Opportunities for Ministry

Using Available Technology

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(as a volunteer not Essex Hall Staff Member)

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Opportunities for Ministry using Available Technology

The advance of cheap available electronic recording facilities and more available fast internet connections has opened up opportunities as to how Ministry can be delivered. This report summaries the opportunities that now exist.

 I have tried to include all the different ways that audio and video (A/V) worship material can be used either recorded or live. These solutions range from relatively simple and cheap to moderately expensive and complex, but I believe all are possible within the types of budgets available and the ability of a suitably trained person within our community.

1) Pre-recorded A/V website content viewed by a web surfer

The simplest way to use A/V worship material is to make the recordings from services available on a website. The *surfer* can view the material on their own computer at a time of their choosing. This type of facility is available already and used. There is a big difference between recording audio and video so I comment on these separately below.

1.1) Creating Audio Recordings for a website

Making audio recording of sermons is something currently done by two congregations: Edinburgh and Ipswich. The audio files are made available as a *download* or *podcast* from their congregation website. Users can *upload* these and transfer them to an MP3 player (portable audio player - *ipods* etc) and listen to them 'on the move' or through their computer. Personally I normally listen to one from Edinburgh and enjoy doing so. I haven't got into the habit of regularly downloading the one from Ipswich, but the ones I have heard are good.

I asked Cliff Reed about the Ipswich recording and he said that they don't know how many people download them, but he was welcoming a new member this week who has come to them after listening to the sermons online.

Creating an audio recording during worship is relatively simple and most importantly very unobtrusive. Those attending the service will not be aware that a part of the service is being recorded. Either a hand-held audio recorder is placed very close to the speaker or a *feed* is taken off the church sound system (PA). Any recording taken from a distance more than about one metre from the person speaking is likely to be un-useable because of the poor acoustics of most worship spaces. Such recordings will appear faint and have too much echo making it difficult to listen too.

The recording will need to be put onto a computer and edited by an audio software application to produce a suitable (small) MP3 file. Applications used for producing computer movies/video clips (like *MovieMaker*) are very good for this job and can be bought for less than £50. The skill with creating a good MP3 file, is balancing the size of the *download* (file) and the quality of the recording. If the quality is too high then the MP3 file will be so big that web surfers will not want to download it. If the quality of the recording is too low, the file size will be small, but the sound will be of poor quality. Typical problems with poor quality audio is it sounds like the person is on the telephone or they are at sea with the sound fading in and out. The quality is controlled by a *bit-rate*. This is the number of times a second the sound is stored. A small number (16,000 bits per second shown as 16kbps) will produce a very small file but will be of low quality. A high number (128kbps) will be 'CD

quality' but the file size will be very large. Music requires a higher quality than speech. With the Edinburgh we try and produce a file that is about 5 mega-bytes (5mb) and use a 'quality' setting of 64kbps. The sermons are 10 - 15 minutes in length. Creating one of these files is a skill and one that needs to be taught, but not above the scope of a computer user that is used of learning applications like Word, *Excel etc.*

Once the file has been produced, it must be *uploaded* to a website, by a *web-master* - the person who can alter the website. Many web facilities offer a facility to include MP3 files. Under the *UkUnitarians* Scheme that about 70 of our congregations use, the file needs to be emailed to myself or John Wilkinson and we add to it the website.

In website terms, audio files are large and take up a fair amount of *web space* so either you need a large website or only a small number of files can be stored.

Although initially it looks very daunting, editing your sound files with a software program is something that can be learnt.

I feel that more congregations could improve their website by creating these types of *downloads*. The sermons could be recorded on a modern mobile phone or audio recorder (*Maplins £70)* and there is no other cost involved.   Creating such *podcasts* makes the sermon available to a wider audience without any impact on the worship experience and at very little effect and expense.
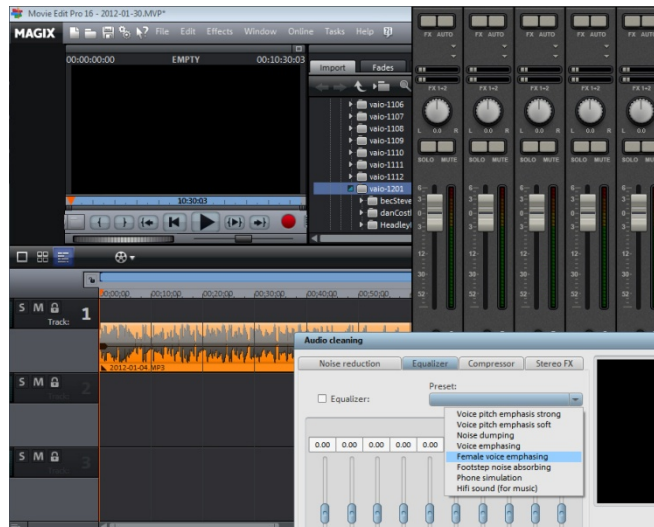
When recording either the audio or video of a sermon, care must be taken to keep the pace up. Everything on the internet happens fast and quick. As a result a 'well paced' sermon in a church might appear to drag on the net. I am not saying the words should be gabbed, just not laboured.

1.2) Creating Video Clips for Websites

To my knowledge no congregations produce video recording of their services. I have produced video recordings of IARF meetings and put these on *Youtube*. There is a single, very good recording of Stephen Lingwood talking about Unitarianism also on *Youtube* and some of the GA presentations.

Youtube is not mentioned as much as *Twitter* and *Facebook* these days, but there are now very few commercial products where you can't see a demonstration for them on *Youtube* and we are missing out here. Video files are very large to hold on a web site and so by putting them on *Youtube* means that the film doesn't take up any of your own *web-space*. It is also very easily to create a link to the *Youtube* video, or *embed* video into your website. That means that a small screen appears on your website with *Youtube* 'behind' showing the film. *Youtube* used to have the limit of a 10 minute video, but this has been increased to 20.

Once you have finished watching a film clip on *Youtube*, it will suggest you watch something else which it thinks might interest you. Unfortunately some of it is not in great taste and we did have one

congregation decide not to use *Youtube* for their GA presentation because someone didn't like the type of material that came up afterwards. It wasn't porn (they have a very strict policy) but it was rather of the *toilet* humour type!

Another advantage of putting the film on *Youtube*, is that you will get people coming across it. They will also make comments and you will get very useful stats about how many times your video has been watched.   I recorded David Usher talking about Unitarianism and the 6 videos have had about 10,000 *hits* (views) between them and many comments. I have also created a video about photography which was picked up by a magazine and I ended up getting 65,000 hits. It can be depressing however, when you only get a few hits. We put the videos presented at the 2011 GA, where they were very well received , but they have only had a couple of hundred hits on *Youtube* in nearly a year wish has been really disappointing.

There is another company offering a similar facility to *Youtube* called *Vimeo*. It doesn't come up with alternative viewing after and is used by some of the ukunitarians congregation sites where we are showing the PowerPoint presentations they did for the GA a few years ago. I have a special utility to turn a PowerPoint presentation into a video file of the right format.

Producing video in a worship environment is not easy. As well as having members of the congregation who may not wish to appear, the whole idea of filming while worship is taking place will be upsetting to some people. As a wedding photographer, I still sometimes find that some Ministers who do not allow ANY photos to be taken during any form of service.

Churches are also notoriously dark places and the only lights are sodium which give out very yellow light which looks gives a strange tint in videos. It is a skill creating a good quality video while also filming discretely. It could be we come up with a list of churches where we can film and a list of ones where it just doesn't work.

The advance of recording material for websites over trying to do a live recording is that if it is not very good it doesn't need to be used. Editing can be done afterwards the event, but remember this is a very time consuming task.

2) Playing pre-recorded Audio/Video during Worship

Another use of A/V material is to play it during a service, to add to the worship experience. If so we have other things to consider.

The key to holding an audience it to keep pulling 'rabbits out of the hat'. By that I mean keep things changing and giving those listeners some surprises. I have seen preachers use A/V to help achieve this. The change to a screen with the sound and music can have an impact. However, as a general rule, watching a screen for any length of time can be very soporific if used too much.

IT equipment does not enhance the look and feel of a worship space

The visual impact of the equipment needed can be very intrusive. In a large worship area, any screen needs to be very large and particularly when it is not being used, can be a huge eye-sore.

If our aim is to provide a congregation with an experience which will make them want to return, the quality of the video would need to be good. We are very used to seeing extremely high quality programmes on the TV and cheaply produced material will look cheap.

From a technical view point, showing a video clip is relativity straight forward. Care should be taken to ensure that any audio is connected to the loop system. Those *hard of hearing* will often find the audio on film clips particularly difficult to follow. Many churches have no blinds or curtains over their windows, so on a sunny day a projected image can hardly been seen. Large TV type screens are bulky to store, heavy to move and expensive to buy. They can also still too small for very large worship spaces.

At the end of April Lorna and I will be using a 32" TV screen at a Ditchling Chapel service, showing two 5 minute videos that the youth produced during weekends at Great Hucklow. Ditchling is a small Chapel (40ftx40ft), so this large flat screen TV will be large enough.

3) Live A/V streaming between places of worship

There are far more technical challenges when anything is *live*. A five minute breakdown will seem like an eternity with an audience sitting waiting for 'normal service to be restored'. It would take only a short interruption for any atmosphere to be ruined. All locations would need a technical person to solve any problems very quickly and a back-up plan if the link failed.

The *real time* nature of the occasion will give a reason for the technology to be present and I am sure it would be considered more interesting. You will not get the *"we just watching a DVD"* comment which could happen if pre-recorded material is used too much.

There is a major difference between whether the communication is one-way or two-way and the number of locations involved. All these options are mentioned below.

3.1) An A/V link between two places of worship

Skype can produce a free video link between two locations. It does require either a reliable good solid broadband internet connect at both places, or someone with a *dongle* on their computer. A *dongle* needs the same signal as a mobile phone, so if you can use a mobile at a location, there is a good chance the *dongle* will work. They cost about £15 a month to run, but might be a better option while any trials are going on. An internet connection often has a minimum contract period and a church will not want to be stuck with this if any trial is not successful. They can also be expensive to install. In some areas they are not available at all.

3.1.1) One Location Transmitting and One Receiving

This is simpler to set-up from a technical point of view. The *receiving* site will need much the same experience as it was watching a DVD (see above), i.e. a large screen and a PA system for the sound as well and the computer and internet/*dongle.*

The transmitting site will need much the same equipment mentioned for producing video clips, i.e. a number of camera and microphones. It will also need a method of mixing the A/V signals, this could be either a physical mixing deck or a computer which has a *mixing* programme installed. It could be done with just one camera but it will be rather boring to watch and the view will not get the whole atmosphere of the other location.

3.1.2) Both Locations Transmitting and Receiving

If both locations are to feel included, then both would need to take an active part in the service. A way this could work is for location 'A' to have the person who has created the service and who delivers most of it, including the sermon. But some of the readings are given to someone in location 'B', so during the whole service the both locations are involved. This idea also means that if the link fails, there is someone at location 'B' who can do something, rather than everyone just give up and go home.

Singing via such a link would only be possible the sound is turned off from one end. So if for example the music was played at location 'A' , then this could be transmitted to location 'B' who could join in, but the speakers at location 'A' must be turned off so the singing from 'B' , which would be delayed, could not be heard at location 'A'.

Not much more equipment would be needed for this solution as only a single camera would be needed at location 'B' and this could be the build in web-cam on the computer which is already there to receive the *Skype* signal.

4) A/V Links Between Several Places of Worship.

If more than two places of worship are involved then there are two possible technical solutions discussed below.

4.1) Linking Several Locations via *Skype/GooglePlus*.

Skype offers a video conferencing facility for up to about 10 locations. This service is not free but requires a monthly charge of about £2.50 for the computer used at each location. Two-way communication is available, but I think it would be getting beyond the realms of the competence of all the technicians involved to get more than a couple of the locations involved in taking an active part in the worship. This solution produces a private network and one which is still relatively affordable. *GooglePlus* offers a free video conferencing facility, but I have never used it.

4.2) Live Streaming from a Place of Worship to a Website (webcasting).

Another very existing possibility is to broadcast a live service via the internet. This would enable anyone with a connection to the internet to view the worship in real time.

I am sure this would fall in line with the aims of the National Unitarian Fellowship (NUF) who have a number of people on who might be interested in watching such a service.

The set-up could be as simple as a cheap 'web-cam' camera and a microphone to a very complex network of audio and video devices making the church look more like a film studio that a worship space. For it to be interesting I feel it would need a minimum of 3 cameras, microphones near every location where people speech or a *feed* from the building's PA system. Also required would be a very competent technician would not only have to *mix* the different A/V sources (swap between cameras) but also ensure that the *upload* to the internet was working at all times.

Free software is available that allows any laptop connected to the internet to 'webcast' for free. I have set up an account with *livestream.com*. Having never done any webcasting before, within 10 minutes of going to their website I was broadcasting using the built-in web-cam and microphone on my computer. The free service is not TV quality and you will see adverts appearing before the broadcast begins, but it's a fantastic way we could get involved without any capital expenditure. There is also another company called *Ustream* offering a similar

The 'webcast' channel now set-up on our website

facility.

A very possible project would be to have a couple of teams throughout the UK who, between them could say ensure that one service each month was available live. This could be viewed by congregations or individuals alike. We would have our own *Songs of Praise*! To equip each team would cost very little as much we have much of the equipment and software already.   The only danger of this project is that some people might stay away from church to watch the service!! This would take some effect from some volunteers, but very little money. I have already linked the national website into the *livestream* account and intend using it to broadcast an event from Ditchling in late July.

Attending a church is obviously a far more of a social occasion than watching a service from home. There could be some form of online 'chat-room' which would enable people to comment on what had happened to enable them to be involved to a limited degree. The NUF have such a chat room and *livestream.com* also provide one.

Web-streaming could be used to promote a number of other events like lectures/talks or even training courses. I am sure once it was in place it would get used.

Conclusion

Congregations who can currently provide good quality worship could use audio or video recordings of their services to create an additional dimension to their website. This might encourage growth and helps surfers get a real feel of what happens in a Unitarian service. May members of the public have a perception we are all strange and weird and hearing or seeing what happens inside the church may help the surfer get a better understanding of what we are all about. It is a big barrier for some people to walk into a church and anything that can break that down is useful. However it will not encourage anyone to come if the quality of the either the recording or what is say is not good. For example showing a congregation of three old ladies is not going to encourage young people to come to the church or anyone preaching with a poor delivery.

If a congregation is going to create web material on a regular basis, it is really important that a team is involved. It would be too easy for one person to start creating these and soon find it a bit of a chore after a while.

Congregations will increasingly include short items video material during services, but it will not be much more than that in locations where there are people available to take worship.

Where congregations have a serious problem getting good quality worship leaders at the moment, the introduction of video material could offer a benefit as long it was not used all the time.

It is very important the technology works so seamlessly that it doesn't dominate the worship experience. It would take only a few hick-ups for a congregation to decide that it was all too intrusive. For this to happen, the people involved with the equipment will need lots of practise and training. However this is all possible and not expensive.

By next year we could have one Unitarian service a month available to everyone via the internet.

Many other denominations have the same problem as we have and I am sure there are lessons we could learn from others, something I haven't researched. I have heard of one local (non-Unitarian) Church that records its service each Sunday and this is shown in other smaller churches that haven't a preacher the following week.

A good congregational service should involve many people doing different jobs, a preacher, musician, usher, coffee maker, cleaner etc. In the next few years I see is a technical person added to that list to handle the IT. That is in churches where it is not happening already!

If we want to encourage the younger (under 50) generation to come to our churches, we have to start communicating with them on the media they use. That is not newsletters, leaflets and posters it is the digital communication methods listed in the report.

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Appendix

Youtube comments

Below are only a few of the comments from the Youtube Unitarian videos we have online. I feel it shows there are people out there who are looking for something we are offering. Some of the comments are from people with different views, but I don't think that matters. It also indicates that such pages need monitoring and responding to some of the comments while deleting others.

- *The Evil doctrine of Sola Scriptura led to the unitarian heresy...*
- *was Jesus to you? What is your authority on this?*
- *that the Bible is lying about Jesus. Or that Jesus (or the Bible) was misinterpreted. Or so many other things. Why do we have to throw the baby out with the bathwater and say Jesus is a liar if we don't prescibe supernatural powers to him?*
- *, Jesus said he came to save...the lost sheep of Israel. He beleived this so much that it took a mother's pain and her willingness to humilliate herself before him (after Jesus called her a dog) for him to decide to heal a sick girl that was not a Jew...something that ndertandable in a man, full of love but still tied to his culture, not in a God aiming to save all humanity...*
- *Jesus is not the saving Son of God , He was not a good person he would be a liar. How can a person not believe Jesus is the savior but believe he was a good man? You are creating your own Jesus and he is not Jesus at all. Jesus himself said he came to save. So if you dont believe this you believe Jesus is a liar*
- *is heresy, what is your authority? If it is not the Christ of the bible then it is not Christ at all.*
- *for you , your lord is one god"*

unitarians are the last real christians,

they are mentioned in the hole Quran

Im not syre if they know that we muslims must belive in Jesus as one of God's greatest messengers.

i hope they get to know the last revelation the holy Quran and the last prophet Muhammed PBUH,

- *Unitarians believe Jesus was just a "great man" but not the Son of God.*
- *so what make the Unitarians Christians different*
- *No, not at all.........*

Christians acknowledge that Jesus Christ is the only Son of God, God in the flesh, that Christ died on the cross for the remission of sins and that Christ rose on the third day. And that the only way to be forgiven for you're sins is through faith in Jesus Christ alone.

. You are missing the point. Univerasalists believe that many paths lead to the same goal. Thy believe that all religions can be right in their own way. They say that no religion is exclusive, it is in their doctrine. But this is an impossible contradiction. All religions claim to be exclusive, so an intellectual human being cannot say they "all lead to the same place," because they

@dtdowntown67 I will agree to disagree with you, I don't think I will convince you that the 'personal journey' that Unitarian offers is for you. As it happens I don''t think 'many paths lead to the same goal' but I really don't think that matters. Good luck will all you do.

@ukunitarians Well what about you sir, what's your worldview?

@ukunitarians and yet in every religion goals can go either two ways "Heaven" or "Hell" so only one can be right

So do they belive in a god? If not why call it a religion?

Unitairanism is different to other faith groups. Don't think of it as a set of beliefs to follow (like most major religions) - it not that all all. It's a faith community which exists to allow people to expand their own knowledge and draw their own conclusions - a safe environment where people who are tolerant of other's views are welcome. Its not for everyone, but it is for some (which includes me!). Many Unitarians don't call it a religion so I do understand your question.

@kylaphotographics Well I asked it because on a vid I watched they were talking about how religion is bad and then a unitarian minister said they should clean up their language and not defame religion. She further said that she as an unitarian was part of a religion which didn't have any superstition. That sounded strane to me because religion entail the belive in supernatural. So unitatinaism in your view is a community where people meet to talk about philosophies?

Unitarian Univerasalistm is the unfortunate product of a liberal world. And I know I am going to get a lot of hate for saying that, but it's absolutely true. I have family who are unitarian, so don't say I HATE them, I'm just making the simple observation that it CANNOT EXIST. How can there be more than one truth if each religion IS ABSOLUTE AND CONTRADICTS THE OTHERS. My goodness I just can't understand how people can buy into this nonsense.

You have stated it, there are more then one belief, they exsist and people try and argue and bump elbows with each other but in UU they come together in peace.

@TombKaios I don't find anything wrong with people of different faiths coming together in peace. But the fact is that they contradict eachother. If I am a Christian and you are a Muslim, we could "come together in peace" like you said, but we will disagree on religious aspects on a fundamental level. Truth is not relative when two truths contradict. The law of contradiction applies- x and non-x cannot say the same thing.

@dtdowntown67 Isn't is beautiful that they do not confront and they do not fight for a truth but rather they unite people? Now who is more christlike or godlike or budhalike or any spirial teacher like?

@34roberees No. I think truth is very important and we should actively seek it, rather than diminish its value by saying there is no one truth. That is not christlike at all. In fact, in John 8:32, Jesus says "you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free." Well I believe that the truth is in Jesus Christ, and in him alone. It is actually quite insulting to all the religious traditions to say that they are all basically saying the same things.

dtdowntown67 6 months ago

@dtdowntown67 :::There may be one ultimate truth, but how are we going to find it? It is part of our growth as we look for it. We may find something that sounds right today, but we will find better tomorrow. It is a process of seeking and analyzing, and thinking. Perhaps God designed it that way so we will not be stagnant in our thinking. Carlton Pearson as a pentecostal preacher who prayed about all the souls that would go to hell without Jesus. His revelation? No one goes tohell for unbelief

@k0smon It isn't about what we find, or how we seek it, or what we are seeking, because that is not what's important in this respect. What's important is simply what IS and what ISN'T. That is my main problem with universalism, that they don't understand this. Look at it this way, either there is a heaven and hell, or there isn't. Either Jesus was resurrected and truly is God, or he was a liar. There is no middle ground with truth, there are no options. Truth is just as established as 2+2=4.

@dtdowntown67 :::The identification of what is 'true' is the big question. We don't have a cave in the mountains somewhere that contains 'the truth' in stone. How will you determine what IS? How do we figure that Jesus might be a liar? He never wrote anything. I'm sure he was lied about many times. Not all agree he was God. His body may simply have been his spirit body, that we all have when we die. Certainly there is an afterlife, but does it work like the bible says it does? I don't thinkso

@k0smon Why do you say certainly there is an afterlife? What leads you to believe that?

Ahh you finally reached the point I was looking for, a point that universalists don't usually get to. How do yoo determine what IS? Well, because Jesus, his death, and his resurrection are historical claims, than you use HISTORY to determine their validity. As far as the resurrection goes, there is A LOT of strong evidence that supports it. I can inbox you some evidence if you like, b/c I can't fit it here.

@dtdowntown67 :: I am certain of an afterlife because I have attended 2 materialization seances and spoken to those that live there. I have studied reports of NDEs, psychic investigators, and other life after death literature. I believe Drs who investigate NDEs and are convinced of the continuation of life.

Secular history does not support the claims for the resurrection of Jesus, History barely mentions him at all, and some of those are thought to be forgeries.

@k0smon @k0smon As a Christian I also believe in an afterlife, but be very careful with seances and the like, they could be dangerous. And as far as history goes, I disagree Secular history does not support the resurrection claims only because they reject them from the get go. But if you look at the resurrection as a purely historical event, then it is solid. We know Jesus died, and yet there were 400 people, not even including the disciples and the Mary's and Paul, who saw him after his death.

dtdowntown67 4 months ago

@dtdowntown67 ::: The only danger in a seance is to the medium, who can be harmed if the ectoplasm is handled unexpectedly. Or maybe if someone freaked out and ran out of the room. But you screen people first to prevent that from happening.

Historicity from the CE is spotty at best, because church officials burned books and libraries to cover their tracks. Information I have comes from psychic sources. Was Jesus' resurrection any different from ours, having a spirit body that they could see?

@k0smon And who is to say your psychic sources are telling the truth? The Bible speaks of spiritual forces other than God, which are evil. They are called demons, servants of Satan who look to deceive humanity. I can't convince you that these psychic revelations you are receiving are demonically influenced, but I can get you to look at this another way. If Christ has risen, wouldn't Satan and his demons WANT you to believe that it never happened, and therefore have every reason to lie to you?

@dtdowntown67 :: The psychic sources have no reason to lie. They speak of the knowledge they have. I have no problem with Christ 'arising' in his spiritual body, I just don't give it any religious significance. The late Hans Holtzer, author and psychic researcher, stated there were no demons and no satan. These are just bible personalities and have no reality. Evil people die, so in this sense, there are evil spirits. There is no religion in the spirit world. How you treat others makes the diff

@k0smon If they are demons then they have every reason to lie. Of course they wouldn't tell you they are demons. They want you to believe that Christ didn't die for your sins. I can tell you with absolute assurance that he did, because the Spirit revealed it to me, and I can tell you that you are speaking with demons. Please at least try to reach out to the true God, it's the best decision you will ever make.

In their attempt to be "free thinking" and "non-creedal," the UUs have become so liberal that they deny almost every doctrine of the Christian faith, replacing the worship of God with a worship of self, teaching that human reason and experience take precedence over the Word of God

True monotheism. Just like Judaism, Islam and bahai faith

@jigglyfidda125 sihkism too my friend

you all are avoiding, Gods purpose, the lesson of life...being here is a test to see how we use our free will, and if we use it to get us to heaven or to hell.....i feel so sorry for you all that follow this religion..it is man made..it was not sent by God. There are no wrong questions....only wrong answers, and this religion is giving the wrong answers.....you are supose to follow Gods word, not what you think it is. There is no common sence here...I pray for you all

LONG LIVE THE UU!

open minded brainwashing lol

i'm doing a project on this thanx for good info :)

This unitarian sounds like a real liberal heretic.

Many Unitarians believe that Jesus was a profit who gave us important teachings about God the father, but they don't think of Jesus as a God. We feel you can believe in Jesus message without the need to believe in the physical resurrection. We know that not e'body will take that view & we respect that. More importantly, Unitarians feel that we should all come 2 our own conclusions on these matters, so opinions vary & we are happy with this diversity in/outside our movement. Hope that helps.

I am a muslim and I always wandered...

Do unitarians believe in the crucification of Jesus?I'll be waiting for your answers.

As you have just read unitarianism shares many beliefs that Islam teaches. However Orthodox historical christianity is Trinitarian as taught to us by our Lord & Savior Jesus Christ.

Orthodox historical Christianity is the Roman Catholic Church not the 16th century teachings of John Calvin.

No. Orthodox christianity is catholic, but not Roman Catholic. The 1st century christians were trinitarian. Read the writings of Ignatius of Antioch.

October31st1517 2 years ago

Ok, so where were the followers of Calvinism from 30 AD - 1500 AD? I can't find them in the history books.

bandaidmafia 2 years ago

Sure you can. Now if your looking for the term calvinism, your not going to find it. Before Calvin it was called Augustininism. Before Augustine, it was Pauline. Same doctrine, different name.

Again read the writings of Ignatius who was a 1st century christian, there is no doubt that he taught Predestination etc.

So the historical teachings of the Catholic church have really been Calvinist this whole time huh?

bandaidmafia 2 years ago

There has ALWAYS been a debate in the church on the sovereignty of man.

A) Not really. But since you mention Augustine let's look at a different point.

B) Augustine and every other Christian for 1500 years believed that baptism was necessary for salvation.

C) That is the orthodox historical view.

D) Yet in the 16th century protestants began to reject the necessity of baptism.

Q: Where do you stand on the issue: with the historic orthodox faith or with the protestants?

yes that is true, but i belief that a man is sovereign by natural right. We can govern ourselves if we wanted to, but people fear what would happen if we did, its because of a lack of understanding yourself, that has made people want to be governed and give up their natural right to be controlled by others. we are not free, because we gave up our freedoms willingly to someone else

most of those books were burned during the dark and medieval ages, so we have no textual reference for them

i just would like to know do you believe in trinity .