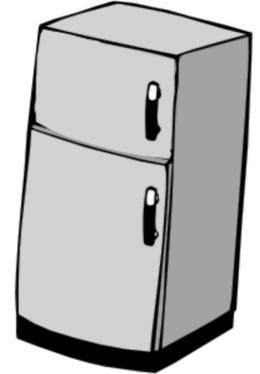




# RE-Frigerator Page



## We Celebrate...

Our theme for January is Resistance. Resistance basically means "fighting back." When you see something happening that you know is wrong, and you work to stop the wrong and make it right, that's resistance. Like the Resistance fighters in the *Star Wars* movies who are fighting a cruel and corrupt government.



Of course, most resistance doesn't happen with fighter planes and

light sabers. More often resistance looks like people writing opinion letters to the newspaper or going

to marches or calling their member of Congress or going to a protest march.

But resistance can also look like people saying to friends: "It bugs me when you say that—it's insulting to (girls, mentally disabled people, gay people, Black people, etc., etc.)"

Beyond that, resistance can look like all the ways people work and play and create to build a better world.

## Family Quest of the Church of the Larger Fellowship

Jan. 2018



## We Honor...



There are many Unitarians and Universalists who have resisted injustice—not to mention quite a few who have stood on the wrong side of history. One brave resister you might never have heard of

is Maria Weston Chapman, who, along with her three younger sisters, was very active in the movement to abolish slavery.

Maria was highly educated, and married into a wealthy family. She was an active member of the Unitarian Federal Street Church, where the famous William Ellery Channing was minister.

She, her sisters, and eight other women founded the Boston Female Anti-Slavery Society (BFASS). When Maria started attending anti-slavery meetings, some people thought the elegantly-dressed woman must be a spy,

since so many wealthy people supported slavery. In fact, in 1835, when a famous British abolitionist was speaking to the BFASS, a mob of some 5,000 angry people stormed the building. Afterward, Maria observed that many of the people who yelled horrible things were members of her own Unitarian church.

Whatever the opposition, Maria would not turn away from her convictions, and all her life she wrote, published, raised money, spoke and did everything she could to end the horrible institution of slavery.

## Talk About It!

- ☺ Who is someone you admire because of their courageous resistance?
- ☺ What is something you see going on in the world that you want to resist?
- ☺ How have you fought back against unfairness or unkindness in your personal circle?
- ☺ How have you resisted injustice in the wider world?

## Act...

So, what can one person do to resist injustice in a world that is full of prejudice and greed? Well, one thing a person can do is join with other people to get their voices heard.

If there is something that you want to change, or something you feel called to resist, one important question to ask is "Who would join me in this?" Maybe your family. Maybe you have friends who share your concerns. Maybe you could start a club at school, or create a video to put on YouTube that invites other



people to join you in a cause. Maybe an online search will turn up the fact that there is an organization

out there that is already hard at work addressing the issue.

One organization that brings people together to resist injustice is called Indivisible. Different Indivisible groups take on different projects, but they are all dedicated to resisting unjust decisions coming from the government. There are Indivisible groups in many, many different cities and towns, and there might well be one near you.

## Nurturing the Spirit

Mostly we talk about resistance as a good thing, when we push back against things that are wrong. But we can also resist things that are good, but difficult. It's easy to resist changing your mind or admitting you were wrong. We can resist doing things that are challenging or scary, but worthwhile. We may resist hearing that the way we experience the world is not how it is for everyone. And sometimes it turns out that WE are the ones who are being unfair or unjust, and who resist the voices telling us that we should change.

So how do you overcome resistance? Fighting back against fighting back isn't the most effective thing in the world. But you can take up the practice of just noticing when resistance is there. Pay attention when you feel your stomach getting tight or your eyes getting hard. When you want to tell someone else that they are wrong, or they don't understand, just pause for a moment to see where that need is coming from. Maybe they are wrong, but maybe they are right, and you just don't want to hear it. Pause. Breathe. Notice.

**What does resistance look like to you?**

## Practicing the Principles

Our Fifth UU Principle talks about:

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The right of conscience and the use of the democratic process within our congregations and in society at large.

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In other words, we believe that each person needs to follow what their heart tells them is good and right to do, even if that means resisting the government or other

powerful forces.

But we also believe in the democratic process, in which people get a say and a vote in choices that affect them. Which means that sometimes what other people feel is right could overrule what you think is right.

Following your conscience and following the democratic process is an ongoing balancing act of listening to

your own heart, but also listening to the voices of those around you who might well disagree with you about what is good and right.

If that sounds complicated and tricky and like it might not always come out for the best...well, that's exactly how it is. That's why we call it a democratic *process* rather than a democratic *result*. We commit to the process of engaging with each other, trusting that that is the best tool we have.

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Read more about Maria Weston Chapman and her sisters: <http://uudb.org/articles/mariawestonchapman.html>

Find an Indivisible group near you: <https://www.indivisible.org/act-locally/>