The Inherent Worth and Dignity of Every Being

Chalice Lighting

All too often, we pace the geometries of our walled gardens, believing we are traversing the whole of creation. With spirits of discovery, let us uncover the mysteries nested in our routines, with the eagerness of children, let us seek out the secrets unfolding in our peripheral vision. Let us behold each fellow creature with reverence; let us greet each day with praise and thanksgiving. For life is a gift of incomprehensible magnitude; our lives are voyages with unknowable destinations. Along the way, let us meet, kiss, challenge, and support one another, let us fashion a network of mutuality and extend it into the larger world. In these ways, we know the life of prayer.

- Rev. John Millspaugh

Check-In

How is it with your body, mind, spirit and heart?

Silence

Holding ourselves and each other in silent support

Deep Sharing/Deep Listening

1. How have other species enriched your life? Any instances or stories in particular you would like to share?

2. How do you currently care for or think about other species?

3. How do you define "being?" "worth?" "dignity?"

4. Would the proposed change to the First Principle impact your actions towards humans or other species, or how you care for or think about them?

5. What benefits and challenges might the process to change the First Principle mean for you, your congregation, or your communities?

6. What benefits and challenges would the actual change the First Principle mean for you, your congregation, or your communities?

7. Some question time and resources spent advocating to reduce suffering of nonhuman animals when there is so much human suffering in the world. How do you respond to this concern?

8. How do you think the First Principle relates to the Seventh Principle - respect for the interdependent web of existence of which we all are a part?

Check Out

How are you leaving this gathering? Gratitudes? Mournings?

Closing Words

May every creature abound in well-being and peace.
May every living being, weak or strong, the long and the small, the short and the medium-sized, the mean and the great, May every living being, seen or unseen, those dwelling far off, those living near by, those already born those waiting to be born, May all attain inward peace. Let no one deceive another. Let no one despise another in any situation. Let no one, from antipathy or hatred, wish evil to anyone at all. Just as a mother, with her own life, protects her only child from hurt, so within yourself foster a limitless concern for every living creature. Display a heart of boundless love for all the world in all its height and dept and broad extent. Love unrestrained, without hate or enmity. Then as you stand or walk, sit or lie, until overcome by drowsiness, devote your mind entirely to this: it is known as living the life divine. - Buddhist

**Background**

**Current First Principle:** We, the member congregations of the Unitarian Universalist Association, covenant to affirm and promote...

The inherent worth and dignity of every person;

**Proposed change:**

*The inherent worth and dignity of every being*

**To get connected**

First Principle Project Facilitator: Rev. LoraKim Joyner, DVM - amoloros@gmail.com

Google group: First Principle Project (https://groups.google.com/forum/#!forum/first-principle-project)

Facebook page: First Principle Project (https://www.facebook.com/groups/648805055153160/)