

Questions from the Question Box  
January 5, 2014

**Answered in the service, extemporaneously:**

1. Did you make any New Year resolutions? Do you mind sharing if you did?
  2. Do you believe in God and if so how would you describe that being? Or: define spirituality.
  3. What is your favorite color?
  4. I have trouble motivating myself to attend on Sundays. Can you give me some reasons why I should go to Follen?
  5. When you prayer, who or what or “?” are you praying to?
  6. If you could be any animal, what would it be and why? (Included a drawing, perhaps as a suggestion, of a ring-tailed lemur.)
  7. Since your “calling” asks of you great compassion and empathy to so many people, for so many life issues and passages, how do you keep from compassion burnout? Meditation? Prayer? Your immediate family? Solitude? How?
  8. How can we help you in your new role as our minister? (That perhaps we are not already aware of?) Also, your family?
  9. How and when did you know that you wanted to become a minister?
  10. If there is a God or higher power, how can we allow disasters, sickness and tragedies to happen? How do we make sense of it?
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**Additional questions received:**

11. What made you realize you could be a good minister?
12. What challenges do you think Follen needs to address in the coming years?
13. What has surprised you about being at Follen? And/or what surprises you about Unitarian Universalism?
14. How do you introduce spirituality to your children? Can you read my handwriting?
15. What are your ideas for attracting and keeping people in their 20s?

16. How, if at all, does “The Heart of Christianity” by Marcus Borg, resonate with your spiritual journey? What do you make of the book of Job?
17. What do you like least about being a minister? – if anything.
18. What is your concept of God and what is its role in your ministry. What is the function of religion in this world?
19. While understanding that ours is a shared ministry, what is one new project/program/initiative you would like to see at Follen in 2014?
20. What do you think of the idea that the cosmos itself is God?
21. What are your thoughts about making the services when children are present to be more “child friendly” at the same time they are “adult friendly”?
22. How do you like being minister at Follen so far? When did you decide you wanted to become a minister?
23. I believe you have said you always knew you wanted to be a UU minister. Why?
24. Did you ever consider another profession? Which one (if so)?
25. How to get outside the treadmill I keep finding myself on, to be more present to others?
26. Some of us pray, some meditate, some spend time in nature. What spiritual practices do you depend on in your own life?
27. What would Emerson do? Is he relevant today?
28. Why do (most) people wish to believe in something bigger than themselves?
29. Have you considered sermons that focus on or teach non-Christian-based religions?
30. Is your experience as minister here all that you want it to be? How as a congregation can we make your ministry better?
31. Why do people not realize that life on Earth is Heaven?
32. Will the Patriots ever win another Super Bowl?
33. Why is it always so difficult for me to participate in this type of activity??

34. What should we do more of? What is your favorite Follen Christmas tradition/event? Least favorite?
35. So many possibilities: 1) What do you believe happens after we die? 2) What has been your greatest personal challenge? 3) What did you mean when you said at the Solstice Service that you wished for “boldness”? 4) But, for real, I’ll ask: What do you perceive to be our community’s greatest challenge, even with all our many strengths?
36. We are such a tolerant faith, but sometimes we can be intolerant of faiths we perceive to be intolerant. In other words, can a dedicated UU find happiness with a very religious Catholic?
37. What is your process for writing a sermon?
38. How do you find time to read for pleasure? Job, family, house, sleep—how does pleasure reading fit into “must do’s”?
39. In the spirit of a welcoming congregation, what perspectives do you feel are underrepresented, and what will you be doing to encourage them in the coming years?
40. What is your best advice on dealing with loss?
41. Is it enough for our 9 to 5 job to do no evil, or should we strive to find one that will do good?
42. You have been so supportive of our community’s life, how can we be more supportive of your ministry?
43. How did you come to your level of comfort with both the word and concept of “God”? (Did you ever have doubts about either?)
44. How do you understand the statement “God loves you”?
45. When we share stories/lessons from other faith traditions how can we keep from superficiality without enough context about the traditions from which those stories arise?
46. How do you say “I love you” to your aging parents when it is a household that does not utter those words?
47. What does the word “prayer” mean to you? Why do we invite prayer with meditation and have a pastoral prayer in a UU congregation (that has a diversity of thought)?

48. How did you decide to be a minister and how do you balance work and family?
49. How has your ministry been shaped by your experience growing up UU in your particular and special family of origin?
50. What do you enjoy most about Follen?
51. What would be your vision and hopes for Follen if you were to jump ahead one year from today?
52. How can we start to pray?
53. If/When Follen grows, would you want/need to add an assistant/associate minister and if so, how big would we need to grow before we could consider having this minister?
54. What are Divinity School parties like?
55. When or if, you use the phrase “Our Faith,” what do you mean by the word “faith”? – Asked by someone who is a bit skeptical of the merits of the term as it is used in the Bible
56. What made you decide to be a minister and what keeps you being a minister?
57. How can we “Live Peace into Being,” as Vietnamese Buddhist monk Thich Nhat Hanh says? Why did you become a UU minister?
58. Should we be growing our membership? Why/why not?
59. If you could have followed any other career path(s) what would it (they) have been? What were the reasons you chose not to follow that (those) path(s)?