

“We Are the UUs, Loving, Caring UUs, Everywhere we go people wanna know, who we are, where we come from? So we tell them, We Are the UUs, Loving, Caring UUs. Everywhere we go people wanna know...”

So goes a chant from my high school days. Only it was Mighty, Mighty Trojans rather than Loving, Caring UU. But wouldn't it be nice to have such a simple way to explain to our friends and family who we are. How do you pull together 400 plus years of history, two denominations, 1100 churches and 300,000 members? Particularly when we encourage freedom and diversity of thought.

Freedom, Reason and Tolerance, a Unitarian motto, no longer fits. Nor does, “The Fatherhood of God; The Brotherhood of Man; The Leadership of Jesus; Salvation by Character; the progress of mankind onward and upward forever.” The Universalist “Deeds, not Creeds,” doesn't encapsulate all of who we are. And I too struggle when questioned to remember the exact wording of the seven principles.

Often when I am describing Unitarian Universalism I take just a few of the principles, like the inherent worth and dignity of every person, acceptance of one another, justice equity and compassion, the interdependent web of all existence and then explain what they mean.

But there are some basic things we can tell others about who we are. We stand on the side of love, the side of justice for all living things. We believe in community, that anything can be accomplished if we work together. We believe in reason when it comes to religious exploration. We know that people come to faith and experience faith differently and we honor that difference. What else would you add? What would you say?

The hard part is to begin speaking. Do you wait until someone asks you about UUism? Do you slip into a conversation that they might really enjoy coming to your church? Do say, “I have this wonderful, supportive community of which I think you would be a terrific part? I think the most important thing when talking about your faith is to tell people what excites you; why you come to this church; and what keeps you coming back.

It takes practice and courage to talk to others about your faith but it is a significant part of who we each are.

See you in Church!

Rev. Dr. Kristen L. Harper