

January 05, 2011

In Theory: Looking back, looking forward

Question:

As you look back on 2010, what most affected you spiritually and challenged your belief system? And how will that impact you as you confront 2011?

Rev. Dr. Betty's Answer:

At this time of year, we often are inspired to make New Year's resolutions. And, in this age when there are many in our society and our world who seem to be pointing to divisions among people of various religious faiths, I believe that the most important resolutions we can make as individuals and members of religious groups are to look for the ways in which we are alike, rather than the ways in which we are different. We may not share the same religious language, and we may not always agree on the methods to use to achieve our goal. But I am convinced that we can still find ways to work together for the good of all, and I am saddened when we fail to live up to that high calling.

With that in mind, I am inspired in this New Year by the following words, written by Unitarian Universalist minister The Rev. Dr. Mark Morrison-Reed:

"The central task of the religious community is to unveil the bonds that bind each to all. There is a connectedness, a relationship discovered amid the particulars of our own lives and the lives of others. Once felt, it inspires us to act for justice. It is the church that assures us that we are not struggling for justice on our own, but as members of a larger community. The religious community is essential, for alone our vision is too narrow to see all that must be seen, and our strength too limited to do all that must be done. Together, our vision widens and our strength is renewed."

I hope that as people of faith, whatever our religious tradition, we will all be encouraged to live up to the best that we know and to help make the world a better place for those of the multiplicity of racial, cultural, national, and religious groups in our country and the world. May we work together to live our shared resolutions into being in 2011 and beyond.

Rev. Dr. Betty Stapleford

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