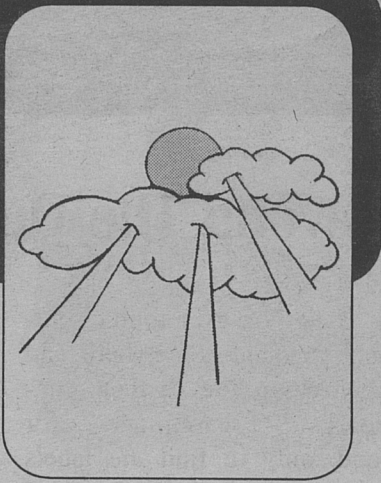


The Spiritual Essence

by The Rev. Jane Dwinell



Say A Prayer

Much has happened since the tragic events of September 11. Much has been said, and a great deal has been unsaid. People, for the first time in a long time, filled houses of worship. There was mourning, and prayer, and questioning, and fear. There was anger, and hope, and pulling together as a community, both large and small.

Second of all, we need to have patience — with our selves, our leaders, the media, those with whom we disagree. We have been through a tragedy of immense proportions, one that I hope will not be repeated. We are distracted. Tears may come at unexpected times. We are in grief even if we have not lost a person close to us.

to you, what makes sense to you, and commit to it with all your heart.

Lastly, find a way to channel your rage, anger, frustration, and desire for a new world into helping your local community. I'm sure all of us, on some level, wished we could go to New York City to help with the rescue efforts. Maybe some of you gave blood — or wanted to. When I think of the energy and money that is pouring into the relief efforts I wonder what we, as a community both large and small, could do if the same kind of energy was put into healing and helping right here, in Vermont. The Spirit knows we certainly can use healing on many levels. What can you do to help here, and now?

May your life be filled with Love, Wisdom, Patience, and Justice, every day. May your life be touched and blessed by all that is around you. And may we, together, create a better world for everyone.

The Rev. Jane Dwinell serves the First Universalist Parish, a Unitarian Universalist congregation, in Derby Line, VT. She lives with her partner, Sky, and their two children, Dana and Sayer, on the shores of beautiful Lake Memphremagog.

Light a candle. Say a prayer or sit in stillness. Look around you at the wonder of our world, at the wonder of your life.

There is much we can and should do at this time, but first of all, I feel we should give thanks. We should give thanks for all that is our life, for those we love, for those we hate, for those that died and those who have worked so hard cleaning up the debris, and bodies, and pieces of lives blown into little bits.

Light a candle. Say a prayer or sit in stillness. Look around you at the wonder of our world, at the wonder of your life. Although we may not know what is ahead, we know what is with us now. In the present. Today. This moment. For that is all we can really know. And say thank you.

Take time to take care of yourself. Play. Love. Laugh. This, too, shall pass.

Next, find yourself a spiritual home. Even though the terrorists destroyed innocent human life in the name of their religion, it doesn't mean that Islam, or any other faith, is bad. The magical diversity of our world gives us many wonderful organized religions to explore and choose from. The magical diversity of our world also gives us the option to find a spiritual home in the woods, or with our pet, or alone with a book of poetry. The Rev. Billy Graham is right — we are a nation in need of spiritual sustenance. Find what calls

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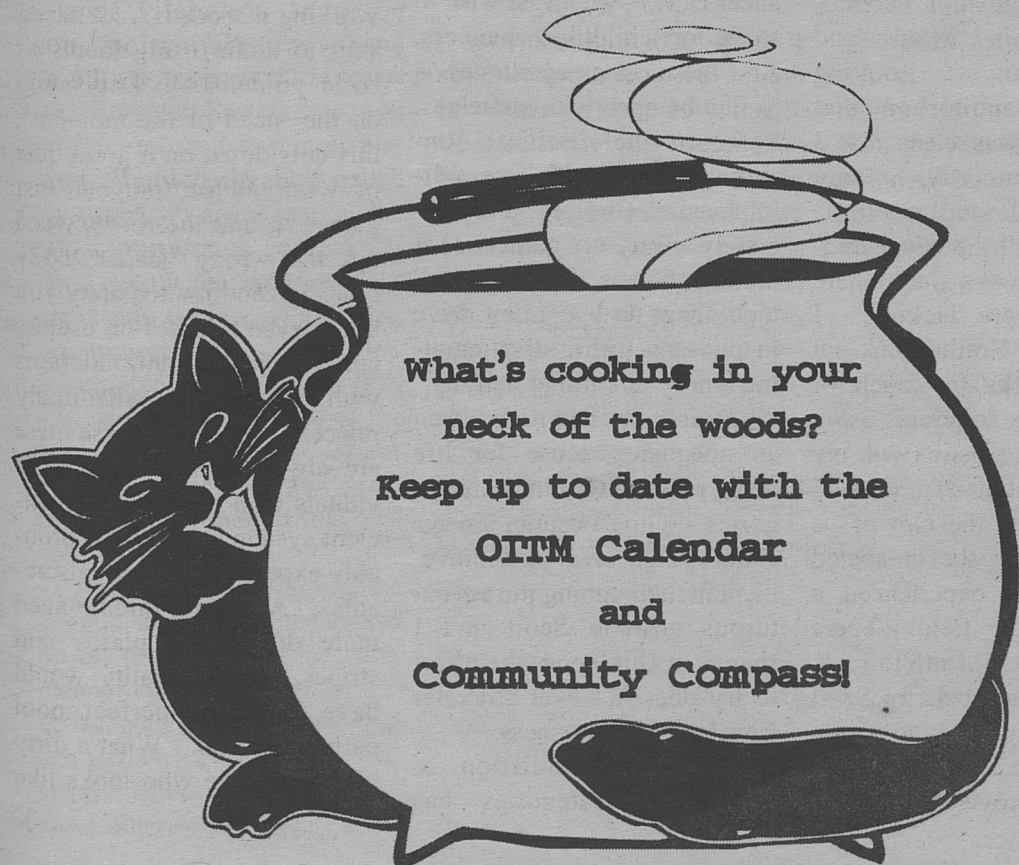


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