

Pedestals, cracked and not

Kitsap Unitarian Universalist Fellowship, Bremerton, WA, Rev. Liz Stevens. 2006-2007

Opening Reading:

“A Note” by Wislawa Szymborska

Life is the only way
to get covered with leaves,
catch your breath on the sand,
rise on wings;

to be a dog,
or stroke its warm fur;

to tell pain
from everything it's not;

to squeeze inside events,
dawdle in views,
to seek the least of all possible mistakes.

An extraordinary chance
to remember for a moment
a conversation held
with the lamp switched off;

and if only once
to stumble upon a stone,
end up soaked in one downpour or another,

mislaid your keys in the grass;
and to follow a spark on the wind with your eyes;
and to keep on not knowing
something important.

Discussion Questions:

Can you remember a time when someone you admired very much let you down? What happened? How did it feel? How did you react?

Can admiration and an honest awareness of imperfection peacefully coexist? How does it work for you?

Do you admire yourself? Why or why not?

Closing Reading:

“Salvation” by Lynn Ungar

By what are you saved? And how?
Saved like a bit of string,
tucked away in a drawer?
Saved like a child rushed from
a burning building, already
singed and coughing smoke?
Or are you salvaged
like a car part – the one good door
when the rest is wrecked?

Do you believe me when I say
you are neither salvaged nor saved,
but salved, anointed by gentle hands
where you are most tender?
Haven't you seen
the way snow curls down
like a fresh sheet, how it
covers everything,
makes everything
beautiful, without exception?