THE KNIGHTS WHO SAY “WE”!

Our recent annual auction theme was Knights of the Round Table (see curiously personalized poster below), so I’ve been thinking in Such Realms of late. Meanwhile, at our also recent regional ministers’ meetings (probing the question, “Whose Are We?”), the subject of covenant led one presenter to comment that when individuals in a group agree on some common understanding, “I”s become “WE”s.

So, I thought, UUs could be considered The Knights Who Say “We”! (an unabashed, if oblique reference to the influential comedy film, “Monty Python and the Holy Grail”). Over my 20+ years in parish ministry I have certainly noticed how some members take a bit longer to refer to the group as “we.” For whatever (probably good) reason, they linger in the “you” mode when commenting on aspects of congregational life.

At some point, though, the I hopefully becomes a WE, as a deeper connection emerges, relationships grow and a seat opens at the round table of community, facing in. Saying “we” when speaking of one’s congregation indicates a commitment of the heart, a “leaning in” toward the center of that group, an eager identification that adds to one’s individuality and grounds the self in relationship with others of all ages.

There is almost no other place in our culture where one can garner the value found in knowing and being known by people of all ages—regularly, significantly, joyfully experiencing the gamut of the human age span interacting together under a congregational banner. Such a round table has a diversity of seats.

When our Pacific Northwest ministers gathered to explore “Whose Are We?”—the sense of covenant that binds us around the inclusive table of UUism—we were invited to muse on a quartet of productive angles and I offer here a brief recounting of my reflections, thus inspired. I suspect any Knights Who Say “We” (ordained and otherwise) can gain insight from also considering these four approach paths, which ask about “the quality of one’s relationship and covenant with Source, Call, Community and Colleagues.”

SOURCE is as good a word as any for that ineffable mystery greater than the sum of the parts. The quality of my relationship and covenant with Source is at once earthy and cosmic. This planet is literally the source of my being, plus where I will return eventually. And the Earth itself is embedded in a Universe of immeasurable and unknowable dimension, a largess with which I try to find ultimate balance and humble comfort.
A CALL is what anyone knows as an inner drive toward resounding authenticity, offering opportunities to live out of one’s own passion and gifts. For me, I have tried to listen deeply for this call throughout my life, at some moments suspecting that there was something ahead that was awaiting my energies. I feel fulfilled when I can honor such purposeful momentum, which tends to reflect an ethic of service toward the good of the whole.

The quality of my relationship and covenant with COMMUNITY is very much what has followed from a longtime call in that direction. I find a deep grounding in the often messy but dynamic process of a group mind, amid multiple perspectives. Patience and accountability are essential companions on this path.

As are COLLEAGUES, those connected to us in affinities of one sort or another. On my particular journey, with many beloved clergy colleagues, I find strength in a ministry of presence, what is sometimes called “just showing up.” So I try hard to attend celebratory functions and be attentive to those who share this curious craft with me. (I married one, even.)

Our engagement at the round table of life is seen in the quality of our relationship and covenant with Source, Call, Community and Colleagues. As Knights Who Say “We,” let us continue journeying together toward a future of shared hope, called to add our creative presence and multiple perspectives into the human mix that animates this Earthy domain and moves us to serve the Good.

Fondly,

[Signature]

"THESE VARIOUS AND SUNDRY ITEMS SHALL SURELY HELP FILL THE COFFERS OF OUR BELOVED CEDARS!"

Gather your gear, good Knights of the Cedar Table! Scour your helmets and castles for those Unique & Precious items that yearn for a new home—help make our annual auction one for the ages! Mark your calendars, call the sitter, polish your plate mail...

~~ SATURDAY, NOV. 5 IN ROYAL WEBSTER HALL ~~