

## Ministerial Musings

*"It's a blessing we were born,  
and it matters what we do with our lives,  
What we know about god is a piece of the truth,  
And we don't have to do it alone."*

These words were the focal point of my sermon on Flower Communion Sunday this past June. They come to us from Unitarian Universalist "Chalice Camp", which was developed by Laila Ibrahim and Rev. Sheri Prud'homme. And I've been so taken with them that I shared them as my "Faith Matters" article for the local newspaper (*Home News Tribune*).

As we move into summer-mode, I think it's worth restating this simple but profound wisdom. Summer is the time when we slow down... for those of us "ruled" by the school calendar, this is the break we've been longing for, that children and youth celebrate. It's time at the pool or in the backyard or at camp. It's heading down the shore or into the mountains or in the garden. It's reading books we've postponed tackling.

Even if you are not "off" for the summer, there is a shift in the pace of things and hopefully a opportunity for greater relaxation and a chance to refocus. And that's a perfect time to reflect on what really matters.

When are given a chance to really feel and move with the cycles of nature, even if it is in the abstract, we realize what a precious gift this life can be. Fragile as it is, this blessing is ours to share. So this little bit of Unitarian Universalist "theology" can be helpful for all of us to remember.

*It's a blessing we were born.* What we make of our birth - the fact that we are here, that we are alive, that we have been given this gift of life - colors everything we do. So we might ask ourselves how would it feel to go through life knowing yourself to be a blessing? How does this shape our choices in life - or the way we look at misfortune or difficulty? Or how we accept or celebrate what is good?

*It matters what we do with our lives.* If it is a blessing to be born, than this blessing requires some response, some gratitude. We have a responsibility to pay back, or pay it forward. Our lives and the living of them matter and will make a difference - for good or ill.

*What we know about god is a piece of the truth.* We need to accept that we do NOT know everything - we have but a piece of truth. And it also reminds us that we live in a diverse world with different people... we need to be comfortable with difference and know how to lovingly disagree, and to embrace all of creation's diversity.

*We don't have to do it alone.* Ah, this is the best part. To be accepted in community - to live among the people who know you and can lay a claim on your affections - that makes the blessings flow every wider, like the proverbial pebble tossed in a pond. And it gives us courage to really live as blessings in this world.

And so the circle continues, as these four simple truths cycle back on each other, one leading to another. So even if life gets hectic or feels unbearable, take these summer moments to see the blessings in nature, in the world around us, in one another... and most of all deep within ourselves.

*In the faith, with hope and love,  
-- Rev. Susan*