At first glance, money might seem an unusual choice for a monthly "Journey" theme. It seems so concrete--so material--compared to other recent themes, such as contentment and intention, that perhaps seem more philosophical.

Yet money is deeply connected to all the ways we make meaning, both as individuals and within communities. Depending on our circumstances, our identities, our histories and values, our relationship with money may be a happy one or it may be deeply troubled. Many of us might say "it's complicated" when it comes to our outlook on money.

On a societal level, the Covid-19 pandemic has brought economic inequality into sharper focus. In Canada, the top 59 billionaires' wealth increased by $111 billion--more than the Canadian government spent on supporting workers through the Covid crisis.¹ Out of the 4.9 million people without adequate income in this country, 1 in 5 racialized families live in poverty, compared to 1 in 20 non-racialized families.²

We've all heard the saying "money can't buy happiness." But it does buy food, shelter, personal safety, health care, comfort, and numerous forms of power and security. And so, we're called to ask, how does money shape our lives and the lives of those around us? How has money assisted us and/or held us back? What role does money play in our ability to live our values as Unitarian Universalists?

During the month of March, as we begin our annual Team Generosity pledge drive, and with a wonderful range of guest speakers looking at money through a variety of lenses, we'll reflect on how our financial resources can come together collectively to make a meaningful difference in our world. In our Journey Groups and in our own personal engagement, may this month be a time of deep reflection on value and worth, as expressed through our financial lives.

Love,

Lynn

² Canada Without Poverty website, "Just the Facts" page. https://tinyurl.com/yv7a4r4n
Questions to Live With

1. How has money been involved in the most significant events, turning points or decisions in your life?

2. What, if anything, would you like to change in your relationship with money?

3. What lessons about money have you learned from others? What lessons would you like to pass along?

4. What do you consider "money well-spent" and why?

5. If none of these questions resonate for you, what other questions about money come to mind?

For Inspiration

"Money can't buy me love."
- Lennon & McCartney

"The only thing [money] cannot buy is meaning. The ultimate source of every human activity, every human function, is something, some force, beyond the ego. Money can't touch that, but it touches everything else."
- Jacob Needleman, Money and the Meaning of Life

"Success isn't about how much money you make; it's about the difference you make in people's lives."
- Michelle Obama

"Whoever loves money never has enough; whoever loves wealth is never satisfied with their income."
- Ecclesiastes 5:10 (Hebrew Bible, Judaism)

"No one can serve two masters. Either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and Money."

"One who helps others wins wealth."
- The Rig Veda (Hindu)

"For most people, money is a thing that must be acquired rather than a meeting place of the spiritual and the material. At this point in just about every civilization on the planet, money represents only the material world—it has lost its relationship to our depth."
- Mayuri Onerheim - Money - Spirituality - Consciousness

"Wealth consists not in having great possessions, but in having few wants."
- Epictetus

"Money often costs too much."
- Ralph Waldo Emerson

"I love money. I love everything about it. I bought some pretty good stuff. Got me a $300 pair of socks. Got a fur sink. An electric dog polisher. A gasoline powered turtleneck sweater. And, of course, I bought some dumb stuff, too."
- Steve Martin
Everyone wants to ride with you in the limo, but what you want is someone who will take the bus with you when the limo breaks down."
  - Oprah Winfrey

"Money can be more of a barrier between people than language or race or religion."
  - Vera Caspary

"You can only become truly accomplished at something you love. Don’t make money your goal. Instead, pursue the things you love doing, and then do them so well that people can’t take their eyes off you."
  - Maya Angelou

"Capital as such is not evil; it is its wrong use that is evil. Capital in some form or other will always be needed."
  - Gandhi

“The problem is that wealth ceases to move freely when all things are counted and priced. It may accumulate in great heaps, but fewer and fewer people can afford to enjoy it.”
  - Lewis Hyde, *The Gift: Imagination and the Erotic Life of Property*

“I never believed in Santa Claus. None of us kids did. Mom and Dad refused to let us. They couldn’t afford expensive presents and they didn’t want us to think we weren’t as good as other kids who, on Christmas morning, found all sorts of fancy toys under the tree that were supposedly left by Santa Claus. Dad had lost his job at the gypsum, and when Christmas came that year, we had no money at all. On Christmas Eve, Dad took each one of us kids out into the desert night one by one.

"Pick out your favorite star", Dad said.

"I like that one!" I said.

Dad grinned, "that's Venus", he said. He explained to me that planets glowed because reflected light was constant and stars twinkled because their light pulsed.

"I like it anyway" I said.

"What the hell," Dad said. "It's Christmas. You can have a planet if you want."

And he gave me Venus.
  - Jeannette Walls, *The Glass Castle*

"Wealth is the ability to fully experience life."
  - Henry David Thoreau

"I always count my blessings more than I count my money. I don't work for money, never did."
  - Dolly Parton

"We make a living by what we get, but we make a life by what we give."
  - Winston Churchill
"I do not think I am successful just because I have money. I’m successful because I love who I am and I have no regrets, and I'm successful because I have a great heart and I have compassion and I care and I would be happy with or without money.

- Suze Orman

"People say that money is not the key to happiness, but I always figured if you have enough money, you can have a key made."

- Joan Rivers

“While money can't buy happiness, it certainly lets you choose your own form of misery.”

- Groucho Marx

Optional Spiritual Exercise

Notice and reflect how you spend your money this month and consider how your spending and consumption is (and/or isn't) in alignment with your values. What changes could you make to bring your values and your financial life into greater alignment?

Join Us

Join a Journey Group

Journey Groups are a great 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 Themes

April – Awakening | May–Beauty

Upcoming Services

Sundays at 10:30

March 6
“An Update on the Thunder Woman Healing Lodge”, Guest Speaker Patti Pettigrew, with Rev. Lynn Harrison

March 13
“Lost and Found”, Rev. Linda Thomson
Start of the Team Generosity Campaign

March 20
“Springing For It”, Rev. Lynn Harrison

March 27
“Power and Money”, Tanya Cothran

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