The Art of Compromise

Service offered by
Dave Clements, Worship Associate
Anne Osborne, Worship Associate

Sunday, July 22, 2012
10:30 a.m.
Part I: Mastering the Art of Compromise

When I started as a worship associate this past January I knew that come summer I would be asked to provide a topic and conduct the service for one of the Sundays during the summer.

I have had the opportunity since January to work with Wayne, Kathleen and Ellen and most recently with other Worship associates in assisting them with their services.

As I pondered about topics early one morning the thought came to me that my sermon should be about the “Art of Compromise”. I first thought that this was a strange topic to prepare a Sunday sermon about. But during these past few weeks as I have been preparing I have come to realize just how much compromise is a part of each of our lives. My hope today in the short amount of time that we spend together that each of us will come away today having learned and appreciated-just how much the art of compromise is a blessing and a challenge in each of our lives.

In order to understand compromise we first need to define, for our purposes today, just what the word means. According to Webster’s latest edition Compromise means:

(1) A settlement of differences in which each side makes concessions.

(2) The result of such a settlement.
(3) Something that combines qualities or elements of different things:

In our discussion today we will explore and explain each definition.

A settlement of differences in which each side makes concessions.

Story: Let’s consider the case of Sam and Ann to illustrate this point.

Sam is thinking about summer vacation. What he would really like to do is go camping and hiking for a week in a national park. But Sam also knows that his wife Ann really doesn't like camping, so he thinks maybe the beach would work.

But also Ann tends to get bored at the beach, but maybe if they only went for a long weekend that would work out. Okay, he decides, he'll propose that to Ann.

It's likely that Ann is doing some similar thinking - trying to figure out not only what she wants to do, but also preemptively thinking about what Sam doesn't want to do. She may really want to spend a few days in a big city seeing the sights, but knows that Sam isn't much of a city guy. So she starts thinking about something else. Camping isn't something she is crazy about, but the beach is something she can handle for a few days. Good enough.

So then they sit down to talk about summer vacation and -- whoa - each suggests the beach - unbelievable!
This is great (and what a relief)! But will they both be happy...sort of, kinda, maybe.

The type of thinking that Sam and Ann are doing certainly is considerate and avoids conflict. But the problem is that it dilutes the decision-making process. By their mental pre-compromising, the end decision is a watered-downed, watered-down version of each's original. It's good enough, perhaps, but not close to what each really wants. Over time with many many of these compromises stacking up, it's easy for someone to feel that her life has strayed way off course, and get resentful. Or have a midlife crisis.

There's another way of approaching compromise - from a stronger position of clarity and assertiveness. Rather than compromising down their decisions before the discussion starts, Sam and Ann can both come to the table with what they have in mind - I want to go camping, I want to go to the city. Now that doesn't mean they can't be open and sensitive to the other - no "My Way or the Highway" attitude. But the negotiation and compromise starts from a more honest stance, and is more likely to represent what each wants.

The key is stepping back and being clear in your own mind what you want before you start talking: Not what you should do, not what will make the other person happy, not what will cause the least conflict. Decide how important, on a scale of 1-10 how important this issue is - the vacation may be a big deal but the color of
the new living room rug less so.

And then stand up for what you want, what's important, make your case, and encourage the other to do the same. Listen their side, sidestep the potential power-struggle. Finally, negotiate the compromise - 3 days at the beach, one day camping, and then 2 days in the city. Or separate vacations camping or seeing the city with friends and doing a stay-at-home vacation together.

Go for the win-win, but remember winning is only winning when you know what it is you want. Learn how to work together.

This type of compromise can best be illustrated from the words of a one of our Westshore Members when I asked her to Comment about compromise in her Life and marriage. (Karen Auer’s Statement)

Compromise.

The only compromise thing I can think to write about is marriage and travel with my husband. He likes to rough it, have no plans, treat no reservations in a foreign country as an adventure, eat on the fly (stand up) I like to know ahead about all of it - transportation, nice accommodations, outings, tours, every day. He likes to sit and people watch; soak in the atmosphere and culture for hours. I like to be on a museum, church or city tour twice a day, eat 3 meals sitting down and sleep in a bed.

So, we have to compromise- sometimes we travel his
way; sometimes we go on a planned trip with guide. That means; sometimes I am on the ground in a tent at age 70 and sometimes he only has 2 hours in a city before the boat sails. This has meant I eat canned goods in Spain for several days; OR he has 3 sit down served meals -dinner taking 2 hours. As you can tell one way is much more expensive than the other. But by compromising--we get to do a lot more travel. And we both like each way of travel--both have their advantages. The promise and potential of working together lies in our willingness to remember to ask questions and stick around long enough to listen to the answers. That's all. It means when we talk, we do so with curiosity and compassion. It's about respect. “By respect we do not mean agreement, but taking someone so seriously that you ask why they think as they do.” We have to stay at the table with one another, even when it is discouraging, or baffling, or inconvenient because diversity of opinions promotes dialogue. Without dialogue, there is no communication; without communication, there is no education; without education, there is no transformation.

Anne Reads: Emerson's Moral Dilemma

Ralph Waldo Emerson was a leading 19th-century philosopher, father of the Transcendentalist movement. Before he became a philosophical and literary luminary, he was a Unitarian minister and served the Second Church in Boston between 1829 and 1832. In pursuing
ministry, Ralph Waldo followed in the footsteps of his father, William Emerson, a Unitarian minister who served Boston's First Church.

In 1831 and 1832, the younger Emerson became embroiled in a controversy at Second Church. As a Unitarian Christian minister, Emerson was expected to regularly conduct a communion service. Emerson did not find the act of communion personally meaningful. Because he was interested in a depth of authentic personal experience with the sacred that did not have room for ritual for the sake of ritual, Emerson told his congregation he would no longer offer the sacrament of communion.

His decision created uproar. For many Christian Unitarians, communion was a central sacrament. Although the congregation was fond of Emerson, his declaration seemed unreasonable to them. Church leaders tried to negotiate with Emerson, hoping he would change his mind. They offered a compromise: Since the parishioners found the act of communion meaningful, they asked if Emerson could perhaps offer communion to the attendees of the church but not partake of the sacrament himself, in light of his philosophical objections. Emerson did not agree to this compromise and the negotiations were not successful.

Emerson recognized this disagreement with the congregation of Second Church as an insurmountable difference between his philosophical and spiritual understanding and the congregation's, and he voluntarily re-
signed his pulpit. While he never disavowed Unitarianism, or his status as a minister, he never again used his title "Reverend" nor served a congregation. Instead, he chose to express himself through lecturing and writing. Emerson believed we cultivate our own character and through this cultivation become agents of good or evil in the world. Further, cultivation of character is grounded in an unmediated experience of the sacred, one that occurs by looking inward. Finding that spark of divinity within us, it is possible to have a direct, transcendent experience of the holy. Emerson's belief became the cornerstone of the Transcendentalist movement, and Emerson's greatest spiritual contribution to Unitarian Universalist Sermons.

**Another Story from our Unitarian History where compromise was successful:**

Legendary minister and pacifist John Haynes Holmes climbed into his pulpit on the eve of World War I, knowing that he could lose his livelihood, knowing he was jeopardizing all he'd ever worked for. In the politics of the time, his views were considered treasonous. He delivered a fiery sermon, denouncing this and all war, as anti-Christian, and instead of a call for arms, he calls for alms; reconciliation; brotherhood. The congregation responded with stunned silence. And Holmes left the pulpit for what he expected would be the last time. The Board President called an emergency meeting. The church board took two votes that evening. First, they unanimously condemned their minister's pacifism, declaring it to be dangerous, ‘wrong-headed,' even trea-
sonous. Second, they voted unanimously that, wrong-headed or not, John Haynes Holmes had an obligation to speak his mind.

In his time, the Reverend John Haynes Holmes was vilified for his pacifism. Today we acclaim Holmes as prophet and hero. He is. But I also acclaim that brave church board who had the moral courage to vote their religious values above their partisan views and despite looming congregational conflict. In so doing, they created a compromise through covenant, declaring that by staying in relationship with our (political) opponents, we get along much better. In such a compromise, all of us win.

Politics is commonly called the "art of compromise." This label is thought to be especially appropriate for democratic politics. Elected officials representing different voters meet in legislative chambers to hammer out policies that all constituents can live with. Of course, no politicians or voters receive everything they want in the final legislative package: the need to assemble at least a simple majority to implement any policy almost invariably means that supporters of some policy must sacrifice something of value to others active in the political process.

What are you willing to sacrifice in order to achieve something of value?

I am reminded of a time in my life when the art of sacrifice and compromise came face to face.
It was April of 2005 and I had just ended a 10 year relationship that had its share of ups and downs. I had accepted a contract position for the next year that required me to move to Cincinnati, Ohio. I was giving up one life that I had built for the past 10 years to create a new life. I had no place to stay in Cincinnati and knew no one there. I left my home of the past 20 years to set out on adventure that I could not see or imagine the consequences of.

Within my first 2 weeks of arrival in Cincinnati I had to hire a staff, define goals and objectives of fundraising campaign and most important find a place to live. I had brought with me three suitcases full of clothes and had left a home full of furniture and things in San Francisco. In spite of the task that I had in front of me I was surprisingly calm and believed that all would work out. I quickly learned the art of compromise as my list of the ideal places to live narrowed down to that which was within walking distance of my office and clean and affordable.

I found just such a place, a 4 story Victorian apartment building with my apartment being on the third floor and a walk up at that. I had no car, no furniture and moved into the apartment the next morning with my three suitcases of clothes. I had the rest of the day to find basics that you need in setting up a new home. I located a Macy’s that was within walking distance, went there and purchased a sleeping bag, an air mattress, a pillow and towels. Over the next few months I furnished my apartment and learned a great deal about compromise.
and dealing with others. Each weekend I would look over Craig’s List and see what type of furniture was for sale. Then I would contact one of my new found friends and go about making arrangements for a truck and bodies to help me to pick up the furniture.

I furnished my apartment not always with what I wanted but always with what I needed. In my own personal life and relationships I was practicing the Art of Compromise. My former partner of 10 years and I were able to work out our differences and communicate them opening and honestly to each other.

I realized how important compromise played in this. After being gone from San Francisco for several months I came back home to disband my home. My former partner and I were able to calmly one weekend go thru our home and decide who would take what. We did this without conflict and with a lot of compromise along the way. Today we are still friends and very supportive of each others lives.

As I think back upon this experience I realize that we were successful because we both looked for sides where we could find a common ground. We looked for solutions that were acceptable to both parties.

Most of us learn to base our self-worth on comparisons and competition. We think about succeeding in terms of someone else failing--that is, if I win, you lose; or if you win, I lose. Life becomes a zero-sum game. There is only so much pie to go around, and if you get a big piece, there is less for me; it's not fair, and I'm going to
make sure you don't get anymore. We all play the game, but how much fun is it really? We will learn about that in part II.

SERMON Part II – How we Learn to Compromise

Early I defined compromise as a settlement of differences in which each side makes concessions. In this portion of the sermon we will consider definition 2, the results of such a settlement. In order to understand results we must first consider how we learn to compromise. I learn best many times from hearing the stories of others who have learned about compromise in their lives. In preparing for today’s sermon I asked West Shore members to write down what compromise means to them. I will share with you their thoughts. Some have asked that I not share their names.

Story one: COMPROMISE:

When asked to write about compromise and what it has meant to me in my life I felt that I needed to first define some terms:

**Compromise:** a settlement of differences by mutual concessions; an agreement reached by adjustment of conflicting or opposing claims, principles, etc., by reciprocal modification of demands.

"Toe the line" is an idiomatic expression meaning to conform to a rule or a standard.

**Aphorism:** a terse saying embodying a general truth
like — “Children should be seen and NOT heard.”

**Terse: abruptly concise**

I’ve been asked to comment on my experience with compromise as it is manifested in my life. Compromise, Hmm? At 62 I became me, the person I’ve always been inside my head, my hand-made prison cell. The transition occurred after I retired from my job which consisted mostly inventing products, processes, instruments and so forth and managing a group to that end. Prior to my literal rebirth I had raised three children and saw them on their various paths into a life of their own. I was nearly free to pursue a life for me. The only thing holding me back was the compromise I made with ‘life’ back when I began to understand that I was a bit different from other folks....

It was a hell of a compromise for I compromised myself-worth, my happiness, joy, freedom and replaced them with self-hate, doubt, fear, and shame. My parents set the cadence of my early life. They set my goals and swung a mighty yardstick: graduate high school, date women, graduate from college, date women, get married, create grandchildren, and so on. Well you can see that life wasn’t a compromise at all. I ‘toed the line.’ I was ‘seen and not heard.’ I performed and avoided the judgment of my superiors – never their approval.

My religious training was fairly similar. In the Baptist church in the 40’s and 50’s the Bible was the law. It was infallible, written by the ‘finger of God’ and not to be questioned. They taught an angry god, a vengeful god,
a god that would strike me down with lightning from the heavens if I dare step out of line. God knew every-thing I did, every thought. Compromise?

Don’t make me laugh.

I’ve been free for twelve years, now. Since leaving my cell, I’ve met people that I understand, that I can nego-tiate with – people with joy in their hearts, having no apparent need to be smarter, richer, wiser, or bolder than anyone else. This is the way my life should always have been – one of joy, sharing, mentoring, and settling differences via mutual concessions – Compromise!

Story Two: Jerry and Suzanne’s Story

For over three decades two members of our church have been colleagues and friends. The roots of their partnership was from the classroom but both taught different subjects. One a biology teacher and the other an art teacher. Two diverse areas and often believed to be quite different, but after many discussions they both begin to realize that there were many similarities with the two subjects each taught; that most individu-als never thought about.

They agreed that others could benefit from their discov-ery. This led the pair to develop a series of lectures, programs and college classes for educators, on the in-ner relationship of Art and Science or in the “Art of Compromise” ...Science and Art.
The relationship could be like the James Baldwin Quote, “Feeling is consciousness of the resulting conditions of success, failure, equilibrium, compromise or balance, in this continuous rivalry of ideas.

Throughout the process the two teachers began research and development of ideas; from this they faced the prospect of compromise. In the beginning the science educator just assumed from the hierarchy of the subjects that science would considerably outweigh Art. Often in education there is more emphasis placed on reading, math and science. But the Science educator faced her first approach to an aspect of compromise. The Art educator wanted to level the playing field, that if the writing and research were to move forward they must be an equal importance and one subject was not more superior than the other. Each would stand their ground and with common agreement and mutual respect move forward. The key in the relationship would be respect of each other and each subject matter.

There would be a balance of Art and Science and Science and Art. Throughout the working relationship both have held this belief and find a commitment with promise demonstrated by their respect for each other on a personal and intellectual level.

One method to reach this level is found in being a good listener. Obvious this is important in any relationship. For many partners and couples... who is often faulted for not being a good listener?... Ignoring the other...
sound familiar?...Are you listening to me?...Think about that last disagreement over communication...only I’d listened better...Think how these great pairs have compromised:

Anthony & Cleopatra
Wilbur & Orville
Roosevelt & Churchill
Butch & Sundance
Thelma & Louise
Cheech & Chong
Proctor & Gamble
Siegfried & Roy
Lucy & Desi
Ben & Jerry
Gin & Tonic
Lewis & Clark
Barack & Michelle
Masters & Johnson
and Wayne & Kathleen.

This Science and Art pair continues the fine “Art of Compromise or is it the Science of Compromise? Both professionally as well as here at church serve on committees together. Their goal is to teach others the same methods and approaches that work for them.

Story Three: A story from my own life. In the spring of 2006 I found myself living and working in the city of Detroit Michigan. I had been granted an 18 month contract to work with the Detroit Symphony Orchestra and
to reenergize their subscription and donor programs. The orchestra was losing its donor base and Subscription sales were in a decline. I had been hired to stop the decline and increase subscription sales and increase donors and donor giving. I had inherited a staff of 30 and along with that a call center that had a group of employees that was like the land of misfit toys.

I realized that if we were going to be successful it would require everyone on my staff to be willing to make compromises and to work together. This was no easy task given the diverse personalities that I was dealing with.

I had one woman who worked in our call center. She showed up each day with her traveling suitcase and told me that she had just flown in from New York to sell subscriptions over the phone for the Detroit Symphony. She was a great worker despite being a bit odd. Than there was Della, who was older than my own mother, and who was very sweet and would make sales and collect donations, but forget to get the Credit Card information from the Patron.

I can’t forget Sharon who each day showed up for work and told me how bad she was for the job and that she just knew I was going to fire her.

Our tasks as a group was simple sell 1.2 million dollars in subscriptions and raise another 5 million in new donations all in 6 months.

As a group we all became committed to the tasks and along the way looked for ways in which we could com-
promise and still make our goals. Sometimes this meant working extra hours, attending additional events in the community, and approaching businesses and individuals who previously had no intention or desire to purchase a subscription of make a donation.

I designed motivational contests for my staff, awarded them with prizes and provided them with a learning environment where they felt comfortable and encouraged. By the end of the 6 months we not only accomplished our goals but exceeded them. Along the way many compromises were made and my staff learned how to bargain with potential patrons and how to identify what really their own driving forces are and what motivates them.

What can we learn from these three different stories? How to Compromise?

Perhaps the following ideas as a means for building compromise can help us:

1. **Identify what is driving you:**
   Humans are competitive by nature.

   Make sure you understand what is really motivating your reaction. If you are being prompted by an important difference of opinion, so be it. But if you are disagreeing simply for the sake of disagreeing, check your impulses.

2. **Understand that compromise is not surrender**
   People often resist compromising because they think of
it as defeat. But compromise is not surrender. Compromise is a truce. Truces are established between two parties who recognize that there is no definitive way to prove a winner, without massive carnage.

A truce does not require you to believe that the other party’s claims are actually superior to your own. You simply need to understand the other party’s worth—that he or she deserves to be spared hostile, prolonged and unproductive warfare. You can acknowledge the validity of their feelings or opinions without having to actually agree with him/her.

3. Define your terms
We usually have a little wiggle room in our personal objectives. Decide where you are willing to bend. Be willing to give up something in order to gain something significant.

4. Be careful what you bargain with
Be sure the conditions established in your bargaining are fair and relevant to the issue at hand. Otherwise, your negotiations can turn ugly.

5. Know what to never compromise
While relationships require flexibility, there are some things you should never compromise. You should never be forced to act against your core values, conscience, or dignity. And even in the fiercest disagreement, your physical well-being should never be in danger. These are the non-negotiable, protect them diligently.

Sometimes it is worth “losing” a battle to win the war.
In this case, the war you are fighting is not against each other, but for each other—to secure the prize of a healthy, mutually-supportive and lasting relationship.

Ok you are probably saying that is all fair and good and I really want to have those a type of relationships but life really doesn’t work that way.

For Instance:

Prioritizing is a key issue in conflict management.

The prioritizing of our values indicates what compromises—if any—we will make in order to establish peace.

The key to learning to love your opponents—political and otherwise—lies in distinguishing our differences. Perhaps that sounds counter-intuitive. The usual approach to learning to get along with one another is by oversimplifying our similarities and ignoring our differences, as we declare ourselves one big happy family, and we live tolerantly ever after . . . right?

Except it doesn't work that way. Instead, we easily see the destination we have in common, but when we disagree on how to get there, we feel mystified, even betrayed, at how “mistaken” our new friend can be, because they seemed so... intelligent, and if they just weren't so stubborn, or misinformed, or selfish, then they would see the light and we could get back to agreeing about how right I am.
This cycle of events is repeated over and over again in heated disagreements, and neighborhood circles, and our own church lobby. The failure to distinguish our divisions asks for inappropriate compromise. It tempts us to *set aside* differences instead of engaging them. We stand to learn far more from one another in investigating the boundaries of our differences, than had we tried to design each and every meeting, every initiative, or every worship service as “one size fits all.” And such weak-kneed spirituality will lull our souls to sleep.

When we encounter our perceived opponents, and take the opportunity to engage with our differences, either in the world or within the walls of this church, our cherished assumptions are challenged. Divulging our differences requires that we better articulate our positions, and forces us to consider creative options we cannot see when we take a stand, only to face a mirror. Diversity enriches us by increasing our effectiveness in problem solving by widening our field of vision. In the martial art practice of *taekwondo*, a master turns his body *with* the force of his opponent's attack, to gain leverage and advantage. Your opponent's agenda can be your own best friend.

History is full of ironies where the unexpected gift of an opponent serves what seems an opposite agenda. Who remembers that it was Richard Nixon who established the Environmental Protection Agency – reasoning that it was good for business!? And it was Democrat Bill Clinton, who became the conservative’s friend when he signed Welfare Reform into effect.
Whether today, or tomorrow, we deem these actions a triumph or defeat, they serve as examples of why we must be willing and hopeful in working with those we oppose.

Sermon Part III – Applying a Win Win Viewpoint

In our third and final definition of compromise we refer to compromise as:

Something that combines qualities or elements of different things.

This can best be illustrated from a story form my own life. As I mentioned earlier when preparing for this sermon I realized just how much my life has been a life of compromise. I am not sorry about that for I have grown and learned many things about life, people and how I relate in this world and how is the best way for me to make a difference and to live a life that builds upon compromises.

The year was 2011 and my family was busily preparing for a June wedding of my nephew. Two years before the family had come together for the wedding of my niece and this wedding would be another opportunity for the family to come together again. The last wedding my mother had died a year earlier so it was nice for me and my brothers and their families to spend some time together.

About 6 weeks before the event I had received an invi-
ation and found it odd that it was only addressed to me and not to Dave and a guest or Dave and Jerry. My family had met Jerry 2 years before at my other brother's wedding of their daughter so it wasn’t like they didn’t know who he was and that he was my partner.

I called my brother and asked him if it would be ok if Jerry came to the wedding.

Weeks went by and I heard nothing. Finally 10 days before the wedding I was told by my brother that Jerry was not welcome. I was shocked and upset that my brother would not allow Jerry to attend. I tried to reason with my brother but his mind was made up.

Without batting an eye I told my brother that I would not be attending. He couldn’t understand my position and kept trying to get me to re consider. I told him that it was a manner of principle and that I would not compromise my principles. That if Jerry wasn’t welcome than I would not be attending. Since Jerry and I had long been planning a trip Chicago to attend the wedding and even had paid reservations we decided to go to Chicago anyway. We had a wonderful time in Chicago and enjoyed the time with each other and friends.

This event happened over a year ago and it has changed the relationship between my brother and I and our family in general.

As I think back on this whole experience I still get upset and I have such a hard time trying to understand why my brother took the stand that he did. I have thought a
lot about this experience this past year and I know that the decision I made was correct. Sometimes in our lives there are those events and or people that we can not compromise on.

In closing I wish to say that my life has been a series of compromises that have always provided me with varying and unique opportunities. In January of 2011 I realized a lifelong dream and opened my own businesses. In the year and a half that has followed I have learned a great deal about compromise and the importance of making it a part of your day to day business dealings. Just recently my company was asked to be a part of a task force to look at ways in which Northeast Ohio could be stronger economically. We were asked to consider many aspects of development and the role that our organization could play. Many new programs and ideas have came out of these meetings but in most of them their has been a great spirit of cooperation and compromise.

So what are the keys to Compromise?

**KEYS TO COMPROMISE**

In the beginning  
I thought I made  
Heroic compromises;  
I dwelled too much  
On the "hero" part.

Establishing our home  
I thought I should teach  
Countless lessons;  
I dwelled too much
On the "teaching" role.

During early disagreements
   I thought I gave in
      Unnecessarily;
   I dwelled too much
      On the "I" word.

   I saw a multitude
      Of faults:
   I thought I needed
      To correct his
         Not mine
      Until
   I found the greatest fault
      In me:
      Trying to change him
         Instead of myself.

Concerns are different now:

Does the issue really matter?
   If the answer is "no"
      What is the point?

   What am I giving up?
   If the answer is "nothing"
      Why should I care?

Can I adjust my thinking?
   If the answer is "yes"
Why waste time arguing?

   We have learned to
      Listen first
         Think next
            Speak last
               Teach by example
We have found
Our keys to compromise.

If only
I didn't
Keep losing
Those keys!

Conclusion: In closing I hope that each of you today will look at just what compromise means to you. It can be a powerful tool in each of our lives.

A case in point: when the Boy Scouts of America began blatant discrimination against Unitarian Universalists in general, and against homosexuals in particular, a Unitarian Universalists mother wrote,

“My first reaction was to “take my boys and go home.” But, without families like mine, the Boy Scouts of America would have no dialogue partner. They would be freed from our decent dissent. They would never change their policies, because they would never have them challenged. So, we were prepared—just like good scouting parents are told to be...when at a parent's meeting, that uncompromising Scout Leader, declared loudly that should the scouts deem homosexuals as fit leaders, that would be the day he quits and “we'll just see what happens to this troop when men like me refuse to lead.”

Without hesitation, my husband replied, “Well, then men like me will lead them,” he said, with quiet firmness. “And this troop will continue, with or without you.”
And with that dozen words of dissent, the assumption and agenda in the room dissolved.”

I challenge each of you here today to look into your own lives and realize just how much “The Art of Compromise is present” In the words of Ben Franklin,

“It is not the symphony of voices in sweet concert I enjoy, but the disagreement of democracy, the full-throated roar of a free people busy using their right to freedom of speech in the art of compromise”

Let it be so.
The Vision and Mission of West Shore Church

Our vision is to inspire more people to lead lives of meaning and purpose. We do this by providing: transcendent worship; a nurturing, inclusive community; lifespan faith development; service to others within our congregation, our local community and the world beyond; and by spreading the news of Unitarian Universalism and our church.

Connect * Grow * Serve

Our mission is to Connect you with your highest values and to others who share them; to help you Grow in wisdom and compassion; and to provide opportunities for you to Serve needs greater than your own.

West Shore Staff & Leaders

Board of Trustees President.............................................................. Cil Knutsen
Parish Co-Ministers .....................Revs. Kathleen C. Rolenz & Wayne B. Arnason
Director of Lifespan Faith Development...................................... Kathy Strawser
Affiliated Minister ................................................................. Rev. Katie Norris
Business Administrator............................. .....................................Debbie Lydon
Finance Manager.................................... .................................... Suehana Kieres
Development Director............................................................Karen Kircher
Programs Assistant................................................................. Cathy Ross
Youth Ministry Coordinator.......................... Christa Champion
Membership & Growth Coordinator ......................... Kathleen Heck
Director of Music .................................. ..........................................David Blazer
Junior Choir Director .................................................................Joe Schafer
Commissioned Lay Leader.................................................. Doris Matthey
Child Care Center Director................................. Courtney Bischof
Facilities Manager ................................................................. Rick Achtziger
Evening & Weekend Facilities Manager .........................Sam Hughes