

October 2017

Priscilla Shumway:



My mother was a converted Catholic and my dad was an agnostic.

My sisters and I were raised Catholic. But when I turned 15 or 16, I realized that this faith did not resonate with me. I left Catholicism in search for another way to build community. I visited several different faiths, including a few Unitarian churches in the DC area.

My husband Jack and I joined the Unitarian Church in Burlington, VT in the early 80's and both of our boys were dedicated there.

We moved to SC in 1991 but for whatever reason, I did not resonate with the Unitarian Church at that time. I remember that I met with Floy Work and shared my frustration with finding a church in Charleston. She said, "Priscilla, if you expect a one-hour service, and the minister's sermon to do it for you, you will never find a church. You have to get to know the people, join a committee, get involved." That was the best piece of advice! So I joined the Eden Keepers and from there it has been a lovely relationship with this church family.

Back to my childhood in Cleveland, Ohio. I grew up there in the 1950's and 60's. How many of you remember a children's TV show Romper Room? It ran from 1953-1994 and was nationally and internationally syndicated. My Cleveland hostess was "Miss Barbara." During each episode, she would pull out her magic mirror and say hello to the children who had written a letter to her. Here is what she said:

"Romper, stomper, bomper boo. Tell me, tell me, tell me, do. Magic Mirror, tell me today, did all my friends have fun today?"

Well, I brought my magic mirror today.

"Romper, stomper, bomper boo. Tell me, tell me, tell me, do. Magic Mirror, tell me today, did all my friends have fun in church today?"

I see Hillary and Richard, and Bernadette, Sue and Paul, George and Marcia, Richard and....

YOU all are the reason I am a member here. The people who put their hands and hearts behind their words. As the poet Mary Oliver said, "May I be the tiniest nail in the house of the universe, tiny but useful,"

So in this church, one of the many houses of the universe, I am a tiny nail, but I, along with each of you, am useful.