The Spiritual But Not Religious (SBNR) movement has been gaining popularity for decades, and an increasing number of people forty and younger describe themselves this way. These individuals incorporate multitudinous spiritual practices into their own rituals.

During a national conference for chaplains this week, Dr. Varun Soni, Dean of Religious Life and Spiritual Life at the University of Southern California, said, “Seventy percent of our students identify as Spiritual But Not Religious.” This identification is common on college campuses across the nation. In fact, several chaplain friends have mentioned Duane R. Bidwell’s book called *When One Religion Isn’t Enough: The Lives of Spiritually Fluid People*. Bidwell, a professor of practical theology, spiritual care, and counseling, is a self-described Christian-Buddhist. He explores the movement of people finding spiritual wellness through a mixture of practices rooted in various faith traditions.

Many of my chaplain friends and I witness students embracing spiritual fluidity. Some students may pray to Jesus, use crystals for healing, and meditate in nature. Others may focus on Mother Earth but also incorporate Buddhist philosophy into their routines.

While we may want to point to technology making readily available information on religious and...
Sympathies, Concerns, and Congrats

Our sympathies are extended to:

- **Jackie Almond** (ITR) on the death of her father-in-law. George “Pete” Braxton Almond, Jr. died on March 8. [Link](#) to obituary.
- **Tracey Garrett ’87 M.Ad. (Business Office)** on the death of her father-in-law. Thomas Owen Garrett died on March 1. [Link](#) to obituary.
- **Genie Paitsel** (sophomore, Laurel, MD), whose friend, Kai Saunders, died.
- The family, friends, colleagues, and students of **Keith Smith** (Criminology) who died on February 1. You can click on this [Link](#) to go to the livestream of the March 12th memorial service, which is scheduled for 3 p.m.

---

**SPRING FORWARD**

Daylight Savings Time begins March 14th

---

**Dates to Remember**

Vespers will resume virtually at 9 p.m. on the following Sundays:

- March 21
- April 4
- April 18
- May 2

(Use YouTube Link on page 3)

**Wednesday, March 10**
TODAY at 6:30 p.m.

New student group - Earth Spirituality

Contact Chaplain Jer at bryant.j@lynchburg.edu to join the Interest Meeting

**Wednesday, March 17**
12:30 - 2 p.m. in the Dell Catholic Campus Ministry

St. Patrick's Day table - Come by, guess the correct number and win a gift card

For a list of regularly scheduled fellowship group meetings, go to the [Spiritual Life webpage](https://www.facebook.com/LynchburgSLC) and click on "Spiritual Organizations on Campus."

Like us on Facebook - [https://www.facebook.com/LynchburgSLC](https://www.facebook.com/LynchburgSLC)

Helpful Links on LinkTree at - [SpiritualLifeCenter](https://www.facebook.com/LynchburgSLC)
Spiritual Fluidity (cont'd)

spiritual paths, we must also acknowledge the beautiful diversity of our country as a contributing factor to spiritual fluidity. I first learned about Hinduism as an undergraduate at Lynchburg College. A new friend, a young vibrant woman from New Delhi who had a small altar to Lord Krishna, taught me about her style of worship. That same year, I met a young Jewish woman whose family also practiced Zen and reiki. Through friendships, I received an education about world religions. Each path opened my heart, and I still carry with me the concepts I gleaned. Many students find themselves learning from each other about paths unique to their own and decide to respectfully incorporate different elements into their own practices. If we allow for it, we have the gift of learning from several rich and diverse ways of celebrating divinity. This is one of the many benefits of inclusive excellence.

The man I am now, one who considers himself Spiritual But Not Religious, thanks those compassionate and sharing people who exposed me to various paths of spirituality, whetting my interest in becoming a chaplain. I hold the greatest respect and admiration for the many ways to Oneness. I see myself in the young seekers who, despite sometimes being criticized for their rejection of religious labels, work every day to achieve spiritual wellness. They quilt together the beauty of sundry spiritualities and seek solace in the wisdom collected.

I give thanks for being part of an academic, spiritual, and artist community that allows seekers the gift of being. Our University’s Spiritual Life Center supports many wonderful student groups such as The Humanist Community, The Buddhist Community, and the newly formed group called Earth-Based Spirituality. The other chaplains and I provide compassionate support, providing students with safe spaces to explore spirituality and faith.

If you are interested in being a part of a virtual panel on spiritual fluidity, please contact Chaplain Jer Bryant at bryant.j@lynchburg.edu.