

CHAPLAIN'S CORNER

Inclusive Sacred Spaces: Welcome to the Table

BY JER

As someone inspired by multiple paths, including Humanism, I value religious and spiritual inclusivity. I want everyone, no matter their religious or spiritual identity, to be included in sacred spaces. As an interfaith chaplain, I treasure bringing together students from various paths—Judaism, Buddhism, Humanism, Christianity, Earth-centered Spirituality, Hinduism, Islam, Other.

What I find most refreshing is our University's sincere dedication to interfaith dialogue, one in which those who may identify as spiritual but not religious, Humanist, agnostic, or atheist are included. At University of Lynchburg, everyone has a seat at the spiritual table. Not only is there room for everyone, we value each other. We support one another.

This support is perhaps best evinced by our sukkah, the booth or tent that many Jewish people set up during Sukkot, the yearly remembrance of the forty years the Israelites spent wandering in the desert after escaping from slavery in Egypt. The sukkah represents the temporary structures that so many Israelites lived in during that time in their history. This year, members of Hillel, Lynchburg Christian Fellowship, Q&Spiritual, and The Humanist Community helped me put up the University's sukkah in the front yard of the Spiritual Life Center.

To celebrate Sukkot, we ate pizza together one evening, and we had sushi another. We came together, no matter our belief systems, and shared meals. During one evening, Rabbi John Nimon of Agudath Sholom Synagogue joined us and talked about the significance of Sukkot. In that moment of honoring Jewish culture, tradition, and religion, we were all bound together by our common humanity and by our desire to support each other on our individual religious, spiritual, and/or secular journeys. It was an experience to cherish.

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It is not lost on me that numerous Jewish families spend time in the sukkah eating and sharing their lives during this special time of the year. At University of Lynchburg, we Humanists, Jewish people, Christians, Hindus, Buddhists, Muslims, and those who self-identify as "Other," are a family, one that cares for all people. When we stepped into the sukkah, we recognized our bond while also honoring our Jewish brothers, sisters, and non-binary kin. We were reminded that our very presence here is sacred.

What a gift it is to walk together through this journey of living. May we make each space in this campus sacred and inclusive, and may we support one another with every step we take on this beautiful campus. May we always make room at the table, clearing spots for everyone who enters our space hungry to coexist and learn. May our hearts be full of love and compassion.

Sympathies, Concerns, and Congrats

Our sympathies are extended to:

- **Lee Bryant** (Environmental Services) on the death of his step-sister.

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 - www.lynchburg.edu/spiritual-life.

Dates to Remember

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

Tuesday October 12
4 p.m. - Westover Hall 4th Floor
Outdoor Terrace
KITE FESTIVAL
Sponsored by Garam Masala. Feel free to bring a kit. We will have some to share.

October 15 - 17
T-SHIRT QUILT SILENT AUCTION
12 noon until 4 p.m.
at the Homecoming Tailgate
(Coming Soon - Story featuring Lunch Lady and Quiltmaker Lori Elholm on the University website and on Social Media)

For a list of regularly scheduled fellowship group meetings, go to the [Spiritual Life webpage](#) and click on "Spiritual Organizations on Campus." Helpful Links on LinkTree at - [SpiritualLifeCenter](#)