

CHAPLAIN'S CORNER

The Gift of Religious Diversity

BY NATHAN

Last week, the Jewish Community hosted its annual “Pizza in the Hut” to celebrate Sukkot. This holiday commemorates one of the three festivals which Jewish people acknowledge as a commandment to make a pilgrimage to the Jerusalem Temple. The holiday includes building a sukkah, or temporary hut, that symbolizes the fragility and nomadic nature of life as well as one’s dependence upon God.

Although I was a little late, when I arrived I saw a beautiful diverse group of people enjoying pizza and conversation together on the lawn of the Spiritual Life Center. As I looked around, I saw our Jewish students offering pizza to Christian, Buddhist, Pagan, Humanist, Muslim, and Queer students. It was one of those moments that I want to remember for a long time as a beautiful religiously diverse group of students ate and talked together.

It reminded me of the well-known rabbi, Abraham Joshua Heschel, who made the comment that “in this aeon diversity of religions is the will of God.”

My work as a chaplain in higher education has convinced me Heschel’s comments are true. Religious diversity really is the will of the Divine. It is not a problem that needs to be fixed or erased. Instead, it is a promise and gift that must be embraced.

Religious diversity is an intrinsic good that actually allows us to gain a fuller understanding of the Divine. We need the different religious traditions of our neighbors to better understand our own. My spirituality has blossomed because I have learned from Humanist, Buddhist, Jewish, and Muslim colleagues and friends. I now have a fuller and deeper understanding of the Sacred because I have practiced my religion inter-religiously. It is holy and sacred work.

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For more information about the Spiritual Life Center, including info on student spiritual life student groups, go to our webpage - link in the email signature. You can also visit our Linkt.ree (link is in email).

The Gift of Religious Diversity (cont'd)

It is my hope that we continue to be a campus that embraces all religious or secular traditions and learns from each other as we practice our traditions together, so that we might all become fuller human beings, seeing the Sacred in everything and discovering the Divine all around us.

Sympathies, Concerns, and Congrats

Congratulations to:

- **Jessie Hinkle '13, '16** M.Ed.(Women's Soccer) and **Josh Hinkle '15, '18** M.B.A. (Men's Soccer) on the birth of their daughter. Ryan Isabella Hinkle was born on October 14, 2022. She joins her big brother, Jaden.



Ryan Isabella Hinkle

Our sympathies are extended to:

- **Dr. Robin Bates** (English) on the death of her mother, Harriet Bates.

LAVENDER WEEK

Wednesday, October 19 - 5-8 p.m.

Safe Space Training
Drysdale, West Room

Thursday, October 20 - 7:30 - 8:30 p.m.

"The Power of Identity" Panel
Livestream - Link in email

Dates to Remember

Sundays at 4:30 p.m.
Weekly ROMAN CATHOLIC MASS
in Snidow Chapel

Monday, October 27 - 7 p.m.
CAKE CHAT: DEATH CAFE
Schewel 231

Monday, October 31 - 2-4 p.m.
DOGGIES IN THE DELL
(Halloween Style)

Tuesday November 1 - 2-4 p.m.
SERVICE OF REMEMBRANCE
Anyone who has experienced a loss is invited to attend. You may also contact the SLC to have a candle lit, even if you are not present. Email SpiritualLife@lynchburg.edu or call 434.544.8348.

The Chaplain's Corner is a newsletter published by the Spiritual Life Center (SLC) at the University of Lynchburg. We share campus concerns and updates, spiritual life events and activities, and words for the journey. If you have a joy or concern you'd like to share, reply to this message, email the SLC office - spirituallife@lynchburg.edu, or call 434.544.8348. We only share with your permission. Current and previous issues are on the SLC page of the University website - go to Link in signature (www.lynchburg.edu/spiritual-life) and click on "Newsletter."