportunities at Pullman, please don't hesitate ask Bill Lattin, Gay Smith, or Pastor Lee for more information. We'd love to begin the conversation of how you can help preserve our architectural heritage while also leaving your own legacy.

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

by Lee Richards

Since the last newsletter I've written online essays about listening to the voice of God, a thinking person's church, the end of pledge sermons (yay!), and taking the long historical view.

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

Pastor Lee suggested the church join AMSA - the Albion Main Street Alliance - and the board approved. Among other activities, AMSA will be actively promoting the stained glass window tour with C.W. Lattin as guide. Pastor Lee also suggested the church consider purchasing a larger window air conditioner for the social hall summer services, a suggestion which generated much discussion. Lee will research costs and bring the proposal back to the board in March.

The treasurer's and finance committee's reports were approved as presented. Chris Loss will serve as "back-up treasurer" when Andrea Rebeck is unavailable, and Diana Dudley will be "second back-up." A proposal to sell the remaining individual stocks in our endowment and convert them to a mutual fund was put forward. The item was referred back to the finance committee with questions for more clarification.

Other brief news: The fundraising committee's report showed great progress on the two major upcoming events for this year - the wine-tasting in March, and the book sale in June. Twelve people attended the Introduction to Unitarian Universalism class led by Darrell Dyke. Randy Crawford, from Crawford and Stearns, will meet with Andee, Gay, Lee and Bill on Feb. 18th to discuss the renovation project. The nominating committee will meet to prepare a slate for the upcoming annual meeting.

Complete minutes available upon request.

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.

A CNN journalist heard about a very old Jewish man who had been going to the Wailing Wall to pray, twice a day, every day, for a long, long time.

So she went to check it out. She went to the Wailing Wall and there he was, walking slowly up to the holy site.

She watched him pray and after about 45 minutes, when he turned to leave, using a cane and moving very slowly, she approached him for an interview.

"Pardon me, sir, I'm Rebecca Smith from CNN. What's your name?"

"Morris Fishbien," he replied.

"Sir, how long have you been coming to the Wailing Wall and praying?"

"For about 60 years."

"60 years! That's amazing! What do you pray for?"

I pray for peace between the Christians, Jews and the Muslims. I pray for all the wars and all the hatred to stop.

I pray for all our children to grow up safely as responsible adults, and to love their fellow man."

"How do you feel after doing this for 60 years?"

"Like I'm talking to a freaking brick wall!"