



## Together on the Journey

**Rev. Bruce Beisner**  
**Minister**

One of my esteemed professors in seminary used to say that every minister really has only one sermon in them and we all just find multiple ways to preach it from Sunday to Sunday. He also said that every great religion has a single core idea at its heart and its followers just find diverse rituals and teachings to express it. Several weeks ago I offered a Sunday morning message about this and asked you to consider with me what the single core idea of our church and our UU faith might be. Within all the diversity of interests, theologies, social justice causes and social gatherings that form the ministries of BAUUC, is there some simple truth that we are all trying to live out together?

In the sermon on April 15, I offered up how I've come to answer that big question. I think that no matter what we're doing, believing or enjoying together in this church, it all comes back to two central affirmations: "All life is sacred" and "We're all in this together." These two statements, which are based in our first and seventh UU principles, call us to try to live with **Reverence, Compassion and Responsibility.**

I chose these words carefully. I chose **Reverence** rather than respect. We talk a lot about respect. But respect has the connotation of approval and there are many ideas and action that we can't approve. Reverence is about honoring the power and presence of people and ideas, even if we don't always agree with them. I chose **Compassion** rather than love. Love holds broad meanings and can be somewhat abstract. Compassion is about suffering with and celebrating with and being really present for one another. And I chose **Responsibility** rather than freedom because if our faith asks nothing of us, it probably has nothing to offer us. And we can't just profess our UU principles, we must try to live them. I believe that whether we're studying a Biblical story or hearing a foreign policy speaker, we're doing it out of reverence, compassion and responsibility. Whether we're holding up signs on the street to rally for justice or taking a meal to a sick friend, it all comes back to these three core callings.

My conclusions and my words for this don't need to be your conclusions or ideas. And I encourage you to consider what you think forms the core of your understanding of our church and our approach to religion. And then come and share some of what your feeling and thinking with other church members and with me on Wednesday nights May 16, 23 and 30 at 7:00pm. I'll be leading an open discussion class where we'll be exploring what it is that drives us and centers us.

Blessings!

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Bruce".