

A Career of Friendliness

On September 20th of this year we will celebrate Friendship Sunday here at Unity South Church. I first wrote about the power of friendship roughly a year after the tragic event that took place here in America referred to now as 9-11. It was then I was reminded of the title of a Unity School of Christianity pamphlet of a long time ago stating, "A Career of Friendliness is Open to All of Us." What an impact this little pamphlet had on me—the thought is that friendliness is a choice we can consciously make, and is an opportunity universally available to us all. Indeed we can make career changes to embrace the whole essence of friendship. A career of friendliness is not limited in the way a career for making a living can seem to be limited. This is one career we all can have in common. It is a career that can help make the world worthy of human habitation.

In the neighborhood or on school play grounds children often ask one another, "Can we be friends?" It is sad to sometimes hear one child refuse the invitation of another—thinking that the other has a problem just for asking—and assume undeserved power as a dispenser or withholder of friendship as a favor.

I sense the Quakers had it right and were creating a space in human consciousness for further spiritual evolution when they called themselves, "A Society of Friends." Such a name carries powerful intention and is potent with spiritual vibration that engenders consciousness evolution.

I ask you, "What gives me the right or audacity to invite you into 'my' friendship"—such a personal thing of choice? Is my invitation to you just a humble invitation to ask that together we may find a spiritual expression beyond what our individual egos can offer? Perhaps it is a gesture to open a corridor or a door into our beings whereby our imprisoned splendor can escape into the world. When I think of a celebration of Friendship, I am reminded of these lines from Kahil Gibran's Prophet:

"And let there be no purpose in friendship save the deepening of the spirit. For love that seeks ought but the disclosure of its own mystery—is not love but a net cast forth; and only the unprofitable is caught."

Is there really any game in town more satisfying than a career of friendship and friendliness with all?

Perhaps that answers why a man, over 80-years-old, with a stomach severely damaged from a would-be assassin's bullet, hunched down, shaking with severe case of Parkinson's disease, constantly ran around the world pleading with the world for peace, justice and humane treatment of one another. Why did Pope John Paul do what he did? No matter what you think of the Pope and the Catholic Church, you have to wonder, 'why did he do all these things with the proverbial 'one foot in the grave?'"

Please, don't say it is because he was preparing for heaven! I believe that he was too pre-occupied with the plight of the poor and the misery inflicted upon one another by warring humanity to think about the here-after. Why do people who care, care? You may be one of those people who has chosen a career of caring. If so, then you know how it feels to care, even if you don't know why. I have to say that many who have chosen a career of friendliness do so regardless of what they do for a living.

I believe this happens among people in churches too. In this citadel for the proclaiming of Divine purpose and upholding the high ideals of loving one another, sometimes we discover that we are among humans. And one of the things humans do is err, and in the process often damage their relationships with one another. In the heat of the human condition, we might lose sight of our vision of the Divine. However, there are always those souls who have chosen a career of friendliness who choose to work on rebuilding the temple and erecting new bridges of connection.

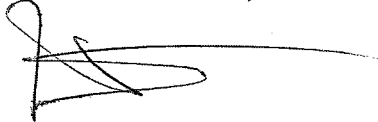
A career of friendliness is open to everyone. Have you chosen to enroll?

I believe friendship is a "whisper of the Divine essence" inviting us to breathe and radiate the same, that our world may be healed, transformed, and ready for the emergence of the first fully evolved human.

Won't you join us on Friendship Sunday on September 20, 2009 to celebrate the Divine in all of us!

Our Friendship Sunday is our humble attempt to open new doors to old friends and to friends we have yet to meet.

Your New Friend,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Festus Umeojiego', with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Rev. Festus