

## Stewardship Moment #5 – Freedom

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 made the terms Unitarian and Universalist relevant to the 21<sup>st</sup> century, we have reviewed our legacy in American History, and we have understood that our concept of God involves belonging.

We Americans have some confused ideas about the concept of freedom. Often we seem to idolize heroes who demonstrate their freedom by acting alone – the Lone Ranger, Superman, and Henry David Thoreau, as well as Kris Kristoferson’s observation that “freedom’s just another word for nothing left to lose.”

A better perspective, however, might state that “you can’t be free until you belong.” As Dr. Galen Guengerich observes, “You’re not free to be alive until you belong to [the] earth. You’re not free to enjoy the benefits of being American until you belong as a citizen, and you’re not free to play in the World Series unless you belong to one of the teams.”

That also applies to this congregation. If you wish to truly experience the richness and depth of life here at Second Unitarian, well, membership is a key component of that interaction. There is a freedom that appears when we find ourselves in a place that sustains us, and when we fellowship with people who nurture us. Collaboration with other members is a key component of life at a Unitarian church.

And, one key part of that collaboration – and membership – is our commitment to fund and support the efforts of this congregation. We as a body can’t interact in a meaningful way without the life blood of pledges, financial contributions, and volunteerism. Unfortunately, we can’t just “write a grant” and see our funding magically appear. The good news, though, is that each of us has the freedom to contribute at a level that reflects our financial ability, and symbolizes our level of passion for this church.

This year, as we near the time for the Stewardship Campaign, let each of us ponder what we can do to freely supply the needed investment in OUR congregation’s future and success.