i thank You God for most this amazing
day: for the leaping greenly spirits of trees
and a blue true dream of sky; and for everything
which is natural which is infinite which is yes
e.e. cummings

e.e.cummings enthusiasm for the day we are experiencing in this moment, is contagious. At the start of a semester, there is often a lot going on, with many new things to get used to, and this can feel overwhelming. But cumming’s wisdom, of simply paying attention to what is here in the moment can be helpful. Take a breath. Look around you. Notice things. Pay attention to your body and how you feel. Let this moment come alive for you.

“7 Reasons to Hang Out With Your College Chaplain (Even if You’re Not Religious)”
(An article by Paul Rauschenbush in Huffpost, which I tweaked a bit to reflect GMC)

1. Chaplains are interested in the big questions at the heart of a liberal arts education such as: Who am I? What kind of life do I want to live? What do I believe? How will I contribute to this world?

2. Chaplains have your back. There may be times when you just need someone with who you can talk to without fear that it will go beyond the two of you. Having this kind of sounding board can really help when dealing with relationships, the pressures of being a student, or just figuring out life.

3. Chaplains go on fantastic trips. GMC joins with Poultney UMC’s pastor David Adams to go on Spring Break trips to Red Bird Mission to repair homes in Kentucky’s poorest areas.

4. There is always food. The Chapel & chaplain’s office pretty much always have tea, sometimes other goodies.

5. It’s a place of peace. The Chapel is a special place where you can go and sit, breath and reflect -- and where nobody will bother you. There are CD’s with meditations and great music as well as a library of spiritual resources. If you spend even 10 minutes a day in it can help you be centered and more peaceful, and may help you to handle the stress of college.

6. Chaplains can help you understand your roommates (and other people). Discussions on interfaith relations, science and religion, ecology and faith, art and spirituality, mindfulness and happiness happening at your chaplain’s office can help inform you of your neighbor’s belief and also hone your own opinions. And if you don’t see the discussion you want to have, most chaplains will be very glad to help you start a new one!

7. Chaplain offices are often a locus for social justice work. If you are looking for a way to make a positive difference in the world, your chaplain’s office is often one of the most active locations for service organizations and social justice groups. This work is often not faith-based, instead it is about the wider goal of creating a more just and beautiful world. People of faith as well as spiritual and secular are equally welcome to take part.

So as you enjoy your first days at college this fall, stop by the chaplains office and say hi. And tell them Paul sent you. (Actually, you don’t have to do that.)


Events & Groups:
Spirituality Club – Meets Tuesday, Sept. 8th at 5:30 in Withey Dining room at the table in the back beneath the flags. Open to people of all faiths and spiritual traditions or who are simply interested in great, often meaningful, conversation. Bring an open mind and perhaps a story to share about your spiritual life. Katiemae White is the contact person for this. whiteka@greenmtn.edu

Bible Study – We are forming a group of people who would like to read and talk about the Bible as it applies to life. Open to all interested. See Ellen at the Club Fair on Wednesday to sign up and let us know a good time for you or email her: ellen.sanders@greenmtn.edu
Interfaith Diversity Experiences & Attitudes Longitudinal Survey is launching next week. Freshmen should check their email for a link to the survey which will help us understand the diversity of worldviews here at GMC as well as how students perceive and accept one another.

Religious & Spiritual Life Committee – this group is developing some great discussions and workshops that focus on many topics related to spirituality, tolerance and developing skills to help us all engage in meaningful conversations with sensitivity to our differences. Contact me if you would like to be a part of this group.

Chapel Activities:

- **Meditation** – Wednesdays 11:30-11:50 - This is open to anyone who would like to create a few moments of peace and focus in the middle of their day. (Shirley leads this meditation time)
- **Yoga** – Mondays from 6-7pm
- **Dance** – Mondays from 7-8pm (Instructor for yoga and dance is Erika Lawlor Schmidt)
- **Quaker Meeting** - Sundays at 10am (potluck after worship first Sunday of the month!) Contact people are EmilyMulder @gmail.com and Kenneth Mulder (mulderk@greenmtn.edu)

To contact me, your chaplain: email  Shirley.oskamp@greenment.edu  
Phone:  802-287-8388  
Office:  201 Richardson –Open hours Tuesday or Friday from 10:00-11:30am.  
Other times by appointment or chance.