What would life be like if we didn’t live according to “clock time”?

It’s hard for me to imagine, especially when I have a full schedule (as I do while I’m writing this reflection) and many tasks to complete. At times like these, tuning in to life’s more natural rhythms may seem impossible—but perhaps it’s most essential.

The history of human time-keeping dates back to the ancient Sumerians (around 2000 BCE) and since then, the method and accuracy of keeping time has become ever more sophisticated. The pocket watch was introduced in the 17th Century. For many people today, the personal computer in all its forms has become the timepiece of choice.

The clock and the calendar allow us to organize our lives and coordinate activities with others, but they can keep us tied to accomplishment-oriented values of competition and striving. While every life includes action, our spiritual growth also calls us to simply “be”—to fully experience life “off the clock” and in the flow of the present moment.

I once worked with a man who prided himself on not wearing a wristwatch. The only problem was: he constantly asked everyone in the office what time it was! Clearly, something was calling him to be free of the tyranny of the clock, yet like all of us, he was immersed in a highly time-sensitive culture.

Starting in mid-June, Shawn and I will be taking time for rest and renewal, as perhaps some of you will be, too. I hope this month will provide you with time to lose track of time, in ways that nurture you.

Love,

Lynn
Questions to Live With

1. What experiences allow you to “lose track of time” and live in the natural flow of life’s rhythms?

2. What is your experience with “time management?” When is time “unmanageable” for you?

3. If you had as much time available as you want, what would you do with it?

4. Do you prioritize spending time with the people and on the activities that are most important to you? If not, how could you shift your use of time?

5. How has your relationship to time changed over time?

6. If these questions don’t address how you wish to engage with time this month, what is your question?

For Inspiration

Time is a companion that goes with us on a journey. It reminds us to cherish each moment, because it will never come again. What we leave behind is not as important as how we have lived.

- Brannon Braga & Ronald D. Moore screenwriters, Star Trek: Generations

At the end of your life, you will never regret not having passed one more test, not winning one more verdict, or not closing one more deal. You will regret time not spent with a friend, [family member or loved one].

- Barbara Bush, Reflections

It’s only when we truly know and understand that we have a limited time on earth -- and that we have no way of knowing when our time is up -- that we will begin to live each day to the fullest, as if it was the only one we had.

- Elisabeth Kübler-Ross

Look to this day!
For it is life, the very life of life.
In its brief course lie all the verities
And realities of your existence:
The bliss of growth,
The glory of action,
The splendor of beauty;
For yesterday is but a dream,
And tomorrow is only a vision;
But today, well lived,
makes every yesterday
A dream of happiness
And every tomorrow a vision of hope.
Look well, therefore, to this day.

- Kalidasa

The most precious resource we all have is time.

- Steve Jobs
The key is in not spending time, but in investing it.
    - Stephen R. Covey

Time is what we want most, but what we use worst.
    - William Penn

How we spend our days is, of course, how we spend our lives.
    - Annie Dillard

It's worth making time to find the things that really stir your soul. That's what makes you really feel alive.
    - Roy T. Bennett

The time you enjoy wasting is not wasted time.
    - Bertrand Russell

Spring passes and one remembers one's innocence. Summer passes and one remembers one's exuberance. Autumn passes and one remembers one's reverence. Winter passes and one remembers one's perseverance.
    - Yoko Ono

The time will come when diligent research over long periods will bring to light things which now lie hidden. A single lifetime, even though entirely devoted to the sky, would not be enough for the investigation of so vast a subject...And so this knowledge will be unfolded only through long successive ages. There will come a time when our descendants will be amazed that we did not know things that are so plain to them...Many discoveries are reserved for ages still to come, when memory of us will have been effaced.
    - Seneca, *Natural Questions*

It is the time you have wasted for your rose that makes your rose so important.
    - Antoine de Saint-Exupéry, *The Little Prince*

Time is a sort of river of passing events, and strong is its current; no sooner is a thing brought to sight than it is swept by and another takes its place, and this too will be swept away.
    - Marcus Aurelius

Time goes, you say? Ah, no! Alas, time stays, we go.
    - Henry Austin Dobson

Someone told me once that Einstein thought time is a variable. That is to say that time is not a constant. I think Einstein was right. When I was a child, a year was a YEAR! Now a year is a week. When I was a child, a week was a whole bunch of days of limitless possibilities, so numerous that I planned ahead only as far as the afternoon. Now a week is a few meetings interspersed with frenetic activity that I have apparently convinced myself is important. Never mind enjoying the moment. Never mind stopping to smell the roses. Yesterday, a lifetime was forever, immeasurable, like a light year. But today, swirling in a mix of tomorrows and yesterdays, a light year is comprehensible, measurable, and finite. If Einstein was right, and I think he was, where is the throttle? How do I slow this thing down?
    - Ken Nye, “Einstein on Time”
Green leaves of summer turn red in the fall
To brown and to yellow they fade
And then they have to die, trapped within
The circle time parade of changes

Scenes of my young years were warm in my mind
Visions of shadows that shine
Til one day I returned and found they were the
Victims of the vines of changes

The world's spinning madly, it drifts in the dark
Swings through a hollow of haze
A race around the stars, a journey through
The universe ablaze with changes

- Phil Ochs, “Changes”

Time is neutral and does not change things. With
courage and initiative, leaders change things.
- Jesse Jackson

Human progress…comes through the tireless efforts
of [people]…and without this hard work, time itself
becomes an ally of the forces of social stagnation. We
must use time creatively, in the knowledge that the
time is always ripe to do right.
- Martin Luther King Jr., Why We Can't Wait

Yesterday is gone. Tomorrow has not yet come. We
have only today. Let us begin.
- Mother Teresa

It's being here now that's important. There's no past
and there's no future. Time is a very misleading thing.
All there is ever, is the now. We can gain experience
from the past, but we can't relive it; and we can hope
for the future, but we don't know if there is one.
- George Harrison

There are no hours or days in Coronatime. - The days
blend together, the months lurch ahead, and we have
no idea what time it is. The virus has created its own
clock.
- Arielle Pardes

I went to a restaurant that serves 'breakfast at any
time'.
So I ordered French Toast during the Renaissance.
- Steven Wright

The events in our lives happen in a sequence in time,
but in their significance to ourselves they find their
own order... time as we know it subjectively...is the
continuous thread of revelation.
- Eudora Welty

The future is foretold from the past and the future is
only possible because of the past. Without past and
future, the present is partial. All time is eternally
present and so all time is ours. There is no sense in
forgetting and every sense in dreaming. Thus the
present is made rich.
- Jeanette Winterson, The Passion

Time expands, then contracts, and in tune with the
stirrings of the heart.
- Haruki Murakami

There's only one thing more precious than our time
and that’s who we spend it on.
- Leo Christopher

Come out of the circle of time and into the circle of
love.
- Rumi
Join a Journey Group

Journey Groups are the best way to go deeper with our monthly theme by sharing with a small group of people for a couple of hours each month. Groups meet online on Zoom and are scheduled at different times during the month.

For more information, visit our website https://firstunitariantoronto.org/journey-groups/, or look for the link in First Light.

Upcoming Services

Sundays at 10:30
June 6 – Flower Communion
Rev. Shawn Newton
Rev. Lynn Harrison

June 13 – “Sabbath”
Rev. Shawn Newton

June 20 – “No Time Like the Present”
Rev. Lynn Harrison

June 27 “The Speed of Relationships”
Rev. Ben Robins

New Horizons Vol 9, Issue 10- June 2021