

What I Believe — by Earl C. — Sunday, June 27, 2010 Unitarian Universalist PEACE Fellowship, Raleigh, NC

1. I believe in a sense of humor to get me through the day and through life. Don't take life too seriously — it can drive you to drink!
2. I believe in looking forward and not dwelling on the past. Learn from the past, from my mistakes but don't let the rear view mirror get in the way of moving forward with life.
3. I believe in the natural laws which govern the universe and in the evolution of living from non living. If a God exists, it would be in the forces and beauty of nature which surround us. Steve's, "This I Believe" was very close to my own feeling on this subject.

A bit of a dilemma occurred five years ago when I planned on joining the Masons. I was told during my lodge interview that the only way for Free Masonry to make any sense was if I believed in a superior being. I didn't need to be a Christian as there are a number of Jews and Muslims who are also Masons. I only needed to believe in a God of some definition.

So how do I define "God?" Am I a Theist -Deist -Pantheist or something else?!

Probably I could be considered a pantheist. This philosophy has the view, which I share, "that the Universe (Nature) and God are identical or that the Universe (including Nature on Earth) is the only thing deserving the deepest kind of reverence. As such, Pantheism promotes the idea that "God" is better understood as a way of relating to Nature and the Universe as a whole -all that was, is and shall be -rather than as a transcendent, mental, personal or creator entity. Pantheists thus do not believe in a personal, anthropomorphic or creator God....The central ideas found in almost all versions of Pantheism are the Cosmos as an all-encompassing unity and the "sacredness" of Nature. (Wikipedia)

That said, I am one of the 19% of all Unitarian Universalists that profess an "Earth/Nature Centered Spirituality, according to **"Building Your Own Theology."** This natural spirituality recognizes our sense of oneness with the earth and its rhythms -the "interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part."

So, in sum, I try to respect Nature in all its forms while looking to the future and trying not to take myself too seriously or keeping a sense of humor. There are likely many more items I could add to my "I Believe" list but these were the first to come into my mind.

Remember that Nature may bat last in the lineup, but that it still owns the stadium.

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