

Sermon Looking Back
The First Unitarian Universalist Society of Middleborough
December 27, 2015 10:30 a.m.

Sermon Looking Back

This week in between Christmas and the New Year can be such a spiritual no-man's land for many of us. After all the celebration, we go back to work, or take a break to recuperate. It is one of the many reasons I enjoy the idea of Kwanzaa – very deliberately created to start on December 26th and end on New Year's.

It speaks to the yearning for oneness – for us perhaps not of one belief, but of one yearning to be whole.

Let's take some time to understand what keeps us from feeling whole.

We'll engage in a spiritual exercise. It's a combination of using our imagination and doing something at the same time.

This morning, imagine you are on an airplane hurtling from one holiday to the next and you're so busy you're worried you won't get to your next holiday in time.

Imagine you discover you're wearing a parachute, and you choose to jump out of the plane. Take in the view of the past year.

Go back to September, to the end of summer and the start of school.

Go back to June, to the end of school and the start of summer.

Go back to springtime;

go back to last winter when the snow was piled so high

we thought spring would never come.

Think about all the things that kept you from feeling whole this year. Think about all the things that made you unhappy, or made you doubt yourself

that might have made you lose your grip on your rip cord for a moment. Think about all the things that got you down in spirits.

And when you've thought of these things,

write down at least one thing

that you do not want to bring with you into the new year.

Instead of Unity, was there a time when you felt alone and disconnected?

Instead of Self-Determination, was there a time when you felt like everything you did was for someone else? When you felt anxious and insecure?

Instead of being Responsible to others, was there a time when you ignored others, or failed to help someone when you could have?

Instead of being Productive, was there a time when you could have tried to do something good for yourself and others, but it was just too much effort?

Instead of feeling like you had a Purpose, were there times when you had no idea what you were going to do?

Instead of being Creative, were there times when you felt like you had nothing unique about yourself, nothing that made you special that you wanted to share?

Instead of having Faith and believing in others, were there times when you didn't even think that others believed in you?

These are things better left behind.

They weigh us down and make us fall faster.

These are things to let go.

These are things to forgive, and to be forgiven.

Look at what you have written down.
In your imagination, let it go and pull your imaginary rip cord.
Take your card and turn it over.
Write down something that happened last year that made you feel
Good and strong; helpful and connected and full of hope.
And if you want to, let us collect your card as a spiritual offering, or keep it as a reminder to yourself.

And if it so happened that last year, nothing good outweighed the bad
Then, right now, take that card and tear it into pieces.
Tear it into tiny pieces
Small enough so that you can't read the words.
They don't matter because they aren't important anymore.
You are letting them go.
Time to pull that imaginary rip cord and start to float

Make confetti.
You can put it in your pocket and take it home with you
and throw it up in the air
when the clock strikes midnight on New Year's Eve.
Or, you can let us collect it and recycle it.
In any case, let go of regrets and negativity
and create a bit of colorful happiness and do a bit of good in the world.
You will be so much lighter,
Your spirit will float.

Your parachute is now floating in the air,
carrying you gently to the ground.

All our parachutes have landed.
We arrive where a new sky is above us.
We arrive at this land, a resting place for us.

And Soon love soon
We will be as one.