

## Covenant Program #5

### ON RETIREMENT

#### Light Candle

Our Unitarian heritage bids us light our chalice in the name of freedom, in the light of reason, in actions of tolerance, in the name of faith, in the light of hope and in the actions of love. Elizabeth M. Strong

#### Check In:

#### Opening Readings:

Taking Advantage of Time

Most of us picture retirement as a period when we will have a lot of “free time”—time to do what we choose. Most retirees enjoy their leisure time, but some find that it takes months or years before they learn how to do so.... Consider how many hours you devote to a job each week. It’s not just the 40 hours, it more likely that a job consumes 45, 50, or even 60 hours of your time each week. In fact, no activity in your life uses more time than your job, with the possible exception of sleep....

Many people are workaholics. The belief that work is good and not working is bad can be traced to our cultural past. The early settlers of North American considered work a virtue and not working, sinful.... Some people are better than others at overcoming the urge to work too much, whether it is paid or unpaid employment. But you shouldn’t feel guilty about leisure. Everybody needs time to “re-create” themselves, to

refresh the body, invigorate the mind and stimulate emotions.

Everyone has a need for self esteem. Often, self esteem is tied closely to a job. Retirement from a job makes some people feel that part of their identity has been left behind.... The value of knowing yourself—what you like and don’t like—is that it provides the basis for planning leisure pursuits that can maintain self esteem.

[www.aftscme.org/wrkplace](http://www.aftscme.org/wrkplace)

#### New Beginnings

As every flower fades and as all youth  
Departs, so life at every stage,  
So every virtue, so our grasp of truth,  
Blooms in its day and may not last  
forever.

Since life may summon us at every age  
Be ready, heart, for parting, endeavor.  
Be ready bravely and without remorse  
To find new light that old ties cannot  
give.

In all beginnings dwells a magic force  
For guarding us and helping us to live.  
So be it, heart: bid farewell without end.  
Herman Hesse

#### Reflection Questions~

What are the things you long to do, but don’t have time for?  
What are the activities that you will enjoy the most when you “retire”?  
Are they similar?

#### Reflective Silence~

- Discussing the Questions~

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## Check-out

### Closing Reading:

#### Warning

When I am an old woman I shall wear purple  
With a red hat which doesn't go, and doesn't suit me.  
And I shall spend my pension on brandy and summer gloves  
And satin sandals, and say we've no money for butter.  
I shall sit down on the pavement when I'm tired  
And gobble up samples in shops and press alarm bells  
And run my stick along the public railings  
And make up for the sobriety of my youth.  
I shall go out in my slippers in the rain  
And pick the flowers in other people's gardens  
And learn to spit.

You can wear terrible shirts and grow more fat  
And eat three pounds of sausages at a go  
Or only bread and pickle for a week  
And hoard pens and pencils and beer mats and things in boxes

But now we must have clothes that keep us dry  
And pay our rent and not swear in the street  
And set a good example for the children.  
We must have friends to dinner and read the papers.

But maybe I ought to practise a little now?  
So people who know me are not too shocked and surprised  
When suddenly I am old, and start to wear purple.

Jenny Joseph