



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

Member of **The Unitarian Universalist Association**

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## Minister Musings – by Lee Richards

Six score years of being a rock. It was almost an anniversary that slipped by without mention, but January 31st marked 120 years since the dedication and opening of our beautiful stone building. I briefly mentioned in last month's newsletter some of the rich symbolism of our building's design and in the worship service of February 22nd I spoke more at length about the symbolism of a choice of stone for the building material.

During the six score years our building has been "open for business" many hundreds of people have entered its doors. Some stayed to raise a family with Universalist principles. Some found new friendships. Some became engaged in social justice causes. Some found new ways of thinking about their relationship to the world, to the universe, and to God. I want to believe that all found an experience of Universalist Love.

And, of course, some did not find what they sought. Perhaps the majority of people making up the congregation were too liberal minded for their tastes, or maybe not liberal enough. Maybe the Sunday school program wasn't up to snuff at that moment, or there was dissension/disagreement about how to endorse a cause or accomplish a task. Perhaps they found greater clarity about their own theology or philosophy and that was enough for them so they stopped attending. There can be as many reasons for leaving a UU church as there are for staying.

But through it all - all those hundreds of people - the church as a building, and as a congregation, has remained standing. Standing like a rock. 120 years ago George Pullman made a commitment to Universalism by erecting our building and ever since the people who enjoy his gift have used it as a base from which to launch their thoughts, and messages, and actions of Love. Whether the ranks of membership swelled or waned and then swelled again the constant has been our "rock" of a church.

I'm not sure that if we'd been meeting in a storefront, or even in some older wooden church building, if there would have been the same level of commitment to keep going when things cycled through a tough spot. I suspect it would have been a lot easier to throw up one's hands and walk away. It's notable that all the other Universalist churches around us have closed, including now the one in Middleport, yet we have kept our doors open.

And in fact, our doors are more open now than they have been in years. Not just on Sunday mornings but also on Wednesday evenings. And special events - like our wine tasting this month - are becoming regular opportunities for people from the community to encounter us, and to care about us and our message.

So let me take this opportunity to thank all our stalwart "rocks" - our members and friends who stuck by us in the thin times to see us through the last six score years. With your continued support, I think the next six score can only get better!

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

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March 1	Susan Daiss	"Literal and Spiritual Nourishment"
March 8	Lee Richards	"Irish Blessings"
March 15	Michael Warren Thomas	"What's there to wine about?" (Chautauqua Sunday)
March 22	Lee Richards	"Everything is a Mashup"
March 29	Marcia Buckley	"Palliating Pain"

~ Childcare available during service times ~

## Dates, Times, and Descriptions...

Sunday, March 1 - "**Literal and Spiritual Nourishment**" worship service @ 11 am with Susan Daiss.

Monday, March 2 – Fundraising event committee meeting @ 5 pm.

Monday, March 2 – Potluck Supper @ 6:30 pm. Good food and fun conversation. Open invite to all.

Wednesday, March 4 – "A Gathering of Hearts & Minds" @ 7 pm. Gather for a light supper offering and discussion. Money is very much in the news right now so we'll explore money, wealth, debt, and personal finances for our current events topic.

Sunday, March 8 - "**Irish Blessings: A Spirituality of Place**" worship service @ 11 am with Lee Richards. The spirituality of Ireland is more than Catholic or Protestant, but unique to an island with a long-settled population dependent on the soil and each other. Bonus: a few Irish curses thrown in for good measure.

Sunday, March 8 – Building & Grounds committee meets @ 12:15 pm.

Wednesday, March 11 – "A Gathering of Hearts & Minds" @ 7 pm. Gather for a light supper offering and discussion. Our philosophical topic for March will expand on Sunday's "Spirituality of Place." How does one's location influence their spirituality or religious beliefs?

Sunday, March 15 – Board of trustees meets @ 9 am.

Sunday, March 15 – "**What's there to wine about?**" (Chautauqua Sunday) worship service @ 11 am with Michael Warren Thomas. Can the juice of the grape affect one's spirituality? Includes time for discussion Q&A.

Wednesday, March 18 – "A Gathering of Hearts & Minds" @ 7 pm. Gather for a light supper offering and discussion. Our pop culture topic is "House of Cards" and how politics is portrayed in the media.

Saturday, March 21 – Pullman Pourings 2 Wine Tasting Event from 7 to 9 pm. More info and tickets available at [pullmantickets.com](http://pullmantickets.com) and at the top of page 3 of this newsletter.

Sunday, March 22 – "**Everything is a Mashup**" worship service @ 11 am with Lee Richards. All inventions are recombinant ideas. We stand on the shoulders of giants. Being original while influenced by the past.

Wednesday, March 25 – "A Gathering of Hearts & Minds" @ 7 pm. Gather for a light supper offering and discussion. Wild Card Wednesday – topics of interest brought by attendees.

Wednesday, March 25 – deadline for submissions to the April newsletter. Send to: [pmuc.albion@gmail.com](mailto:pmuc.albion@gmail.com)

Sunday, March 29 – "**Palliating Pain**" worship service @ 11 am with Marcia Buckley MS, NP, AHPCN. Palliative care is specialized medical care for people with serious illnesses. It focuses on providing patients with relief from the symptoms and stress of a serious illness. Marcia is Sr. Nurse Practitioner for the Palliative Care Service of Strong Hospital in Rochester and she will share how pain can be managed and should not be feared. Includes time for Q&A discussion.

Wednesday, April 22 – RESTORE will show "Brave Miss World" @ 7 pm in our sanctuary. The film is a documentary about the story of Linor Abargil, Miss World 1998. Linor was raped just a few months weeks before winning Miss World. You'll see her struggles, her healing process, and her efforts to help others heal. A discussion follows the showing.

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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!

## **Pullman Pourings 2 – March 21**

It's finally here! The great Pullman wine tasting event is Saturday, March 21 from 7-9 pm and it's bigger and better than last year. Wine samplings from Becker Farms Vizcarra Vineyards, Eagle Crest Vineyards, Lake Ontario Winery & Vineyards, Leonard Oakes Estate Winery, and Schwenk Wine Cellars. Food tastings from The Pillars Estate, Della's Chocolates, SNL Sweet Escapes, Kirby's Farm Market, Shirt Factory Cafe, and Watt Farms Country Market. Live music, including musicians Ed Koban, Rich Della Costa, Woody Nicholson, and others. Antique booth with treasures from Bill Lattin's collection. Buy tickets now at [pullmantickets.com](http://pullmantickets.com) or at Bindings Bookstore.

### **Wednesday Evening GATHERING of Hearts & Minds**

Our "Ministry of Ideas" program will present a topic for discussion each Wednesday at 7 pm. In general, first Wednesdays will focus on a current events issue, the second on some aspect of spirituality or philosophy, the third on pop culture, and the fourth is a "wild card" where the evening's topic is up to the audience. The success of *Wild Card Wednesdays* will depend on attendees bringing something they'd like to share with others for a more in-depth discussion. A light supper is also offered. Check the detailed listings on page two for the March topics.

### **DOWN THE STAIRS RECYCLING!**

Return-for-deposit bottles and cans, plus assorted metals, help generate additional funds for the church. Bins for these items are at the foot of the stairs between the kitchen and dining hall doors. Clean, washed metal objects may be mixed, but please separate aluminum from the rest. **SPECIAL INCENTIVE!** Debby Rodrigues has offered to match the amount received from the scrap metal recycling center every month that the total is \$10 or higher.

### **Donations Sought**

The Main Street Thrift Store & Donation Center – an initiative of Community Action of Orleans & Genesee – is currently in need of quality furniture and new or gently used household essentials. The store depends on your generous community donations to ensure sustainability of the retail business, which provides comprehensive job training, employment services, and educational opportunities for residents of Orleans counties.

Donations should be clean and in usable condition with no rips, tears or stains. Unfortunately, the store does not have faculties to repair or clean upholstered furniture. Drop offs are cheerfully accepted at the store: 131 South Main Street in Albion Monday-Saturday 10:30am – 5:00pm, Thursday till 7:00pm. Large furniture pick-up is available by calling the store at 585-589-1430

### **Become a "UU Rock"**

It's that time of year when we ask you to consider making a pledge commitment to sustain the ongoing work of our church. Filling out and returning a pledge form helps the board of trustees to plan a budget for the next fiscal year so we can make the best use of our resources. If you would like a pledge form then drop a line to [pmuc.albion@gmail.com](mailto:pmuc.albion@gmail.com) or call (585) 454-9450 and we'll send one right out. If you also just wish to make a one-time donation then you may do so at our website [pullmanmemorialdonations.com](http://pullmanmemorialdonations.com) or send a check to PO Box 87, Albion, NY 14411. All financial support is welcomed and appreciated.

## **Become a “UU Saint”**

In Pastor Lee’s sermon about saints on January 11th he pointed out there is one “postmortem miracle” we can all perform, by leaving a bequest to Pullman Memorial. It’s very easy to do! Just update your Last Will and Testament by including a version of this language: “I hereby give and bequeath \$\_\_\_\_\_, or \_\_\_\_\_ percent of the rest, remainder and residue of my estate, or the proceeds from the sale of real estate by my estate that I own located at \_\_\_\_\_, to Pullman Memorial Universalist Church, located at 10 East Park Street, Albion, NY 14411, Federal Tax ID # 47-2500608.” [Did you miss the sermon? It is available in MP3 format for downloading or listening to online at <http://pullmanmemorial.org/sermons/> ]

## **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.

If you have a smartphone then check out our electronic “virtual offering plate.” Look for the QR code on the back of Sunday programs and do a quick scan. You’ll be whisked to a special donation page where you can easily make a donation online.

## **Eye on the Board**

At suggestion of the membership committee, the board approved offering a \$250 scholarship to a graduating senior from Albion High School - the selection based upon an essay written by the student (subject to be determined). Fiona Beck was granted financial assistance to attend Camp Unirondack this summer. Noted that Scott Hoffman (son of Betsy & Dick Hoffman) died suddenly and Pastor Lee will do the memorial service on Feb. 21st at Merrill-Grinnell.

The treasurer reported that our new EIN number requires us to close our current accounts and open new ones. Chris Loss is working with the bank branch manager to make the transition as smooth as possible. We were awarded a grant from NYSCU for our religious education program. The wine tasting fundraiser is March 21st.

Craig and Gay Smith have been working on the ice dam near the social hall door and leveling the sanctuary floor (social hall wing). Craig is also attempting repairs to one of the furnaces, and investigating ways to refurbish the piano keyboard.

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## **Pastoral Care**

You are encouraged to contact Pastor Lee when experiencing difficulties. 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.

*Special thoughts and prayers go out to our editor – Alan Nugent – who was unable to generate this edition of the newsletter due to eye surgery.*