



Sea of Faith – Dunedin

Exploring Meaning in Life
Newsletter JUNE 2017



We Start With...

A two minute period of silence - a moment of peace.

From the ‘Chair’

Last month we learned a lot about Unitarian Universalists and found that they hold similar faith position to many in Sea of Faith.

This month’s topic is a book review.

Gretchen

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Next Meeting

Gretchen will introduce two books that are much in the book-lovers’ news these days: ‘Sapiens’ and ‘Homo Deus’, by the Professor of History at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Yuval Noah Harari. Both remarkable, these books make the greatest sweeps of human history – one looking back, to the present, and the other looking forward.

Last Meeting

In May we welcomed Derek McCullough, the minister with the Unitarian Universalist congregation in Christchurch, and his wife Rebekah to our meeting. We learned that Unitarians came into being at the Council of Nicaea in 325 AD; that many well-known scientists have been Unitarians – including Erasmus Darwin, grandfather of Charles; and that now they are principally in the USA and Canada.

Unitarian Universalists

It is our aim to witness a spiritual religion free from dogma, and to encourage our members to seek religious and moral truth in Christian and other traditions, and mostly within our hearts.

We accept that religious belief must be in harmony with scientific knowledge and theological research.

We pledge ourselves to honour human reason in ourselves and in others, and to practice as far as each is able, reverence for our earth and all life.

To this end we recognise our responsibility to seek to bring about the best possible quality of life for all people.

Book Reviews

Gretchen Kivell

Thursday, 22nd JUNE

**St John’s Church Hall,
Cnr Wright Street
& Highgate**

Tea and Coffee
will be available from 5.30pm

**The programme will start at
6.00pm**

Contribution - \$5

We unite in the spirit of love and mutual support to celebrate the joy and mystery of life.

Elsbeth Vallance, founder of the Marlborough Unitarian Fellowship

Humour - Light Bulb Theology

"How many Christians does it take to change a lightbulb?"

Charismatics: Only one - hands already in the air.

Presbyterians: None - lights will go on and off at predestined times.

Pentecostals: Ten - one to change the bulb, and nine to cast out the Spirit of Darkness.

Roman Catholics: None - candles only.

Baptists: Ten - one to change the bulb, and three committees to approve the change and to decide who brings the potato salad.

Mormons: Five - one man to change the bulb and four wives to tell him how.

Anglicans: Eight - one to call the electrician, and seven to say how much they liked the old one better.

Lutherans: None - Lutherans don't believe in change.

Amish: What's a light bulb?

Unitarians: We choose not to make a statement either in favour of or against the need for a light bulb. However, if in your own journey you have found that light bulbs work for you that is fine. You are invited to write a poem or compose a modern dance about your own personal relationship with your light bulb, and present it next month at our annual light bulb Sunday service, in which we will explore a number of light bulb traditions, including incandescent, fluorescent, three-way, long life and tinted, all of which are equally valid paths to luminescence.

Freedom of Speech

Many of you will have read that the writer, actor and TV personality Stephen Fry is being accused of blasphemy in Ireland over comments that he made about God during an Irish TV interview in 2015. It is generally known that Stephen is an atheist but he was asked what he would say if confronted by God. He replied that he would say "How dare you create a world in which there is such misery that is not our fault? It's not right. It's utterly, utterly evil. Why should I respect a capricious men-minded and stupid God who creates a world which is so full of injustice and pain? Bone cancer in children – what's that all about? Because the God who created this universe, if it was created by God, is quite clearly a maniac, utter maniac. Totally selfish. We have to spend our life on our knees thanking him. What kind of God would do that?"

Meanwhile back in Otago... the day that dairy farmers traditionally moved stock from one farm to another has always been called "Gypsy Day" and when Regional Councillor Michael Laws used that term he found a reaction. Fonterra have changed the term to "Mooving Day".

Brahms and Dvorak both have musical pieces inspired by gypsy music – should they be renamed in a similar way?

Sally Kohn on **YouTube** calls for Emotional Correctness rather than Political Correctness and there are several short clips on the subject. Just type *Sally Kohn – emotional correctness* into the **YouTube** search box and see how far you agree with her.

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