

Stewardship Moment #4 – Deity is Derived from Belonging

So far we have looked at the uniqueness of Unitarian Universalism from a few different angles. We have noted that we are the Gratitude People, we have taken the terms Unitarian and Universalist and made them relevant to the 21st century, and we have briefly reviewed our legacy in American History. Today I want to reflect on our unique perspective on God. Throughout history, a vast array of religions have developed views of God, and handed them down to their adherents as “things to be believed.” In many cases the beliefs were forced on the rank and file believers by whatever priesthood was in place. It’s an age-old routine. “Here is your God – believe in Him (or Her) or else!”

To our credit, Unitarian Universalists have deviated from that norm. Unlike most Christians, we don’t reach back to something like the Nicean Creed or the Apostle’s creed for our understanding of the divine – any more than modern medicine would reach back that many centuries for an understanding of the human body.

Rather, Unitarian Universalists have continued to evolve our understanding of ultimate reality so it conforms to everything else we know. As Galen Guengerich puts it, “We understand our experience of God (though not all of us would use that term) as **an experience of belonging** – not just to a family, or a nation, or even a galaxy, but to everything: **the experience of ultimate belonging**. The **experience** of God intimately and extensively connects us to everything – all that is present in our lives and our world, as well as all that is past and all that is possible. In a word, God is the **experience of possibility**.”

We at Second Unitarian Church continue in that tradition. Our connection to the divine – whatever our understanding or definition of that might involve – is inherently wrapped up in our sense of belonging. We belong to the Universe, we belong to each other, and we belong to this unique congregation. It is this sense of belonging that motivates us to invest in the vitality of this church. From it we receive richness of life, the joy of fellowship, and guidance for our journeys; and into it we contribute our perspectives, our effort, and our material resources. We belong to Second Unitarian, and it belongs to us.