

Unitarian Universalist Jokes

Small Group Ministry Session, Unitarian Universalist Society of Fairhaven, MA, Bette Low
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Note: Jokes at the end may be divided into slips for distribution during the session.

Opening Words

"Comedy is based on truth. You take the truth and put a little curlicue on the end." Sid Ceasar\

Check-in/Sharing

Focus/Topic: UU Jokes\

If you have ever listened to - Garrison Keillor's "A Prairie Home Companion" on National Public Radio, you know that the "Uncommon Denomination" is uncommonly funny- to everyone else. We are going to tell Unitarian jokes in this session and talk about the role of humor in our church and our lives. We will look at jokes we tell about ourselves and those told about us. We will test our sense of humor and I hope, have some fun too. Have you heard this one?

Q. How many UU's does it take to change a light bulb?

A. One, who will affirm the rights of all bulbs to screw into the sockets of their choice, regardless of the bulb's illumination preference.\

You might agree with Peter Ustinov when he said that "Comedy is simply a funny way of being serious." Maybe sometimes, we might be too serious? Let's read some jokes. In the basket on the table are a number of UU jokes, please take one & pass the basket on to the next person, we will take turns reading each joke, and, if you choose, we can discuss the UU principle or belief which might have inspired the joke and why you think it's funny (or not.) But first:

Q: How many UU's does it take to change a light bulb?

A: This statement was issued: "We chose not to make a statement either in favor of or against the need for a light bulb. However, if in your own journey you have found that a light bulb works for you, that's fine. You are invited to write a poem or compose a modern dance about your personal relationship with your light bulb and present it next month at our annual light-bulb service, in which we will explore a number of light-bulb traditions, including incandescent, fluorescent, three-way, long-life, or any additional non dark resources-all of which represent equally valid paths to luminescence."

Can you find any common threads in the jokes we have been telling? Do you they represent an accurate picture of Unitarians? Is it fair picture? Do you think we need to change this perception? Do you have any ideas about what we could do to change our image? Are you ready for more jokes? Please pass the basket around again. After this:

Q: How many UU's does it take to change a light bulb?

A: Nine: A representative from the Green Sanctuary task force to approve the bulb type and wattage, three members to form a committee "for" the change, two to form a committee to research the history of past bulb use, a member of the Property Committee to check the building use schedule, & locate the ladder, the custodian to change the bulb and the minister asks, "Could we have a volunteer from the Hospitality committee support them in their efforts by making some coffee?"

Discussion Questions

What was the role of humor in your family of origin?

Was there one who was the "jokester?" Was it you?
Did any of your jokes ever backfire? What did you learn from that experience?
Did you have someone among your friends or family that told funny stories?
Do you remember any of those stories?
Did you know any practical jokesters (or are you one yourself?)
What has been the role of humor in your life?
What do you think is the role of humor in your family? Our church? Our society?
What should be the role of humor in our families? Our church? Our society?
Do you have a favorite joke? Please tell us!

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And to conclude:\

Q: How many Unitarians does it take to change a light bulb?

A. Unitarian Universalists accept and affirm that not everyone may find light bulb-oriented illumination useful, or even believe in electricity or the Electric Company. But we will support each and every individual's search for illumination both on and off the grid.

Likes & Wishes

What was your favorite joke?\

Closing Words

"As we welcome you to our Denomination, it is only fair to tell you what we are.
We are friendly. If you are not friendly, out you go!
We believe in tolerance and cannot stand intolerant people.
We are more non-competitive than other groups.
Freedom of belief is rigidly enforced.
Dogmatism is absolutely forbidden.
We aren't sure how ambivalent we should be.\
We are optimists. Anyone who doesn't look on the bright side depresses us.
We believe in equality; everyone is as good as the next person and a whole lot better.
Every Unitarian is a feminist, so he has to watch his language.
Our organization is run democratically because the president insists on it.
We are prompt about being late to meetings.
And to our wonderful faith we joyfully welcome you!"\

This session was prepared by Bette Low, a member of Unitarian Universalist Society of Fairhaven MA and a proud member of the Wednesday morning Small Group Ministry. Thanks to many - Garrison Keillor and Prairie Home Companion, Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Stanislaus County, UU Thinker blog, NW Community UU Church and all the wonderful collections of UU Humor on the web. \

JOKES

Have you heard the latest UU miracle?
Someone saw the face of Ralph Waldo Emerson on a tortilla.

A visitor to a Unitarian Universalist church sat through the sermon with growing incredulity at the heretical ideas being spouted. After the sermon a UU asked the visitor, "So how did you like it?"

"I can't believe half the things that minister said!" sputtered the visitor in outrage.

"Oh, good -- then you'll fit right in!"

What do UU's and Dracula have in common? Both have roots in Transylvania and shy away from the cross.

Q: Why did the Unitarian-Universalist cross the road?

A: To support the chicken in its search for its own path

The sermon on the Stewardship drive was titled "Sermon on the Amount"

What do you get when you cross a Unitarian with a Jehovah's Witness?

Someone who knocks on your door for no particular reason

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It is show-and-tell day at school, and all the children are requested to bring in an item which illustrates their religious beliefs. David stands up and says "This is a star of David and I am a Jew". Dorothy stands up and says "This is a crucifix and I am a Catholic". Jimmy stands up and says "This is a coffeepot and I am a Unitarian".

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A Unitarian prayer:

Dear God, if there is a god, if you can, save my soul, if I have a soul. And so to whom it may concern, these thoughts, prayers, good vibes, karmic or cosmic forces or whatever we offer to you. If there is a you. Or not.

A Unitarian is just a Quaker with Attention Deficit Disorder.

The clergy in other denominations have a hard time figuring us out.

One time at an ecumenical service the Episcopal rector said, "Let us pray. And for you Unitarians, do whatever it is you do."

I told somebody I was a Unitarian once, they said "Hey, isn't that that thing in the science museum with the stars in the ceiling and- I said " "No, that's a planetarium."

What's the difference between Catholics praying and Unitarians praying?

Catholics cross their upper bodies, Unitarians cross their fingers.

After the secular humanists came along, we said that UUs believe in One God - at Most.

Now, what with the 6th Source and the pagans, we say that UUs believe in One God -More or Less.

Did you hear about the UU who was a dyslexic, insomniac, & agnostic?

He stayed awake all night questioning the nature of dog.

Shortly after a woman began attending the Unitarian Universalist Congregation in Summit, New Jersey, she found herself in a restaurant after church. It was small place, with tables close together, and so she could not help overhearing the conversation at the table behind her. Two people were discussing their dissatisfactions with some aspect of their church. Suddenly, one of them asked, "Well, what do the Unitarians believe in?" Without a pause, the other replied, "Recycling!"

You might be a UU if . . .

1. you are unsure about the gender of God.
2. you think the Holy Trinity is "reduce, reuse and recycle."
3. you study the "ten suggestions" instead of the "Ten Commandments."
4. the only time "Jesus" is mentioned at church is when someone trips or stubs a toe.
5. you think a Holy day of Obligation is your turn to do coffee.
6. you get mail from committees you didn't know you were on.

Religious Holy Books:

Judaism - The Torah

Islam - The Koran

Christianity - The Bible

Unitarian Universalism - Roberts' Rules of Order

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A convict on Death Row, the night before his scheduled execution, was visited by the warden. The warden, in talking with the condemned man, said, "Usually at this point, persons in your situation find great comfort in talking to a member of the clergy. With that in mind, would you like us to send the prison chaplain over for a visit?"

The convict replied, "Well, warden, I have to tell you - I was raised a Unitarian Universalist."

The warden then said, "Well, then, would you like to talk to a math professor?"

In my family I'm known as the member who questions authority, dislikes the status quo ... you get the picture. Recently I told my Episcopalian mother that I'd been getting interested in Buddhism. She sighed wearily and said, "Oh, Anne. Couldn't you just be a Unitarian?"

On my last flight the attendant gave us instructions on what to do if the plane developed engine trouble. We were told how to use the oxygen masks that would fall and also instructed on how to use our headsets. "If the plane is about to crash you can dial up an appropriate message on the selector to your right. Catholics will hear a recording of the Hail Mary, Protestants will hear the 23rd Psalm, Jews can hear Kaddish, and the Unitarians will be treated to a roundtable discussion on flight safety."

What does a UU say when someone sneezes?

Oooh, ick! Get away! Germs!

UU's are basically good people, who, for the most part, try to live by the 10 suggestions.

"Unitarian Universalists prefer buffet to catered," a UU was saying over coffee hour.

"What's wrong with catered food?" interrupted another UU, catching only the last part of the conversation.

Explained the first, "I was referring to theology."

For the members of any religion...

To have a few doubts is normal.

To have many doubts is a crisis of faith.

To have constant doubts is a conversion to Unitarian Universalism.

Child, on seeing the flaming chalice for the first time:

Mommy, why do Unitarian Universalists build fires in their bird baths?

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What's the difference between a Unitarian and a Universalist?

Universalists think that God is too good to send them to hell.

Unitarians think that they are too good for God to send them to hell.

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The Unitarians don't want salvation, they want closure.

A UU family moves into a new neighborhood. Their little girl finds a new playmate, and they are happily getting to know each other. One day, the playmate says, "We're Episcopalians, what are you?" The UU child thinks for a minute and says, "I'm not sure, but I think we're League of Women Voters." \

In, *Of Human Bondage*, Somerset Maugham said: A Unitarian very earnestly disbelieves in almost everything that anybody else believes, and he has a very lively sustaining faith in he doesn't quite know what.

Why are UUs the worst hymn singers? \

Because they are always reading ahead to see if they agree with the next line.

Why don't the UUs have church during the summer?

God trusts them. \