



Brockport UU News

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Reflections—and Memory

By Rev. Peggy Meeker

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Our worship theme for November is memory. In our worship service on November 8th, and in our children’s religious education, and in Soul Matters, our small groups program, we will be reflecting on the importance of memory to spiritual life. What does it mean to be a person of memory? Where does memory take us? Does what we remember hold us back or give us a lifeline? Or both? What is your most cherished memory? When you take the word “remember” apart, you get re-member—to put back together! At its best, then, memory helps us to re-assemble ourselves, to re-establish who we are and what we most want to be. At our November service we will have an opportunity to take part in a community ritual of honoring those who have died by remembering the gifts they have given us.

As we move into November, and toward Thanksgiving, may the colder weather find you warm and safe, and may the upcoming holiday season

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Spirit in Practice Workshops

“... spirituality is defined as your relationship with the spirit of life, however you understand that.”

If you have ever wanted to find the right spiritual practice for you, or if you used to have a spiritual practice but let it go because it went hand-in-hand with religious beliefs that are no longer meaningful for you, or if you have a spiritual practice but would like to go deeper, this series of workshops might be just right for you! “Spirit in Practice” is a series of ten workshops that explores a variety of life-giving spiritual practices—where spirituality is defined as your relationship with the spirit of life, however you understand that. Topics include prayer and meditation, body movement, art and creativity, spiritual partnerships, justice practices, and so on.

We meet on the first and third Wednesday of each month, from 7 to about 8:30 or 9 p.m., at St. Luke’s Episcopal Church (side entrance, 14 State St). *You need not commit to regular attendance*—just dip in whenever you want for an opportunity to enhance the quality of your everyday life.

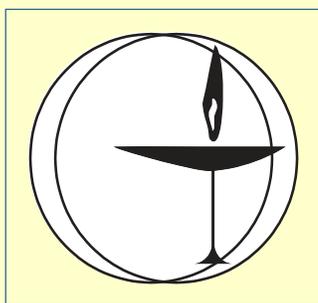
Soul Matters—Our Small Groups Program

Too often the pressures of our daily lives force us to move quickly from week to week, month to month, year to year. It can be hard to find the time to think or feel deeply about anything, let alone spiritual things. Soul Matters, our small groups program, is an opportunity to do just that, and to make important connections with other members in the process. We hope that Soul Matters will become a network of small groups within our congregation. The groups will meet monthly to discuss the worship theme of the month. Discussions will focus on listening and sharing about deep personal values, and will be led by trained facilitators from within the congregation.

For November, with the theme of memory, if you enroll in Soul Matters you will receive a small packet of readings related to the topic (four pages), and you will be invited to do three spiritual “exercises” in preparation for group discussion. First, re-connect with your earliest memory. It doesn’t have to be anything profound; just the earliest thing you can remember. Second, identify some memento that carries special meaning for you, and if it has gotten tucked away in a dusty closet, then find it and brush it off, and bring it to your Soul Matters group. Third, figure out a way to pass on some treasured memory. In group discussions, you will have a chance to talk about what this process was like. Did anything surprise you about it? Was it harder or easier than you expected? More painful or more fun?

Here’s one quote from the November readings, from William Faulkner: “The past is never dead, it is not even past.”

If Soul Matters sounds like something you would enjoy, or something that would help you to bring more meaning to your life, contact Rev. Meeker (pmeeker@frontiernet.net) and sign up. We’re hoping you will join us!



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bring you peace and joy. If you are experiencing difficulties, or if you or someone in your family is in the hospital and you would like a pastoral call, please let me know, at pmeeker@frontiernet.net or 224-6312 (my cell phone). I hope that all is well, and I invite you to reflect on memory, though at the same time I know that memories, especially around the holidays, can be painful. Look for memories of gifts—for me, it might be the way my mother “encouraged” me to practice clarinet 20 minutes a day, no matter what. Today I’m grateful for the discipline that gave me! Look for memories that can bring a smile. May your memories bring you blessings.

*“The past is never dead,
it is not even past.”*
--- William Faulkner

The Wider UU World (and Beyond UU)

Social Justice Conference of the St. Lawrence Unitarian Universalist District: This conference will be held **November 7th**, 9:30 am to 4 pm, at the Unitarian Universalist Church of Amherst. The theme speaker is John Buehrens, former president of the Unitarian Universalist Association, on the topic “Doing Justice in an Economic Tsunami.” Further information is available at www.sld.uua.org, under Social Justice.

John Dominic Crossan, author of numerous books on the historical Jesus, will be the speaker at two events in Rochester. On **Sunday, November 8th**, at 5 p.m., he will speak on “Divine Violence in the Christian Bible” at St. Paul’s Episcopal Church, corner of East Avenue and Westminster Road. The talk will be preceded by Choral Evensong at 4 p.m. There is no charge for this event. On **Monday, November 9th**, he will speak at 2 p.m. at Colgate Rochester Crozer Divinity School, 1100 South Goodman, on “Jesus and the Kingdom of God.” There is a \$30 cost for this lecture. At 6 p.m. the same day there will be a reception and dinner with the keynote speech “Paul: An Appealing or Appalling Apostle.” The cost for the dinner is \$65. The cost for both the Monday afternoon lecture and the dinner is \$85. For more information on the events at the Divinity School, call 340-9540 or email lll@crcds.edu (that’s LLL, for Life Long Learning; not 111).

UU Musician Sarah Dan Jones will offer two workshops, “Shared Ministry: Cross Cultural Engagements” and “Building Community Through Music” on **Saturday, November 14th**, at the UU Congregation of Binghamton. For information or to register, see http://www.sld.uua.org/pdfs/2009/Sarah_Dan_flyer.pdf.

Human Rights Day: 2009 is the 61st birthday of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. This event, beginning at 5:30 p.m. on **Thursday, December 10th** at the Downtown Presbyterian Church in Rochester (121 North Fitzhugh St.), will celebrate the future achievement of world peace.

BUUF News

If you were at our October service, you saw an exciting sign of our growth: we now have our own brand-new hymnals, *Singing the Living Tradition*. If you would like to honor someone by purchasing and dedicating a hymnal to them, or to their memory, please speak to Bernie LoBracco or Ron Beiswenger at a Sunday morning service. Thirteen hymnals have been dedicated so far. The cost is \$30.

In other news, we now have a formal relationship in place with the First Universalist Church in Rochester whereby they will act as our financial agent until we are incorporated, so that contributions to the Brockport Unitarian Universalist Fellowship can be processed through them to benefit from their not-for-profit status. (Checks should be made payable to First Universalist Church, with BUUF in the memo line.) We are grateful to First Universalist for their crucial help in this matter and for their support!

As one way of giving back, Rev. Peggy Meeker and Ron Beiswenger, our treasurer, helped out at First Universalist’s pancake breakfast on October 25th, sharing their special skills in dish washing and dish drying.

Last but definitely not least, BUUF’s steering committee voted at its last meeting to begin offering two Sunday morning services each month beginning in January. Services will be held on the first and third Sundays of each month, at 10 a.m. We are stepping out in faith that what Unitarian Universalism has to offer is life-changing and life-giving!

“We are stepping out in faith that what Unitarian Universalism has to offer is life-changing and life-giving.”

BUUF Calendar

Sunday Morning Services, 11 am, followed by Path to Membership Class—November 8, December 6, January 3 and 17, Brockport Exempt Association

Steering Committee Meeting—Thursday, November 19 (third Thursdays), 7-9 pm

Soul Matters Meetings—to be arranged

Building Your Own Theology Class—Mondays, November 9 and 23, 7-9 pm, St. Luke's Episcopal Church

Book Discussion Group—Tuesday, November 10, 6:30-8 pm, Lift Bridge Book Shop (discussing Michael Pollan's *In Defense of Food*; come whether or not you've read the book!)

Spirit in Practice Class—Wednesdays, November 4 and 18, 7-9 pm, St. Luke's Episcopal Church

We would love to have you join us at these activities, and even better, bring a friend or family member!

Action Alert

For too long, farm workers have been excluded from the laws that protect other workers in New York State. Get in touch with your New York State senator by email, phone, or letter, and tell him that you want the **Farmworkers Fair Labor Practices Act** to pass this year. You can also help by writing to Senate Leader John Sampson and urging him to pass this bill. Write to him at the following address, and be sure to include your name and full address:

The Honorable John Sampson
New York State Senate
Legislative Office Bldg., Room 409
Albany, NY 12247

Brockport Unitarian Universalist Fellowship

Mailing address: 6558 4th Section Rd, Box 211,
Brockport, NY 14420-2477

Sunday morning service address: Brockport
Exempt Assoc'n, 248 West Avenue

Phone: 585-637-6374

Web: www.brockportuu.org