

"...[T]he people who plant the seeds of movements make a critical decision: they decide to live 'divided no more.' *They decide no longer to act on the outside in a way that contradicts some truth about themselves that they hold deeply on the inside.* They decide to claim authentic selfhood and act it out – and their decisions ripple out to transform the society in which they live, serving the self-hood of millions of others." Parker Palmer,
from Let Your Life Speak: Listening for the Voice of Vocation

Parker Palmer is a Quaker/Friends religious educator and scholar as well as a man of thought, compassion and commitment. He led UU ministers and religious educators some years ago for several days and I came to profoundly appreciate his work and his manner. What he is speaking of in this particular quote is one that has meaning in every context, individual and community. It certainly speaks to the UU Church of Olinda's place in the world in this moment, as we enter into the second decade of this century in this new millennium. In Spring Linda Thomson will come (hopefully no respiratory problems this time!), to lead the board into the congregation's future (and they, in turn, to lead the congregation) by listening deeply to the words of the church's Mission Statement and hear what it has to tell the congregation about what it is called to do. I know I have said such things before; it is time to act fully, coherently, beautifully, in a pattern knitted out of who the people are and the words the congregation has chosen.

The beauty of the winter is not so much the snowfall on every kind of winter-remaining flower, nor the ice glittering in moonlight. The beauty of winter is in the barrenness of trees and bushes that outlines and displays their skeletal truths. Whether any of us have made new year promises or not, let us promise, at least, to watch these trees and bushes without their leaves, holding the truths of Olinda and your place in it in mind and heart.

HAPPY NEW YEAR!

Faithfully and in faith, Rev.
Christine