

UU Small Group Ministry Network

Can't We Just Get Along?

First Unitarian Church of Wilmington, Delaware, by Rev. Michelle Collins, 2013

Chalice Lighting, by Jalal ad-Din Rumi

If ten lamps are present in one place, each differs from another,
Yet you distinguish whose radiance is whose when you focus on the light.
In the field of spirit there is no division; no individuals exist.

Check In

Reading: from *Acts of Faith*, by Eboo Patel

One of the most important questions of our time: in a world of passionate religiosity and intense interaction, how will people from different faith backgrounds engage one another?
...Religious pluralism is a form of proactive cooperation that affirms the identity of the constituent communities while emphasizing that the well-being of each and all depends on the health of the whole. It is the belief that the common good is best served when each community has a chance to make its unique contribution.
...Pluralism is not a default position, an autopilot mode. Pluralism is an intentional commitment that is imprinted through action. It requires deliberate engagement with difference, outspoken loyalty to others, and proactive protection in the breach. You have to choose to step off the faith line onto the side of pluralism, and then you have to make your voice heard.
(pages xiv, xv, and xix)

Discussion & Sharing Questions:

- Can you think of a time when you witnessed people with differing beliefs about God or religion working well together? What helped to make that happen?
- On the other hand, can you think of a time when you witnessed people with differing beliefs about God or religion in conflict or tension? A time in this church or in another religious community that you were part of?
- How do you feel when you witness religion-based tension or conflict?
- The pluralism that Patel talks about is proactive and is more than tolerance and just getting along. What does it take to create that, here in this church or in our community?
- What are some ways that you could be part of creating and nurturing that pluralism?

Closing Thoughts

Extinguishing the Chalice