

RELIGIOUS AND SPIRITUAL LIFE

Dear Bowdoin College Community,

There are currently 8 faith groups at Bowdoin College including the Catholic Student Union, Hillel, Muslim Student Association, Bowdoin Quakers, Bowdoin Orthodox Association, Bowdoin Community Gospel Choir, a new faith group called Bowdoin Inklings, and the Bowdoin Christian Fellowship which remains off-campus at the Joseph and Alice McKeen Christian Studies Center on Harpswell Street.

The academic year 2015-2016 began with our customary Faith Bar-B-Q for all students of faith and especially our first years in which all the 8 faith groups shared the aims and mission of each group. About 50 students attended the gathering.

The Office of Religious and Spiritual Life (ORSL) holds monthly meetings with all the faith groups at which we share what each group is doing during the year, and plan various Inter-Faith activities, programs, and services. During these monthly meetings we also share in dialog about each other's faith tradition.

The Office of Religious and Spiritual Life throughout the academic year has:

1. Worked with Dining to provide Kosher and Halal food on Fridays and high holidays for our Jewish and Muslim students.
2. Created a room on campus for prayer, silence and meditation in Banister Hall 206.
3. Created a Muslim Prayer Room at 30 College Street and secured Prof. Mohammed Irfan to lead the weekly Jummah Salat Prayer Services.
4. Assisted our Hindu students in holding the two sacred, high holiday services of Diwali (festival of light) and Holi (festival of color) for the first time on the Bowdoin campus.
5. Assisted Julianna Lewis '18 in starting up the Bowdoin Inklings which is a faith group dedicated to studying Christianity and its scriptures based on the tradition of C.S. Lewis and J.R.R. Tolkien.
6. Assisted the Catholic Student Union in creating a new discussion group called Theology on Tap, and in having weekly Mass in the Bowdoin chapel.
7. Held 2 Contra Dances to promote natural high experiences in spirituality.
8. Helped coordinate Lessons and Carols in the Bowdoin Chapel.
9. Held two Inter-Faith Services with the 8 faith groups on campus.

10. Assisted the Muslim Student Association in a lecture/ supper entitled Food of Faith where students were introduced to various Muslim traditions.

The Director of Religious and Spiritual Life has:

1. Taught 4 classes in building Shaker oval boxes (entitled Religion in Wood) one of which was for Prof. Dana Byrd and her class in Early American Furniture with 14 students.
2. Shared in Grief Counseling sessions about once a month for students who have lost parents, siblings, or loved ones.
3. Addressed a number of groups on campus about religion and spirituality including, the Res Life Staff, Athletic Department staff, College House advisors, Student Affairs Breakfast Club, First Year Orientation, and a talk at the Bowdoin Upward Bound 50th Anniversary and annual Student Life Breakfast.
4. Moderated 3 different College House talks and discussions on Islam and other religious /faith traditions.
5. Coordinated for the Maine Council of Churches a Fall Forum on peace held in Daggett Lounge.
6. Served as Bowdoin's chaplain offering 3 Invocations to our Bowdoin Trustees, an Invocation at Clayton Rose's Inauguration, an Invocation at the Bowdoin Commencement, 4 memorial services during Bowdoin's Reunion Week, a blessing for the local Brunswick Habitat for Humanity ground-breaking, and officiated at two Bowdoin wedding celebrations.
7. Counseled and helped an average of 7-8 students a week navigate their personal, religious and spiritual lives.

Rev. Robert E. Ives
Director of Religious and Spiritual Life
Bowdoin College