

In the Spirit

We had a wonderful discussion last Sunday during our “Foundations of Unitarian Universalism” session, which is part of our Path To Membership series. I like to start these sessions by quoting Professor Diana Eck, who said that all religions are a stream of argument, and by explaining that both Unitarianism and Universalism began as heretical Protestant arguments.

Margot, our newest member, commented later during our historical survey that this heretical instinct to question, challenge and stand at the margins of the orthodox and the traditional is very much a living legacy for today’s UUs. And she is right. Having been a Unitarian Universalist all of my life, it is always a delight to see this faith tradition through the eyes of a newcomer. We are reverent heretics, asking why, and how, and “how does that make sense” and “why would people cling to or perpetuate beliefs that are so obviously harmful.” We are perpetual seekers after new truth and understanding.

Next week is Holy Week on the Christian calendar and the Passover festival for the Jewish community: the time of year when we become especially aware of the uneasy and unreconciled sibling relationship between Judaism and Christianity. Because of UUism’s respect for world religions and UU clergy being happy to officiate at interfaith marriages, many active UUs have one parent from each faith tradition and may have a self-appointed identity as reconcilers between them. It is a complicated time for us. But for all of us, whatever our hyphenate UU labels, let this be a time of appreciating the way that ancient stories and experiences resonate over many long centuries to speak to us and instruct us in moral, emotional, artistic, spiritual and political ways today. What we believe will likely be in constant flux as we evolve and refine our ideas over time. But who we are in our insistence on questioning received certainties will remain consistent. Thank you, Margot, for articulating our common ground so eloquently.

In the spirit of liberation,

Rev. Vicki