

“Children of the Rainbow”

A Reflection by Jim FitzGerald, Interim Director of Religious Education

First Parish Unitarian Universalist

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This morning’s theme “This Side of the Rainbow” has prompted a great deal of reflection.

I recall one afternoon when driving on I-90, I drove around a bend to be greeted by this *enormous* rainbow that arched over the highway.

Have you ever noticed what happens when a rainbow *does* appear like that?

Those walking in a rushed fashion and those driving with only their destination in mind – all slow down to a complete stop just to take in the sight.

It made me realize that rainbows teach us to slow down and thoughtfully take in all that is around us. It forces our minds away from the everyday routine and instead invites us to dream for awhile.

The theme for this particular reflection is “Children of the Rainbow.”

There are two sources of spirituality for me that I draw upon when thinking about this theme – “children of the rainbow.”

The first is a story from the Gospel of Matthew. The other..... from the Muppets.

In Matthew’s story, those grown ups following Jesus listening to what he called “the kingdom of heaven” became so concerned with status that they asked Jesus, “Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?”

In response, Jesus called for a little child to come over and stand among them. “The truth is,” Jesus replied, “unless you change and become like little children, you will not enter the kingdom of heaven.”

The second spiritual source equally important to me comes from the Muppets (or more accurately, Paul Williams and Kenny Ascher who wrote “The Rainbow Connection” for the 1979 motion picture, *The Muppet Movie*).

The words to the song (as you’ll hear a little later in the service) speak as powerfully as Matthew does in Christian scripture.

“Some day we’ll find it, the rainbow connection, the lovers, the dreamers, and me.”

“Have you heard voices, I’ve heard them calling my name. I’ve heard it too many times to ignore it; it’s something that I’m supposed to do.”

I find these two stories, resting side by side, to be so meaningful. On one hand a song calling us to be lovers and dreamers and on the other hand a scripture story calling us to change so that we can be more like children.

It seems appropriate that this be my reflection as we begin our new year in Religious Education here at First Parish Unitarian Universalist in Cohasset.

What better way to be a dreamer and be more child-like than being involved in the RE program.

I'm happy to say that over 30 adult members of this congregation have decided to offer their time and talent to the children participating in the RE program this year. I'm not surprised. There is something magical about sitting in our opening worship circle each Sunday morning – lighting the chalice and listening to each other's joys and concerns and be overjoyed by such animated faces.

The RE program still needs some help from congregation members. Even though over 30 adults will offer their time, more are needed. We still need teachers and assistant teachers, opening worship circle leaders, mentors for the Coming of Age program, and still yet, advisors for our youth group are badly needed.

All of this could cause an Interim DRE a lot of worry. But this Sunday, the theme, the music, and the readings invite us to not worry, but rather to slow ourselves down from this very busy time of year, to take in all the beauty that is around us and in us. This Sunday, as we begin a new year, we're called to be more like children, to love and dream freely. When we do this, we are – regardless of our age – children of the rainbow.