

Some of those present today said they are interested in the resources I mentioned in my pulpit. Putting them on the web in my Pastor Bud's Buzz section under today's date may be the best approach Under the pulpit title "Compassion and Self Preservation." The audio could be loaded later.

1. The two Rumi poems are from "The Soul of Rumi" translated by Coleman Barks
<http://www.colemanbarks.com/>
2. This is the link to the Honda Motor Company short videos
http://dreams.honda.com/?ef_id=SuYNEdBbricAAGy5ckQAAAdA:20101202225922:s#/video_in

The poem "I Give You Back" by Joy Harjo comes from a book of poetry entitled "She Had Some Horses" by Joy Harjo. This is her home page
<http://www.miracosta.edu/home/gflore/harjo.htm>.

This link is to Harjo reading "I Give You Back"
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DAYCf2Gdycc&feature=BF&list=QL&index=1>

4. This is the excerpt from "Belonging: The Meaning of Membership", Report from The Commission on Appraisal of the Unitarian Universalist Association, 2001.

The Commission on Appraisal (COA) is charged to "review any function or activity of the Association which in its judgment will benefit from an independent review and report its conclusions to a regular General Assembly." The Commission meets four times a year—once at General Assembly, and three working meetings held in Boston and other locations throughout the country. During most of their meetings, they hold open hearings to which they invite local Unitarian Universalists so they can hear as many of the different voices of our movement as possible. Here is a quote from that 2001 report *Belonging: The Meaning of Membership*"

"[Disillusionment] is almost inevitable in the course of one's relationship to a congregation. The congregation that is supposed to be a loving community is sometimes beset with conflicts. The congregation that is supposed to be affirming and gentle can become narrow and unfeeling.

Decisions can be made with which we disagree. People can become disagreeable. These are the same problems the apostle Paul dealt with almost two thousand years ago in establishing the first Christian communities. The church (our Society) is a human institution and it can become all-too human. When such difficulties arise some walk away, others step back. But fortunately there are also those who remain steadfast through these times of disillusionment, whose loyalty grows beyond it. They are not better or worse than the others, just different. Out of their disillusionment grows a loyalty less to the institution and more to the values and ideals that the institution seeks to serve and embody. It recognizes that the institutional as well as personal failure is virtually inevitable. This is loyalty of a high order. It requires extraordinary patience, tolerance, and the capacity to forgive. These are spiritual gifts, learned in real community.

Those who have gained these capacities, these gifts, are in the deepest sense members: people who are committed for the long haul, those who have loyalty not just to what the church is but what it could be, what it can become through their persistence and with their assistance. They are committed in other words, not so much to the institution as to

the values and ideals it exists to promote and uphold - - even in its periods of failure to do so. They are patient with brash young ministers and tolerant of plodding older ones. They are cheerleaders in the good times and steady supporters through the bad. They keep perspective, they take a longer view.”

5. This is the essay of Dale Arnink, minister emeritus, Unitarian Church of Los Alamos, NM wrote this on a recent email post to covchat.

I never seem to be able to resist joining a conversation about reason because I am grateful reason guided me out of Christian fundamentalism into humanism and on to the ‘rational religion’ of Unitarian Universalism. My contribution (to chat) is a shortened conclusion of a study I made some years ago of the concept of Reason as used from the Enlightenment through post-modernism:

It turns out that Reason is not what it was proclaimed to be. As the machine was a dominating image for understanding all things through much of the Enlightenment period, I now liken what they took Reason to be to a machine. Reason was a mechanism owned by the human in much the way each human had a liver, heart, and lungs.

Reason, viewed as a machine, was thought to be common to all thinking creatures. Fueled and operated according to its own internal requirements, any such machine will operate exactly like all the others. Reason is thus universal to thinking creatures.

Reason as a machine has no personality. It is passionless, disinterested, disengaged, impartial, unbiased, or, in a word, objective.

Reason as a machine is reliable. Reason will crank out correctly certain conclusions if only used properly by the owner. If the appropriate data are fed in the results will be conclusive proofs, truth.

Reason as a machine is subject to improper functioning if its gears get gummed up. Clogging agents are such things as personal emotions and values, traditions, cultural biases, authoritarian assertions, faiths, superstitions. Clean up the machine, keep it clean, and all will be well.

But Reason is not a machine in anyone's head. Reason is a social process; it is intersubjectivity. Reason is tied up with things which are drenched with time, history and circumstances: language, concepts, assumptions, interests. The individual mind, the individual thinker, only participates in these things, does not own them.

“Just as we are born into language and never possess it but only use it, more or less well, so we are born into reason, which is not a machine in our head but a social process of which we partake, more or less well. Language is a social product with the marks of its history born along with it. Individuals learn a pre-existent language more or less well and more or less modify it and pass it on to others in a broad social stream far exceeding any individual. Vast portions of our individual, even private, thought processes are dependent upon this language which is not a possession of ours.

In the same way we acquire as a social product what is "rational" for "us." ("They" acquire a different "rationality.") We acquire basic assumptions, facts, methods, procedures, values, directions, interests which we use as reason. Language and reason are acquired from our social milieu and dialogue with others and each continues as dialogue. Even reasoning with oneself is an inner dialogue of several voices.

Mind may be dependent upon an individual brain, but it is also participant in society, a group mind. For language and reason are group processes of which the individual takes part, in which the individual participates by becoming a partner in the dialogue. Without the group there is no language (Wittgenstein: there are no private languages) and there is no reason. One cannot think for one's self if one has always had to think by one's self. Again we [UUs] see that an undue emphasis upon the individual and the individual mind has distorted our understanding of the essential importance of community to the individual, including the individual's thinking as a rational creature.

Reason is intelligent conversation. The Enlightenment was correct to note that that conversation is self-correcting and open to new insights, not when it is controlled by critical and skeptical voices, but certainly when it includes and allows critical and skeptical voices. Objectivity has a wider basis and more perspectives that can be included to refine one another.

This is a link <http://www.commondreams.org/view/2010/12/01-8> to the essay "American Hitler?" by Bruce Luske and published on Wednesday, December 1, 2010 by CommonDreams.org

This is the link to the recent interview with Noam Chomsky on Democracy Now http://www.democracynow.org/blog/2010/11/30/noam_chomsky_on_the_economy_us_midterm_elections_climate_change_haiti_and_more

Pastor Bud

