

October, 2018 Newsletter of the Lake Superior Freethinkers

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First Sunday – Duluth Radisson Harborview

9:00 AM Social – 9:30 Breakfast - 10:00 Presentation

Free and open to the public.

Jan Resberg, Chair/President 715-919-0513

Sue Anderson, Social Director 218-728-1361

Program

TOBY THOMAS CHURCHILL – “ARTIST AND TRUTH”



**Gov. Matt Bevin publicly signs bill allowing Kentucky's
public schools to teach the Bible**

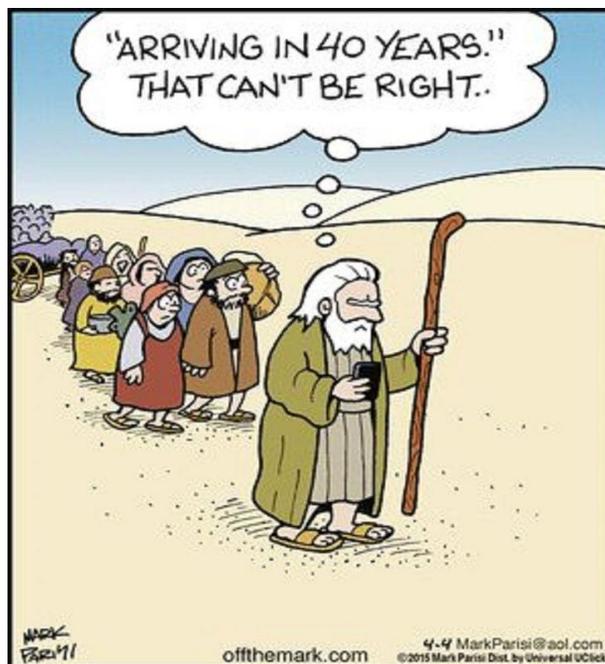
<http://www.wdrb.com/story/35761799/gov-matt-bevin-publicly-signs-allowing-kentuckys-public-schools-to-teach-the-bible>



Leading Secular Groups Win Big in Florida Cross Case

In a pivotal federal [decision](#) released late Friday, September 7, the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Eleventh Circuit upheld the U.S. District Court's ruling that the City of Pensacola's large, freestanding Latin cross towering over Bayview Park violates the Establishment Clause of the First Amendment.

In 2016, two of the country's leading secular organizations, the American Humanist Association (AHA) and the Freedom From Religion Foundation (FFRF), filed suit against the City of Pensacola on behalf of local residents, challenging the city's 34-foot-tall Christian cross prominently displayed in a popular city park. The city's exclusively Christian monolith has been used for annual Christian worship services since its inception. Following a [hearing](#) in June 2017, the U.S. District Court of Northern Florida sided with the AHA and FFRF, [declaring](#) that "the Bayview Cross can no longer stand as a permanent fixture on city-owned property" because it violates the Establishment Clause.



Bill Maher on Faith

They say the word faith, and we all have to back off and pretend that what they believe is not destructive. I will not do that. There are millions of people who will not do that. There are rationalists like me who don't believe in the supernatural. Believers' fables were written by men long before anyone knew what a germ or an atom was. 20% of people under the age of 30 think like I do. They just don't speak up, but I will.

I think all religions are cuckoo. Just because I wish for the demise of an institution that's destructive to the human race doesn't mean I'm a bigot. Take, for instance, Hamas and the KKK. I'm not a bigot because I root for their downfall.

They are not going to shut me up by saying the magic word "faith." When they say, "But this is what I believe," I'm going to say, "It's dumb."



Mormonism 101

A summary of another hocus-pocus, holy-smokus religion.

by George Erickson www.tundracub.com

It all began in 1820 when a 14-year-old boy named Joseph Smith Jr. claimed that Jesus and God had appeared before him, in what would be vision # 1, to tell him that all of the existing religions were wrong. (L Ron Hubbard, the Scientology guy, later advised, "If you want to get rich, start a new religion.")

Three years later, the angel Moroni, a supposed prophet originally from America, appeared and told Joseph of a book with pages of gold that was conveniently buried nearby. Joseph was allowed to see those plates once a year for 4 years, and on the 4th year he took them home, where he translated them into the Book of Mormon (which Mark Twain called "chloroform in print", by occasionally using a Thummimm and a Urim that consisted of two seer stones in silver bows attached to a breastplate.

Jack Worthy, a former Mormon missionary and author of *The Mormon Cult*, wrote that Smith would "place the seer stones into the bottom of a top hat while he hid behind a sheet. He would then stick his face into the hat containing the stone. Buried inside pitch blackness of the hat, he would then wait."

According to Smith, "A spiritual light would shine. A piece of something resembling parchment would appear, and on that appeared the writing. One character from the gold plates would appear, and under it was the interpretation in English."

Smith would then dictate the translation to an assistant on the other side of the sheet. The assistants, of course, never saw the plates. However, to convince them that the plates were real, Smith allowed his assistants to hold them while they were wrapped in a cloth.

During one "translation", Smith and an assistant claimed to have been visited by John the Baptist who conferred the Aaronic priesthood upon them. A week or two later, Peter, James, and John conferred another priesthood upon them.

Jack Worthy again: "The first edition of the Book of Mormon was printed on March 26, 1830. Less than two weeks later, the LDS as church was officially organized. The Book of Mormon is considered by the Latter Day Saints to be divined scripture. So is the Bible. So is a book called the Doctrine and Covenants, which is a collection of Revelations that Jesus personally gave to Smith. And so is a book called the *Pearl of Great Price*, part of which Joseph Smith translated from some Egyptian papyri that the church had purchased along with a couple of mummies. Unfortunately, the papyri have subsequently been translated by Egyptologists, showing that Joseph Smith had no clue whatsoever as to what was actually written on them.

“The book of Mormon begins with a story about a family of Israelites who were committed by God to go to America in 600 BC. We learn from the book that the American Indians, who were unfortunate enough to be discovered in 1492, are cursed, black-skin descendants of one of those Israelites named Laman. Because he was bad, God made his descendants black. Laman’s descendants, who are known as Lamanites, were lazy and wicked, and they killed all the white people, who were the descendants of Laman’s brother Nephi.... All of this explains why Columbus found no white people when he landed on the shores of America - only black-skinned, ‘loathsome’ people.”

God later commanded Joseph Smith to marry lots of women, which he reluctantly did because he was forced to do so by an angel with a flaming sword.

Smith was eventually murdered by a mob, and Brigham Young, who believed that people lived on the moon and the sun, took his place. Soon after that, there was an incredible, deadly, painful exodus of Mormon pioneers to the Utah Territory.

The success of Mormonism is largely due to a three-step program of child indoctrination. First, parents are committed to indoctrinate their children. Second, Parents and others responsible for teaching children are given detailed instructions on how to instruct them. Third, they do it. Finally, Mormon children are taught that truth is proved through feelings, which means that conflicting empirical evidence can never prove the church or its leaders to be wrong.

According to Mormons, they all began on planet that revolved around Kobol, a giant star at the center of the universe. On that planet lived the Heavenly Father, a polygamist (whom everyone lived with as “Intelligences”), who created the earth – and indicated that those who followed the Mormon rules would become Gods.

God’s first two children were Jesus and Lucifer, who had “issues,” and from there on, it’s pretty much variations of Old Testament stuff. As time passed, the church forbade the drinking of alcohol, coffee and tea. Tobacco is also forbidden, and any disagreement with or criticism of church leaders is absolutely out of bounds. As apostle N. Eldon Tanner said, “When the prophet speaks, the debate is over.”

When Utah wanted to become a state, the prophet du jour received a convenient revelation: polygamy would no longer be required. Statehood followed. The Mormon Church expanded, and now fields 50,000 missionaries at all times.

Among the many rewards these missionaries promise is an attractive, three-tiered, end-of-life bonus that trumps the Christian scheme.

First of all, there’s no hell, and the bottom tier, the Telestial Kingdom that’s reserved for serious sinners, is a paradise compared to earth.

The middle tier, the Terrestrial Kingdom, houses the more devout, who can look forward to occasional visits from Jesus and the even more saintly believers who inhabit the Celestial Kingdom, the Penthouse, one might say. How cool is that!

That said, even for Mormons, there really is a hell, and it appears when members attempt to leave the Church, an adventure that Jack Worthy experienced – and aptly describes in the final pages of *The Mormon Cult*.

