

Belonging

Covenant Group Session 2009-2010, First Parish in Cambridge, Unitarian Universalist

Written by Rev. Rebecca Benefiel Bijur based on a 12/5/09 sermon by Rev. Fred Small
“The Destiny of Diversity”, found at <http://www.firstparishcambridge.org/flexinode/table/15>

Opening Words and Chalice Lighting

I will sing a new song. As difficult as it is, I must learn the new song . . . capable of meeting the new need. I must fashion new words born of all the new growth of my life, my mind and my spirit. I must prepare for new melodies that have never been mine before . . . How I love the old familiarity of the wearied melody—how I shrink from the harsh discords of the new untried harmonies. [May I] rejoice with each new day and delight my spirit in each fresh unfolding. I will sing, this day, a new song

- Howard Thurman, theologian and activist

Check-in

How is it with your spirit? What did you leave behind to be here today?

Reading

Litany of Diversity

In memory of the Rev. Marjorie Bowens-Wheatley

If the colors of our skin or the lands of our ancestors are different,

It need not divide us.

If the genders we claim are different,

It need not divide us.

If the stages in our lives are different,

It need not divide us.

If our means of achieving the common good are different,

It need not divide us.

If who we love and how we love are different,

It need not divide us.

If the spiritual paths we follow are different,

It need not divide us.

If our abilities to think and do are different,

It need not divide us.

If our resources are different,

It need not divide us.

If we join spirits and hearts,

Our differences will not divide us, but deeply bind us together.

-Michael Sallwasser

Questions for Contemplation

- Describe a situation or experience when you felt that you didn't belong, or were excluded. How did it feel?
- Describe a situation or experience when you felt that you truly belonged. How did it feel?

Check-out: Likes and Wishes

Closing Words and Extinguishing of Chalice

We have a lot more humanity to learn about; a lot more practicing to do, with a lot more people than we are used to We will have to learn to love each other more, and in better ways than we do right now. We will have to learn to forgive each other more and in better ways, than we are used to doing. We . . . want our churches . . . to be safe. But safety is a relative term when it comes to religious community. For if we are really practicing what it means to be human, in an ever widening circle of humanity, our congregations may become some of the most dangerous places we know, because they will be come faithful communities of change

-Rosemary Bray McNatt
Unitarian Universalist minister

Our covenant

- To abide by the below set of covenantal statements we developed together.
- To engage in at least one service project to the congregation or larger world.
- To hold an "empty chair" so as to always welcome new members (both into the group as well as into the larger program).
- To make meetings a high priority.
- *Insert the covenant your group developed here.*