

2 Jean Marie: Opening Words

Since so many people new to UU and even long time UUsers don't seem to know exactly what Universalist-Unitarianism is, I often like to begin services with a quotation that sheds a bit of light on the subject.

Today I would like to talk about the eighth principle.

What! An eighth principle?

Yes, there are eight. I think our founders took it so much for granted they forgot to list it.

The Unitarian Universalist congregation of Buffalo NY has it on the first page of their website. They say,

“We are a compassionate, thoughtful, and diverse religious community who nurture and challenge each other to deeper understanding, meaning and purpose in our lives. We use our hearts and our heads (and a good dose of humor) to make a difference not only in our lives, but the lives of those beyond our doors. “

Lighten up. Don't take it so seriously. Have a laugh. Leaven it with a pinch or a barrelful of humour.

Taking it all too seriously can do damage to you and others.

Humour is another essential aspect of Unitarian Universalism. If you have other questions about what UU means, feel free to ask me more about it later.

Does anyone here know the name of the Laughing Buddha? Or which saint is the Patron Saint of laughter?

Not me I had to look them up on wiki!!

Pre sermon reading

Put on your clown nose. Stand if you can. Look the person on each side of you in the eye, shake their hand and say in your most serious voice. “I am a very serious person.”

Laughter is carbonated holiness.” – Anne Lamott

Sermon

I am not going to belabour the principle theme here too much,

There is a reason clowns and tricksters were once considered sacred and every king or queen had a court jester.

Laughter is good for what ails you, physical mental and spiritual.

In literally tens of thousands of scientific studies have established a causal connection between the chemicals the body releases when we feel good or when we laugh. Among other things those chemicals boost our immune system and repair the damage done by chemicals released when we are fearful, angry or in stress so that one group of studies proves people who laugh a lot also live

longer. In short, when you are feeling good – watching a ball game, reading dancing, etc. Being here at the BFUU– you are actively releasing chemicals that are good for you – isn't evolution wonderful?

You can look all this up online or at your local library.

But the effects are more than just physical. These chemicals also erase mental wear and tear, reset the mind from a negative state to positive, one. They make you more mentally acute, smarter, more aware, more centered, and set your thoughts on a more positive, creative course. You suddenly see solutions to problems that have worried you and connected to others and the universe.

[Kathy universe is your cue. Come in after you hear it. I will stall talking about the book I got these ideas from until you say:]

Kathy: Jean Marie! Jean Marie!

Jean Marie: (looks surprised) Uh yes what is it **Kathy?**

Earlier you said earlier that a lot of newcomers are not sure about what Unitarian Universalism is and if we had questions to ask you later?

Jean Marie: (confused) Yes...

Kathy: Well I am one of those. I've been a member two years, and I still don't get it. This won't take a minute but I have a list of questions I'd like you to answer.

Jean Marie:, Uh okay, why don't you come up to the floor mike and ask them.

[kathy: does]

Kathy: You ready?

Jean Marie: Sure.

Kathy: Can you tell me what is a Unitarian Universalist?

Jean-Marie: Someone who believes in life before death.

Kathy: I hear UUsers deny the divinity of Christ.

Jean-Marie: That's not true! We don't deny the divinity of anyone.

Kathy: Jean-Marie, have you ever belonged to any organized religion?

Jean-Marie: Oh no; I'm a lifelong Unitarian Universalist.

Kathy: Do UU's believe in the 10 commandments?

Jean-Marie: Well, we try to live by the 10 suggestions.

Kathy: Do Unitarians have a holy book like other religions?

Jean-Marie: Nods vigorously. Yes, it's called Roberts' Rules of Order.

Kathy: Do Unitarians pray?

Jean-Marie: Only when they think a democrat is going to lose an election.

Kathy: How come Unitarians never see eye-to-eye?

Jean-Marie: They can't because they are walking hand-in-hand at protests.

Kathy: Have you ever read the Bible?

Jean-Marie: I started to – but the hero died half way through.

Kathy: Don't Unitarians believe in hell?

Jean-Marie: Certainly we do. Have you ever seen inside a prison?

Kathy: Don't Unitarians want salvation?

Jean-Marie: Unitarians don't want salvation, they want closure.

Kathy: Who do UUs pray to?

Jean-Marie: To whom it may concern.

Kathy: I'm not even sure if I am a UU.

Jean-Marie: That removes all doubt.

Kathy: Don't UUsers have any sacraments?

Jean-Marie: Of course. Doubt, argument, and voting.

Kathy: What's the difference between a Unitarian and a Universalist?

Jean-Marie: Universalists think that God is too good to send them to hell. Unitarians think that they are too good for God to send them to hell.

Kathy: How does the Unitarian Universalist Association excommunicate members?

Jean-Marie: We take away their coffee cup.

Kathy: It sounds like if you ask two Unitarian Universalists about religion you get two different opinions?

Jean-Marie: No. If you ask two UUsers about anything – you get three different opinions.

[switch point]

Jean-Marie: Now let me ask you a few questions.

Kathy: (surprised) Like what?

Jean-Marie: How many Unitarians does it take to change a light bulb?

Kathy: How many Unitarians does it take to change a light bulb?

Jean-Marie: None; we accept the light bulb the way it is.

Jean Marie: Why did the UU cross the road?

Kathy: (looking at **Jean Marie:** like JM is a wiseacre) I don't know Jean Marie, why did the UU cross the road?

Jean Marie: To support the chicken in its search for its own path.

Jean-Marie: Ok one last question - why is arguing with a Unitarian Universalist is like mud-wrestling a pig?

Kathy: I don't know. Why is arguing with a UUser like mud-wrestling a pig.

Jean-Marie: Pretty soon you begin to realize the pig likes it.

Kathy: *Makes a face.*

Andy

Benediction

May Hotei the Laughing Buddha and St. Sarah the Patron Saint of Laughter walk with you always. (fart?)