

# Belief System

Tatyana Nakashima

Before I begin, I would like to thank several people for being a part of my ChurchLife these past two years. First I'd like to thank Mrs. Leger and my mom for teaching Sunday school. I'd also like to thank my mentor Janet Robinson for sharing time with me. I've really enjoyed talking to her and getting to know her better and learning from her. Also, thank you Jaqui for putting together the Sunday school religious education program for all the years I've been in this church. I hope I will remain in your memories as you make your way to your new life. You will always remain in my heart. Finally, thanks to my dad for helping me put my thoughts together for this statement, and for correcting my English.

Let me start by saying that writing this was not an easy assignment for me. Though I've been a part of this church for all of my American life, religion is not the easiest thing to a Russian born girl with poor English skills. My beliefs tend to be a mix of ideas that I picked up from friends and school, as well as my parents and this church. I love going to our church school and being with my friends here, but I have to say, I can't easily state what we as Unitarian Universalists believe in. To be totally honest, I guess I am confused when it comes to religion. The coming of age program has forced me to take a closer look at church and religion, and at this point in my life, here is what I believe.

I believe you should have the choice to believe in what you want to believe in. This is America and America means freedom to me. Telling me what to believe in is not free and is wrong. I believe people should have a choice of where they go to church and why. Church should be a place where people are happy and can find peace. In the coming of age program, I visited different churches of many different religions. Visiting other churches was really fun, and it was interesting to see what other churches have to say and what they believe in. I found the Baptist church the most fun. I actually stayed awake. But when I really think about it, they were telling me what I should believe in and who I should believe in, and that is wrong. I liked this program because it helped me understand that the world has many different ways to look at life and religion and that there are many choices that will be open to me if I choose not to stay within the Unitarian Universalist tradition.

I believe in God, and that God created me to be who I am. I know I am different, and have always been. I am sometimes sad to be different and wish only to be like everyone else. Sometimes I feel stupid because I'm in Special Ed classes and other students make fun of me. I feel it is wrong and not cool to tease people for what makes them different or special. I'm glad God made everybody differently, because it would be very boring if everyone was exactly the same.

I am happy that I can be a part of this church where I have the freedom to state what I believe, and know that people here will support me in my choices. This church is like a best friend who will always listen to you no matter what. Best friends are important to me, so are family. They are always there for you, as different as you may be and as crazy as your choices may appear.

In closing I'd like to read a few lines from a song that my dad would sing to us when we were little. The song is "Everything Possible" by Fred Small. It says; "Don't be rattled by names, by taunts or games, but seek out spirits true. If you give your friends the best part of yourself,

they will give the same back to you. You can be anybody that you want to be, you can love whomever you will. You can travel any country where your heart leads and know I will love you still. You can live by yourself, you can gather friends around, you can choose one special one. And the only measure of your words and your deeds will be the love you leave behind when you're gone."

*Several people have inquired about the song Tatyana referenced in her statement. The song is 'Everything Possible' by Fred Small who turns out to be a UU minister in Littleton MA.*

### **Everything Possible**

We have cleared off the table, the leftovers saved,  
Washed the dishes and put them away  
I have told you a story and tucked you in tight  
At the end of your knockabout day  
As the moon sets its sails to carry you to sleep  
Over the midnight sea  
I will sing you a song no one sang to me  
May it keep you good company.

#### *CHORUS:*

*You can be anybody you want to be,  
You can love whomever you will  
You can travel any country where your heart leads  
And know I will love you still  
You can live by yourself, you can gather friends around,  
You can choose one special one  
And the only measure of your words and your deeds  
Will be the love you leave behind when you're gone.*

Some girls grow up strong and bold  
Some boys are quiet and kind  
Some race on ahead, some follow behind  
Some grow in their own space and time  
Some women love women, some men love men  
Some raise children, some never do  
You can dream all the day never reaching the end  
Of everything possible for you.

Don't be rattled by names, by taunts, by games  
But seek out spirits true  
If you give your friends the best part of yourself  
They will give the same back to you.

#### *CHORUS*