

Opening Words  
Christopher Moore  
Sunday, September 17, 2017

Good morning and welcome to All Souls.

I'm Christopher Moore and I find *not* going to church to be a little irritating.

But I don't know how I got to that point. As a child, I didn't usually go to church—Sundays in our family were for the supermarket and David Brinkley. Granted, there was my kindergarten religious education class, which went well enough. But then in the first grade the instructor was mean and suddenly everyone was talking about religion all the time. It was exhausting. I left and didn't look back.

Until middle school, when I followed a cute seventh grade girl to the Unitarian Church. I loved the architecture there – and the sermons helped me survive the Reagan Administration. The relationship with the girl failed, maybe because I turned out to be gay, but I kept the Unitarian-Universalist perspective. Later, I interviewed Forrest Church—and started visiting All Souls. This place fit pretty well.

For a long time I liked it here because of what it wasn't—and because I wasn't hearing a lot of things that I disagree with. Eventually, though, the focus shifted to what it was – and is. There's a compelling mix of prayer and music and the questioning coming directly from the pulpit. And – oh, the poetry. How do other people keep from crying when Galen reads a poem?

But it's not all about Galen, I swear. Or Audette. I saw that this summer.

In summers past I used to pretend I'm away when I'm actually not, and I miss the 10 a.m. service and the sanctuary we returned to last week. This year I went to several Sunday gatherings and I realized that it's not necessarily the architecture or the music or the sermon, but perhaps it's really the people, the ones inclined to gather in a certain spirit on a Sunday morning...even in summer. When we heard songs here last week about going home, I understood.

And now, please stand as you are willing and able, and join me in the bond of union:

*In the freedom of the truth,  
And in the spirit of love,  
We unite for the worship of God  
And the service of all.*