



**Spiritual Seekers kicks off the Fall 2013 season on 9/24 at 7 PM in the upstairs Chapel at Trinity Episcopal Church. Join us to view a documentary from BBC4 entitled "Jesus Was a Buddhist Monk."**

Spiritual Seekers is a group for people of all faiths, or of little faith, who wish to make a deeper connection to the spiritual dimension in their lives. How does our spirituality influence our GLBT experience, and vice versa?

We meet on the 2nd and 4th Tuesdays of each month from 7:00-8:30 PM at Trinity Episcopal Church, 320 E. College St. Meetings are typically held in the parlor or in the chapel. Often we view a theatrical movie or documentary followed by an open discussion. If the movie is longer than an hour, we continue watching at subsequent meetings.

Occasionally we invite a guest speaker to join us and help us to dive deeper into a topic.

Because we are all seekers, the group welcomes your input for future discussion topics! For more information, contact John Muriello at: [jmuriello@aol.com](mailto:jmuriello@aol.com).

### **Recent Topics:**

December 2011: "Facing East, Facing West," a documentary hosted by Bill Moyers including a look at being Muslim in America following 9/11.

September 2011: "Faith and Doubt at Ground Zero" (PBS Frontline)

Spring/Summer 2011: "The Power of Myth" (Bill Moyers and William Campbell)

Winter 2011: The Gnostic Gospels

Fall 2010: "American Experience - The Mormons",  
South Park episode "All About Mormons"

Summer 2010: "The Buddha" (PBS documentary).

### **Future Topics:**

Culture: "Selling God": a fascinating and always amusing survey of evangelical Christianity from Biblical times to the rise of megachurches to the post-9/11 culture wars.

Atheism: "Religulous," "The God Who Wasn't There"

Religion and Homosexuality: "The Bedroom Commandments," "Fish Out of Water," "Fall From Grace"

### **Some History**

Over many years, the discussions at Spiritual Seekers have varied greatly. Initially there was great interest in studying the seven passages from the Bible which are conventionally used to condemn homosexual practice. Once the group had read them in various historical and cultural contexts, it moved on to the examination of a wide variety of spiritual disciplines and ways of praying. For a month, a leader of the local Zen Buddhist group provided instruction in forms of meditation and their background philosophies. A local rabbi led the members through the spiritual disciplines of major Jewish holy days. Forms of prayer as widely diverse as laughing, napping, and exploring the wonders of nature were examined.

Spiritual Seekers also spent many months on questions of how to develop a healthy queer spirituality which is totally integrated into our physical and sexual lives. The group examined the origins of the common belief that the soul or spirit exists on a higher plane, and is necessarily at odds with the body, which is considered to be a source of shame. We examined the portions of the Bible which could be considered highly erotic, and which express great delight in the body's capacity to be a source of arousal and pleasure.

In 2009, Spirtual Seekers helped sponsor a day-long retreat and brought James Alison to Iowa City for a weekend.

In 2010, we shifted our focus to learning about many world religions, sometimes--but not always--focusing on their views on GLBT people and issues.

There's still much to be explored by the Spiritual Seekers group in the months and years ahead. Please join us!