

## Rev. Lane Campbell - Embody Love

Written by Rev. Lane Campbell  
Thursday, 18 May 2017 00:00

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I met a stranger a few weeks ago while walking back from a prayer march in Columbus. We had marched about a mile away, held prayer space with elected officials, police officers, and the mother of a young man who had been killed by police. We sang, prayed, listened, held silence, and the day had been quite full. I walked back with the women who had been leading us in song all evening long. Rain had started to fall and it was dark out. I looked around and introduced myself to one of the women walking back. We talked about our experiences of the prayer march together.

Early on in our conversation, she mentioned that her religious beliefs required her to extend love to every stranger, every person she meets. This woman is part of a much more conservative line of Christianity and I have to say I came to the conversation with a bit of bias. But she told me her religious tradition asks that she love the elected officials, even when they make decisions she disagrees with. Her church teaches her to love the police officers, even when they do wrong and do not protect those they are meant to serve. And her God calls her to love the brokenhearted mother who is deeply grieving the loss of her child.

Our conversation and connection in that moment inspired and challenged me. To truly embody love means to hold love for the folks I agree with as well as those I don't. This woman shared with me how this call has asked her to stretch and grow, to treat others truly how she wants to be treated.

I wonder with you all now how this congregation and how Unitarian Universalism asks you to stretch and grow into deeper love, into a love that embraces our enemies as well as our friends. And I'm not talking here about some kind of puppy dog love that feels good. I'm talking about a

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love that wants for the well-being and growth of another person. I'm talking about a love that calls us into greater accountability and that still nurtures our spirits as well as our intellect. And I'm talking about an embodied love, one that lives in our actions alongside our hearts and minds. Love at its deepest lives in our bodies and in our deeds.

We are living in difficult time to embody love with one another.

We are living in a time when we are divided beyond our wildest imaginings. Religiously, politically, economically, racially- our current context is divided and it has become harder to truly extend love to our enemies. When we talk about standing on the side of love, there is a side we are choosing to live on.

Where have you made the choice to embody love to someone who lives on a different side than you do?

Unitarian Universalism, and especially Universalism, offers us the challenge to live as if love is true and possible for every single person we meet. In our bodies, this can look like offering compassion to those we do not know. It can look like listening to that person you'd rather ignore. It can look like answering a call for justice while holding love in your heart for those who stand against your cause.

Love looks many different ways. Embody love by embodying boldness, authenticity, and gratitude in the world. May the embodiment help you to stretch and grow in the way only love can.