



Spirit of Life Unitarian Fellowship
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 Kirribilli Neighbourhood Centre
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Schedule of Services

Services are held every Sunday at 10:30 at Kirribilli Neighbourhood Centre

| Date | Speaker | Topic |
|---------|------------------|---|
| 5 July | Laurence Gormley | <p>In the quiet of this Place</p> <p>The address looks at some reasons why we come to Fellowship on Sundays and why we celebrate our lives in the simple rituals of our faith</p> |
| 12 July | Candace Parks | <p>A Sense of Wonder</p> <p>Wonder is inseparable from religion. Apart from dogma or creeds or institutions or belief systems, religion is an experience of the eternal, the boundless, the infinite, the unsearchable. Unleashing our sense of wonder brings us closer to the divine.</p> |
| 19 July | Janet Horton | <p>Human Seasons, Religious Needs</p> <p>Have your belief systems changed over the decades? It's no secret that human beings change as we gain life, wisdom and experience. In fact, psychologists have been able to plot our adult development and have shown that how we move through this development impacts the way we make meaning and sense of the world. But what does this mean for our religious needs? This session will explore how our adult development impacts what we believe and which beliefs we are willing to put into question as we develop. How can religion support us as we change?</p> |
| 26 July | Linda Horton | <p>Our Religious Sources</p> <p>As Unitarians we turn to many sources to develop our religious belief systems. American Reverend Kendall Gibbons has created poetry to honor these sources, and the Reverend Jason Shelton has set that poetry to beautiful music in his Sources Cantata. We will have the opportunity to experience these words and recorded choral pieces. http://www.uua.org/visitors/6798.shtml</p> |

Opinions expressed in "Esprit" are not necessarily those of the Spirit of Life Unitarian Fellowship.

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| Aug. 2 | Jan Tendys | Beyond right and Left |
| Aug. 9 | Colin Whatmough | A Natural Faith How Darwinian Evolution has transformed Religion |
| Aug 16 | Geoff Matthews | TBA |
| Aug 23 | Eric Stevenson | Revelation, Self-evolution and the New Sacred Myth |

Fellowship and Committee News

The party which functioned as a housewarming for Sherman and Jane and as a farewell to Steve was an outstanding success. **All thanks to our hostess and host.** Steve's designated charity for the \$400 raised was in Nicaragua. Steve says, "Project Chacocente is committed to lifting the poorest of the poor out of the Nicaraguan dumps, in particular the Managua dump and housing them in new, simple construction sites. It is a bit like Habitat for Humanity meets Oxfam. I think our money will be well spent."

Geoff Matthews sent a follow-up email to some of our visitors. Here is one reply: "Thank you for your email. I enjoyed visiting the fellowship today and especially the subject of the service. I will make every effort to visit again." Members are requested to join the Committee in making sure visitors are made to feel welcome.

Our latest micro-credit money (through the Kiva organization) has gone to Mary-Rose Ochiagha of Lagos, Nigeria. Mary-Rose is 40 years old and married with 2 children. She sells clothes and has been in the business for a long time. She hopes for a loan of N100,000 (\$US700) to purchase more clothes to sell and says thanks to all Kiva lenders. We will be only one of the subscribers to the loan having donated just \$US 25, as Kiva is still an experiment for us. The idea of micro-credit is to allow people too poor to be considered credit worthy by ordinary banks to borrow. As Mary Rose repays her loan, our money will be recycled to a new recipient whom we choose through Kiva. Jan Tendys (Secretary).

About our new member Carolyn Donnelly: Carolyn says that she was born and bred in Sydney and is a community volunteer now, having worked in the "geriatric" industry previously. She loves friends and gardening, walking outdoors, snow shoeing, occasionally getting lost in a book. She and Peter have two children both with partners, a son who is a geologist who moves around Australia and a daughter, a marketing manager, who lives in Vancouver with her engineering husband. The first grandchild is due in August. The Donnellys have chooks and agist horses, and Carolyn describes herself as obsessed with cats.

She says, "Our family attended Congregational Churches and then joined (from inception) the Uniting Church." They attended this up to last year but became disillusioned with the direction it was going, finding it hard to relate to present thinking and its priorities. The Donnellys became aware of Unitarianism through their friends, Peter Berry and Colin and Helen Whatmough. However, years ago a former minister, on hearing Carolyn's stated beliefs suggested she should attend a Unitarian Church - how ironic. So here she is at last and finding it quite liberating!

She was attracted to Unitarianism by the freedom of thought, simplicity of worship and the chance to question and expand her thinking about the deep and meaningful of life, death, the universe and everything!

Through being a member of the Spirit of Life Unitarian Fellowship, Carolyn hopes to gain more opportunities to grow and question all the above, and to learn about Unitarianism and its history and ongoing attitudes to the big issues of life.

She suggests the Fellowship should provide opportunities for members to find out about other member's thoughts about God, Jesus, Bible, religion and worship

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Does God create Religion, or does Religion create God?

Saturday, August 29 Talk and discussion hosted by CPRT with Dr. Val Webb.
Since early bird expiry, now \$50 per person, and \$45 for CPRT financial members.

The participants will gather in the courtyard of the Kirribilli Neighbourhood Centre at 9.30 am and the meetings will continue in The Gallery from 10 am till 4.30 pm. on that day

Those who knew **Margaret Rowlands**, long time member of Sydney Unitarian Church, will be sad to hear of her passing away on 22/6/09 not long before her 97th birthday. A card has been sent to her son, Roger.

From Margaret Armstrong – a cornucopia of quotes:

“If you think you are too small to make a difference – try sleeping with a Mosquito.” **Dalai Lama.**

To see the universal and all-pervading spirit of Truth face to face one must be able to love the meanest of creation as oneself. And a man who aspires after that cannot afford to keep out of any field of life. That is why my devotion to Truth has drawn me into the field of politics; and I can say without the slightest hesitation, and yet in all humility, that those who say that religion has nothing to do with politics do not know what religion means.

Gandhi [Autobiography](#) 1948; p. 615

Extract from Utopia by Thomas More (Knighted but later executed by Henry V111.)

“The service ends with a set form of prayer repeated by both priests and congregation. It is worded in such a way that, while they’re all saying it together, each person can apply it to himself. It goes something like this:

O God, I acknowledge Thee to be my creator, my governor, and the source of all good things. I thank thee for all Thy blessings, but especially for letting me live in the happiest possible society, and practice what I hope is the truest religion. If I am wrong, and if some other religion or social system would be better and more acceptable to Thee, I pray Thee in Thy goodness to let me know it, for I am ready to follow wherever Thou shalt lead me. But if our system is indeed the best, and my religion the truest, then keep me faithful to both of them, and bring the rest of humanity to adopt the same way of life, and the same religious faith – unless the present variety of creeds is part of Thy inscrutable purpose. Grant me an easy death, when Thou takest me to Thyself. I do not presume to suggest whether it should be late or soon. But if it is Thy will, I would much rather come to Thee by a most painful death, than be kept too long away from Thee by the most pleasant of earthly lives.”
Penguin Classics Edition, p.128.

Here is another snippet p.125

“...religious feeling. Now this doesn’t take the same form with everyone, though all its varieties lead by different routes, as it were, to the same destination: the worship of the Divine Being. For that reason there is nothing to be seen or heard in their churches which can’t equally be applied to all religions. Any ceremonies which are peculiar to individual sects are performed privately at home, and public services are so arranged as not to detract in any way from these private ones.”

From [A Short Biographical Dictionary of English Literature by John W. Cousin, 1910](#)

His great work, *Utopia*, was written in Latin in two books — the second 1515, and the first 1516. It had immediate popularity, and was translated into French 1530, English 1551, German 1524, Italian 1548, and Spanish 1790. It gives an account of an imaginary island and people, under cover of which it describes the social and political condition of England, with suggested remedies for abuses. The opinions on religion and politics expressed in it are not, however, always those by which he was himself guided.

This little life, from here to there –
Who lives it safely anywhere?
(The tidal wave devours the shore;
there are no islands any more.)

Edna St. Vincent Millay (1940)

From Christina Hart

The Ascham bullying incident takes me back a few years to my son's co-educational state high school in an upmarket Sydney suburb.

Each year the school welcomed refugees from local private schools. Late on one first day of term my son chatted to a new boy who looked unusually apprehensive and nervous all day. He confided that he had been waiting for an "initiation" ritual, such as being roughed up or having his head shoved down a toilet.

This adolescent was wide-eyed with disbelief and relief to find himself in a safe environment with no bullying and a culture of mutual respect and support. And his parents had paid for the privilege of his humiliation and trauma.

(The above letter to a newspaper was noticed by Evan Davies. Christina has given us permission to republish it. JT)

If I were King...by Steve Wilson

McDonald's would be forced to offer health insurance not only to employees but patrons.
Citizenship training would be mandatory.
The external costs of pollution and other environmental impacts would be built into costs.
Cell phones would send intermittent shocks to operators using them in public.
Pennies would be eliminated (**as they have been in Australia JT**)
Double parkers would be billed proportional to the lost time of those they slow down.
Hummer's, large SUVs, and their drivers would be drafted to defend the oil they use.
People would be encouraged to submit more to the Spirit of Life newsletter. Gotcha.
The Western, (and English speaking southern world) would be concerned more with billionaire behavior than welfare moms.

Would you care to join us?

Membership is open to all adults and includes this newsletter

If you would like to join us as an active member of Spirit of Life, please ring 9428-2244, consult our website www.sydneyunitarians.com or speak to one of our members before or after the Sunday service.

Please note that all membership applications are subject to approval at a meeting of the Committee.

Do you have a topic of a spiritual nature that you would like to share with the congregation?

As Unitarians, we support an "Open Pulpit"
and invite members of the congregation to lead the service if they so wish.

Just let Candace know what you would like to speak about
and when you are available and we will fit you into the schedule.

Also, please feel free to give us your feedback on any of the services.
This is the best way to ensure the services address the needs of the congregation.

Items for Esprit very welcome. We aim to send it out first week of the month.