

One Light, Many Candles

Biography

Elizabeth and Noel Paul Stookey have been working together for over 50 years, as husband and wife, as parents, as business partners and activists, and as two people constantly questioning how the spiritual informs the day-to-day realities of life-in both a small personal way and a larger global way.

"I went home thinking about the kind of world I would like, not just the kind of world we have."(UCC)

Noel is a singer-songwriter and the "Paul" of Peter Paul and Mary. He has been writing songs that reflect on the political, cultural, sociopolitical and spiritual dynamics of all of our collected stories for decades. Betty is an ordained minister who has ministered and counseled many, including, as chaplain of a school, over a thousand students of many faiths ranging from Buddhist and Christian, to Muslim and Jewish.

"We have much more in common than we see, and we see more differences than there are."(UCC)

Betty's work as minister/chaplain and Noel's talent as a singer-songwriter come together now in mutual multi-faith vision. Believing that no one religion can 'own' God, that God has many names, and that each person's path is a valid one, Betty and Noel bring to their workshops, seminars, residencies and worship services the belief that religious faith which is based on love assumes unity and that when we expand our spiritual comfort zones we are opening a path to understanding and peace.

"Betty and Noel Stookey blessed the Guilford College community with their deeply moving "One Light, Many Candles" presentation during Religious Emphasis week. Combining Betty's insightful and dynamic words about the power of God's revelation through the multifaith community and Noel's guitar and vocals, they touched our hearts and inspired us to see our religious diversity as a source of strength – leading us to delight in that of God in everyone".(MC)

The Stookeys craft presentations and workshops for churches, colleges, retreats, or any gathering that is receptive to hearing about the expansive nature of the Divine. They believe in a world where our faith traditions might stand side by side, not blending or mixing their belief systems, but rather holding strong to them while reaching out a hand of respect and understanding to those of another tradition. The foundation of their belief and their programs germinates from the fact that they cannot feel comfortable accepting that their truth would exclude or minimize yours.

"Betty's reflections and Noel's music led us to an experience of and respect for unity in diversity and opened our hearts and minds to an insightful and productive conversation after the presentation."(RFS)

MC=Max Carter, Director of the Friends Center at Guilford College in Greensboro, N.C.

UCC= the congregation of the Unitarian Universalist Church in Key West Florida

RFS= Reversing Falls Sanctuary, Brooksville, Maine

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OneLightManyCandles.org