



Soul Matters

**What does it mean to be
a people of RENEWAL?**

Worship Resources

September 2020

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About Online Permissions

Online worship brings many challenges. To help, our 2020-21 worship packets will prioritize resources that have permissions for online use.

Identifying, interpreting, securing and communicating online permissions is complicated. To ensure clarity, we are including explicit “permission notes” with each referenced piece in our 2020-21 worship packets. These permission notes provide you with the source of permission so you can follow up and feel more secure about the status of each piece.

Additionally, we use a three-part symbol system so you can easily identify the level of permission of each piece:

1. Permission for In-Person Use Only - These have ***no symbols*** next to their titles
2. Permission for Online Streaming Only - These have a ***single asterisk*** next to their titles
3. Permission for Online Streaming *and* Online Archiving - These have ***two asterisks*** next to their titles.

In some cases, there are additional requirements for use, such as not recording a sermon, emailing authors/composers that you’ve used their work, offering a donation for the work or, for music, securing a usage license. When these special requirements apply, we spell them out.

Four additional important issues:

1. No Permission Notes for Sermon Seeds: You will notice that none of the sermon seeds have permission markings. This is because online sermons follow different rules than other online liturgy, such as music, opening words, prayers and readings. As long as you follow fair use guidelines, our understanding is that online sermons can refer to all the sermon seeds we reference.

2. UUA’s Meditation Manual Anthologies Not Available for Online Use: We contacted Skinner House, the publisher of UUA meditation manuals, and they clarified that only *single author* meditation manuals, not anthologies, have been authorized for online use. To get permission for pieces from these anthologies, you must reach out to those individual authors one by one. Skinner House is glad to help you navigate that process of securing individual permissions. For more information, visit this [UUA.org link](https://www.uua.org). We plan to seek permissions from these authors as time allows. This will be especially important as many of the UUA anthologies focus on voices of color and marginalized identities.

3. Only Referencing Texts and Audio of Sermons: Our approach to sermon support for 2020-21 will likely evolve as the year progresses. There are a number of emerging discussions about fair use of sermons, particularly around ensuring that congregations compensate preachers fairly and ensuring that systems offering free sermons don’t undermine UU preachers who depend on guest preaching income for their livelihood. So for now, we are only referencing and securing permission for sermon *texts* and *audio clips*. The current consensus seems to be that access to free texts and audio files (versus video files) does not undermine those offering sermon videos or virtual guest preaching. We are exploring various additional ways for you to gain access to sermons and virtual guest preachers on our monthly themes. We will share those options if and when they emerge.

4. Why Include “online-restricted” Pieces?: You may wonder why we are still recommending/referencing liturgical pieces that only have permissions for in-person worship use. Our assumption is that some of these “online-restricted” opening words, prayers and poems will be helpful in *written* communications to your congregation, such as pastoral messages or newsletter articles.

There’s a lot here to absorb. Like you, we are still navigating our way into this new territory. So if any of this is unclear or confusing, please don’t hesitate to reach out to us. We also welcome corrections, cautions and suggestions for improvement. And if you come across great resources that are authorized for online use, please send them our way!

Calendar Connections

Click on the name on each event for more information or inspiration.

September 2020 - Renewal

Interfaith:

- [Rosh Hashanah](#) - Jewish New Year - Sept. 18 - 19, 2020
- [Mabon/Autumn Equinox](#) - Wicca - Sept. 22, 2020 (more [here](#) & [here](#))
- [Yom Kippur](#) - Jewish Day of Atonement - Sept. 27, 2020, begins evening of the 26th
- [Rumi's birthday](#) - Sept. 30 (1207)
- [Al-Hijra/Muharram](#) - Islamic New Year (day and month) - begins Aug. 19 2020

Unitarian Universalist:

- Ingathering/Water Communion Ritual - Early Sept. - date varies by congregation
- The first meeting of [the Transcendentalist Club](#) - Sept. 19 (1836) (more [here](#) and [here](#))
- Universalism Day: [John Murray](#) preaches [1st sermon](#) in US (1770) - Sept. 30 (more [here](#))

National & Cultural:

- [Hispanic Heritage Month](#) (Sept. 15 - Oct. 15)
- [Suicide Prevention Month](#), World Suicide Prevention Day is Sept. 10
- [Labor Day](#) – Sept. 7 (*first Monday)
- [International Literacy Day](#) - Sept. 08
- [Grandparents Day](#) - Sept. 10
- [9-11 Remembrance](#) - Sept. 11
- [International Peace Day](#) Sept. 21 (more [here](#))
- [World Gratitude Day](#) - Sept. 21
- [Bisexual Pride Day](#), CBD, Bisexual Pride, and Bi Visibility Day - Sept. 23
- [Bisexual Awareness Week](#) - Week of September 23 ([here](#))
- Publication of [David Walker's Appeal](#) - Sept 28 (1829) (more [here](#), [here](#) and [here](#))

For Fun and On the Fringe:

- [Johnny Appleseed Day](#) - Sept. 26
- [Talk Like a Pirate Day](#) - Sept. 19 (Fun graphic from Rev. Michelle Collins [HERE](#))
- [Hobbit Day](#) - Sept. 22
- [Banned Books Week](#) - Sept. 23-29 (more [here](#))
- [Battle of the Sexes](#) Tennis Match - Sept. 20 (1973)

Chalice Lightings & Opening Words

We Are All Longing to Go Home**

Starhawk

Full piece in #36 in [Lifting our Voices](#)

[Permission Source](#)

“Somewhere, there are people to whom we can speak with passion without having the words catch in our throats... Community means strength that joins our strength to do the work that needs to be done....”

The Spark Between**

Rev. Theresa I. Soto

Full piece found in in *spilling the light*, p. 18, a UUA meditation manual & Soul Matters “[Common Shelf](#)” book

[Permission Source](#)

On the spark that “passes between us,” is “meant to light our way” and brings us to “a hearth around which we gather to be nourished” and renewed

Spilling the Light**

Rev. Theresa I. Soto

Full piece found in in *spilling the light*, p. 1, a UUA meditation manual & Soul Matters “[Common Shelf](#)” book

[Permission Source](#)

On renewing the promises and deepest commitments we make to ourselves, including the promise to let our unique lights spill and shine.

On Claiming This Time for Renewal**

Rev. Gretchen Haley

[Permission Source: Soul Matters Secured](#)

Though you have been warned
and given plenty of explanations
reasons to do otherwise
you have persisted
to claim a life of joy, and justice, and to carve out
this time for renewal
of your own heart
despite the din
demanding your attention
luring you towards fear
and cynicism
you persist
with gratitude
for this day, this life
that has been given
this chance to begin again
despite all the forces of fragmentation
the disappointing ways we fail each other,

fail ourselves
we must refuse
to let grief undo us, or
to let our dreams get lost along the way -
in spite of all of the evidence
we keep showing up at the edge
of our own longing -
and then,
we keep going
remembering this duty we have to life,
in a greater sense,
this duty we have to each other,
our children, and their children -
this hope that is also a choice we make
this promise we fight for:
to persist in kindness,
persevere in compassion
and prevail in a life that is bound
entirely to love - Come let us worship, together

A Chalice Lighting for Ingathering**

Janet Parsons

Full piece at <https://www.uua.org/worship/words/chalice-lighting/ingathering>
[Permission Source](#)

“The flame lights our way... Into this new church year of promise and renewal.”

More Than Enough (Sunshine)**

Lea Morris

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CN7nkDDCmXA&list=RDYaidTfyxgl&index=8>

Permission for free use of YouTube, but request to [donate as able](#). Fee-associated files and sheet music available [here](#).

A New Day Awaits**

Rev. Scott Tayler

[Permission Source: Soul Matters \(Edits permitted\)](#)

We who long for return, who long for repair,
gather again to mend the tender strands of connection,
between each other, the world
and those parts of ourselves buried deep.
We begin, once more, the work
of welcome,
of forgiveness,
of renewing this weary-worn world.
Come friends, a new day, a new story, awaits!

On the Brink of a New Year**

Lois Van Leer

Full piece at <https://www.uua.org/worship/words/chalice-lighting/brink-new-year>

“We light this chalice on the brink of a new year...

Renewed, restored, ready...”

[Permission Source](#)

(Rosh Hashanah related)

The Spirit of Water (for Water Communion)**

Katie Gelfand

Full piece at <https://www.uua.org/worship/words/chalice-lighting/spirit-water>

[Permission Source](#)

“Together, we honor the spirit of water, its many forms, and its life-giving essence.”

A Riverbank to Channel the Sweet Waters of Your Life**

Rev. Kathleen McTigue

Full piece in #29 in [Lifting our Voices](#)

[Permission Source](#)

(Water Communion related)

More Water Communion Resources are found in our “Water Communion Worship Resource Packet” found on our [“Special Topic Worship Packets”](#) page.

Meditations, Prayers & Blessings

Beginning Again on the Continuous Journey**

Marta I. Valentin

Full piece found in *A Long Time Blooming*, p. 53, a Soul Matters [Common Shelf](#) book

[Permission Source](#)

“we are constantly given the opportunity to begin again...”

Great Unity Beyond All Differences**

Andrew M. Hill

Full piece found at <https://www.uua.org/worship/words/meditation/5573.shtml>

[Permission Source](#)

“Out of a troubled world of expediency and selfish strife, we come to this place set apart for the renewal of vision...”

Meditation on Community**

Rev. Gretchen Haley

Full piece at <https://revgretchenhaley.wordpress.com/2016/06/07/meditation-on-community/>

A meditation inspired by the story, *God In Between* by Sandy Eisenburg, originally written for flower communion but works as well for opening Sunday and Water communion.

[Permission Source: Soul Matters Secured](#)

Please join me in a spirit of prayer, or meditation....

feel the presence of all the other people in this room and consider all of the many stories and connections that they were calling to mind, as you were calling yours to mind....

There are many stories in our room, we know, and many more stories of those who aren't with us today but are a part of our community- and so let us keep on breathing into our connectedness, our oneness.

Community is messy, imperfect, yet it is also saving, healing, transforming. As another church year [begins], let us recommit ourselves to our shared purpose, remembering to breathe in and out when we are disappointed or frustrated or hurt along the way.

Let us practice forgiveness, and beginning again, and keep remembering that God lives in the spaces between us, and the greatest goodness is possible in our coming together. And so let us keep reaching out, keep drawing in, keep loving, and breathing, together.”

Amen, blessed be.

Grounding**

Jess Reynolds

Full piece in [Love Like Thunder](#), (pg. 32), a UUA meditation manual & Soul Matters “[Common Shelf](#)” Book

[Permission Source](#)

“...when I have no more mass than a leaf dead on the branch, still this is enough for the earth to find me. She reaches for what little I have and says, stay... The earth is reaching for you. Reach back. Reach back.”

Piece By Piece**

Lisa Friedman

Full piece in [Lifting our Voices](#), #99

[Permission Source](#)

Letting Go of Certainty**

Rev. Rebecca C. "Beckett" Coppola'

<http://revbeckett coppola.weebly.com/meditations--pastoral-prayers.html>

Permission Source: Soul Matters Secured

On renewal of the self by letting go of expectation and judgement.

Let go of the idea that you know
what breathing
should feel like.
Just notice the breath as it moves
in and out
of the body.
Let go of certainty.
Be with the breath as it is.
Allow openness.
Allow curiosity.
Notice the mind.
Each thought that arises.
Allow openness.
Don't judge your mind.
Or your experience.
Be loving in your curiosity about each thought.
Let go of certainty.
Let go of any idea about what
you should be thinking,
accepting your thoughts exactly as they are.
Be with your self
as you are.
Be curious
about who you are.
Love
how you are in the world.
Gently take a deep breath,
maybe even a big sigh,
re-enter the present moment,
and the stream of your life.

The Poignancy of Living In These Days**

Rev. Richard S. Gilbert

Full piece in The Holy Quiet of this Hour - Skinner House Publication

Also found at: <https://uuwellspring.org/2015/more-deeply-with-the-passing-years/>

Permission Source

"...In ways transcending my usual semi-awake state of being.
The poignancy of living in these days
Penetrates me, burrows deep into psyche or soul or spirit...
common things of life become uncommon,
That the ordinary becomes extraordinary...
I awaken myself,
And bow down in deep gratitude."

Peace: A Meditation Through the Chakras

Marcia Tucker in *To Wake, To Rise*, page 32

Full piece in [To Wake, To Rise](#) (pages 47-49), a UUA meditation manual & Soul Matters “[Common Shelf](#)” Book
Permission Status: *UU compilation books are not currently permitted for online use, see [HERE](#) for guidance about how to contact the author directly*

May The Light Of Your Soul Guide You

John O’Donohue

Full prayer/blessing at <https://sacredmoves.com/general/the-blessings-of-john-odonohue/> & <http://www.beinspired-blog.com/a-blessing-by-john-odonohue-inspirational-poetry/>

Permission Status: *Not permitted for online use*

May the light of your soul guide you...

May the sacredness of your work bring healing, light and renewal to those

Who work with you and to those who see and receive your work.

May your work never weary you.

May it release within you wellsprings of refreshment, inspiration and excitement.

May you be present in what you do.

May you never become lost in the bland absences.

May the day never burden you.

May dawn find you awake and alert, approaching your new day with dreams,

Possibilities and promises.

May evening find you gracious and fulfilled.

May you go into the night blessed, sheltered and protected.

May your soul calm, console and renew you.

Water Communion Covenant Renewal**

Rev. Tony Lorenzen

Full piece found at <https://www.uua.org/worship/words/ritual/water-communion-covenant-renewal>

Permission Source

... Spirit Life, may this water be a sign and symbol of your presence and power, for without water there is no life.

Wherever this water is present and however it is used in ritual, may this water be a reminder of the life-

affirming power of our covenantal faith community, the sacredness and worth of each human life, and the

power of love. ...

More Water Communion Resources are found in our “*Water Communion Worship Resource Packet*” found on our “[Special Topic Worship Packets](#)” page

Music

Soul Matters Music Resources

In addition to the suggestions below, be sure to tap into our other sources of support for music leaders:

1. **AUUMM (Association for UU Musicians Ministries) Online Database:** The wonderful leadership of the AUUMM have added our monthly themes to the AUUMM music database. It's a great way to get music suggestions from UUs all around the country. Access the AUUMM Music Database [here](#). More detail can be found on our [webpage](#).
2. **Soul Matters Music Support Facebook Page:** This support page is for on-going sharing among Soul Matters musicians. Click [here](#) to go to the Facebook page.
3. **Monthly online musicians' brainstorming group:** Meets on the second Thursdays of each month at 1pm eastern using this zoom link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/5857099120?pwd=ZXBBcnltQ3JvZkdhWFZjTEptL3FmUT09> (Passcode: 333 ; Meeting ID: 585 709 9120)
4. **Recordings** of all of our monthly music brainstorming calls are available [here](#).
5. **Soul Matters Music Playlists:** We create two different playlists each month: one in Spotify and another in YouTube. This is intended to provide inspiration for our small group participants but might be useful to musicians. Click [here](#) for links to the [Spotify playlists](#) for each month. Click [here](#) to check out the [YouTube playlists](#).

Suggestions For This Month

from Soul Matters Music Resources Coordinator, [Sara Brandt-Doelle](#):

Recommended Hymns**

Use of Hymns: All of the hymns listed below have permissions for live streaming and online recording/archiving, assuming you have legally obtained copies of the hymnal. ([Permission Source](#))

Use of Texts: However, you are not allowed to include the text of hymns as a part of your live streaming and online archived services *unless* those lyrics are in the public domain or permission is given. We've marked texts that are in the public domain with "(PD)" after the title and noted when permission has been given with "(not PD, but permission given)".

When text is not in the public domain, congregations are sending out the lyrics in advance to their members in an email, providing they have legal copies of the hymn such as hymnals at the church, or are sending out a link to a website where the lyrics can also be found.

- 12 O Life That Maketh All Things New (PD)
- 18 What Wondrous Love
- 38 Morning Has Broken
- 86 Blessed Spirit of My Life (If used, donate to [Heritage UU Church in Cincinnati](#), choir or children's music program)
- 108 My Life Flows On in Endless Song (PD)
- 121 We'll Build a Land (UUA copyright holder for text)
- 125 From the Crush of Wealth and Power (not PD, but permission given)
- 188 Come, Come, Whoever You Are (PD)
- 347 Gather the Spirit (not PD, but permission given)
- 357 Bright Morning Stars (PD)
- 387 The Earth, Water, Fire, Air (PD)
- 396 I Know This Rose Will Open (not PD, but permission given)
- 1028 The Fire of Commitment (not PD, but permission given)
- 1045 There Is a Balm in Gilead (arrangement: G.I.A. Publications, One License) (PD)

A note on Return Again - Hymn #1011 (which may seem an obvious choice for Renewal): Shlomo Carlebach has been identified for sexual harassment and misconduct in the Jewish community, and this both may be known to those in our congregations and touch that trauma for themselves. We suggest avoiding its use.

Music Videos

From UUA Online Worship Music

Permission Source

- ["There Is More Love Somewhere"](#) (#95 in Singing the Living Tradition; [African American hymn](#)). Singing by [Jess Huettelman](#).
- [NEW lyrics for "Gather the Spirit"](#) (#347 in Singing the Living Tradition; music and traditional words by [Jim Scott](#); [new lyrics](#) by Pat Lamanna). note: If you use this video or any of Jim's music, please make a love offering [on his website](#).
- ["Dona Nobis Pacem"](#) (#388 in Singing the Living Tradition; traditional Latin canon). Singing by [Jess Huettelman](#), Chelsea Sardoni, and Morayo Akande.
- ["I Know This Rose Will Open"](#) (by Rev. Mary Grigolia; #396 in Singing the Living Tradition). Piano and singing by [Jess Huettelman](#).
- ["Woyaya"](#) (Words & music by Loughty Amoa, Solomon Amarfio, Robert M. Bailey, Roy Bedeau, Francis T. Osei, Whendell K. Richardson, and Mac Tontoh; #1020 in Singing the Journey). Created by Paul Thompson (Music Director at the UU Church of the Palouse, Moscow ID).
- ["Circle 'Round for Freedom"](#) (by Linda Hirschhorn; #155 in Singing the Living Tradition) by Dr. Glen Thomas and Allison Halerz. Editing by Mike Halerz.
- ["Ubi Caritas."](#) a Gregorian chant, by [Jess Huettelman](#)

Video Music from Lea Morris**

Lea Morris grants permission to Soul Matters for free online worship use (live stream and recorded) of her YouTube videos, but requests users [donate if able](#). She also has fee-associated files and sheet music available [here](#).

Bring Me Back

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nNYXYkKXZRw&list=RDYyaidTfyxgl&index=10>

Look Inside

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2cRs_kI2HEc&list=RDYyaidTfyxgl&index=6

Bring Me Back

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nNYXYkKXZRw&list=RDYyaidTfyxgl&index=9>

More Than Enough (Sunshine)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CN7nkDDCmXA&list=RDYyaidTfyxgl&index=8>

It Is Well

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=evzdNWDALZ4&list=RDYyaidTfyxgl&index=20>

Some Extra Ideas From Members of the Soul Matters Circle:

No research on permissions has been done for these pieces.

Peace of Wild Things

Various versions for choirs found at :

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=x2aCm_Q76dA

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XDBxWPmDsk4>

Permission Note: *These videos are for purposes of example; The videos themselves are not authorized for online sharing*

Ain't Gonna Let Nobody Turn Me 'Round'

Sweet Honey In the Rock

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WPuBGcng6Tw>

Permission Note: *This video is for purposes of example; The video itself is not authorized for online sharing*

Sanctuary - hymn and choir

<https://youtu.be/rFtJ2Inyu8A>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YJhlyqu77Dg>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kRD55zWoIn4>

Permission Note: *These videos are for purposes of example; The videos themselves are not authorized for online sharing*

We Rise

<https://soundcloud.com/ifnotnow/we-rise>

Permission Note: *online use permission is unclear*

Ideas for Homecoming and Renewing Another Year Together:

- Country Roads, John Denver
- Homeward Bound, Simon and Garfunkel
- More Than One Way Home, Keb' Mo' -

Water Communion Music Resources are found in our "Water Communion Worship Resource Packet" found on our "[Special Topic Worship Packets](#)" page

Stories For All Ages

Higgins: A Drop with a Dream, Christopher Buice

<https://www.uua.org/worship/words/reading/higgins>

On renewing the world by combining our “drops in a bucket.”

Online Permission Note: [Worship web material has been authorized for online use: *Permission Source*.](#)

Lizard’s Song, Story from Tapestry of Faith, Creating Home

<https://www.uua.org/re/tapestry/children/home/session4/60032.shtml>

On the renewing power of finding our own song.

Online Permission Note: [Tapestry of Faith material has been authorized for online use. See *https://www.uua.org/re/tapestry/downloading*](#)

A Kids Book About Racism, Jelani Memory

Video by the author: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LnaltG5N8nE>

Book: <https://akidsbookabout.com/products/a-kids-book-about-racism> (50% off for non-profits)

On renewing our commitment to dismantling racism

Online Permission Note: [“A Kids Book About” publishing has not publicly shared direction about online use, so you will need to make your own judgement call about use of this story. For help thinking through that see our Soul Matters document: *Copyright Guidance for Online Story Reading*.](#)

You Are Stardust, Elin Kelsey

Video of the Book: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nRzxDXQ5R8w>

Background that might be helpful: <https://www.smithsonianmag.com/videos/category/smithsonian-channel/were-all-made-of-stardust-heres-how-1/>

Related: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7WnJq_5QjBg

On being renewed by wonder and honoring our first UU source: “Direct experience of that transcending mystery and wonder, affirmed in all cultures, which moves us to a renewal of the spirit and an openness to the forces which create and uphold life.”

Online Permission Note: [“OWLKids Publishing” has not publicly shared direction about online use, so you will need to make your own judgement call about use of this story. For help thinking through that see our Soul Matters document: *Copyright Guidance for Online Story Reading*.](#)

The Hardest Word: A Yom Kippur Story, Jacqueline Jules, Illustrated by Katherine Janus Kahn

Video: https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=17&v=Rmuiw70rkBA&feature=emb_logo

Book: [HERE](#)

Example of telling the story in your own words: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Rwg3cKn7FI>

(Note: the story is on the longer side so you might want to abbreviate it.

On the renewal of forgiveness and apology. Related to the end of the month celebration of Rosh Hasanah and Early October’s observance of Yom Kippur

Online Permission Note: [“Kar-Ben Publishing” has not publicly shared direction about online use, so you will need to make your own judgement call about use of this story. For help thinking through that see our Soul Matters document: *Copyright Guidance for Online Story Reading*.](#)

Readings

Elemental**

Rev. Marta I. Valentin

Full piece found in *A Long Time Blooming*, p. 32-33, a Soul Matters [Common Shelf](#) book

[Permission Source](#)

“...the fire that is you
brings hope to hearts untrue
and seeds the world anew.”

A Song of Brown Bodies**

Rev. Adam Lawrence Dyer

Full piece found in [Love Beyond God](#) (pg. 54), a UUA meditation manual & Soul Matters “[Common Shelf](#)” Book

“Do not believe what we are taught to be.

Each morning we all must arise

To see ourselves among the many

Brown bodies

Brown bodies...”

All that You Need Lies Within You**

Rev. Angela Herrera

Found in [Reaching for the Sun](#) (pg.44), a UUA meditation manual & Soul Matters “[Common Shelf](#)” Book

On finding the source of renewal within us.

[Permission Source](#)

Ceaseless Flow of Life

Rev. Vanessa Rush Southern

Found in [This Piece of Eden](#) (pg. 29), a UUA meditation manual & Soul Matters “[Common Shelf](#)” Book

On being renewed by that which has gone before and that which has been passed on.

[Permission Source](#)

Blessing of the Well**

Rev. Jan Richardson

Full piece at <http://paintedprayerbook.com/2017/03/18/lent-3-we-will-find-wellsprings/>

[Permission Source](#)

“...you will hear
your words return to you...
you will feel it
rising up within you,
filling every emptiness,
springing forth anew.”

Blessing in the Storm**

Rev. Jan Richardson

Full piece at <http://paintedprayerbook.com/2012/06/17/still-in-the-storm/>

[Permission Source](#)

On finding renewal in the storm through standing beside each other

Readings with Unclear Online Permission Status

Soul Matters has not been able to definitively determine whether the readings/poems below can be used in online worship. While some argue that the “educational purposes” component of fair use law makes it ok to read poems and prose prior to a sermon which references it, the majority of resources we’ve found disagree. These sources point out that while poems, such as these below, are considered fair use for in-person religious gatherings, copyright law does not extend the same fair use rules to online use. See [this article](#) for more detail.

Our recommendation is to avoid the below readings in online worship and instead use them as inspiration or include a smaller fair use portion of them in your sermons.

If you come across further information about fair use for pre-sermon readings, please pass those on to us.

Advice to Myself

Louise Erdrich

Full poem at <https://wordsoftheyear.com/2016/05/04/advice-to-myself-by-louise-erdrich/>

“Leave the dishes.

Let the celery rot in the bottom drawer of the refrigerator...

Pursue the authentic...

then go after it with all your heart...”

Beginners

Denise Levertov

Full poem at <http://kzoo4peace.org/?p=354>

“We have only begun

to imagine the fullness of life.

How could we tire of hope?

—so much is in bud...”

Saint Francis and the Sow

Galway Kinnell

Full poem at <https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poems/42683/saint-francis-and-the-sow>

Reading by the author: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yBJ3Llp_Lj8

“...sometimes it is necessary

to reteach a thing its loveliness...

and retell it in words and in touch

it is lovely

until it flowers again from within, of self-blessing...”

Singing Light, Mark Nepo

On being renewed by allowing yourself to be held...

Full poem at <https://www.soulspring.org/mark-nepo-s-weekly-reflection-singing-light>

“It’s made me see that more than

holding, we need to be held,

by the larger things that

enable us to live out loud....”

The Sun

David Whyte

Full piece at <https://herosjourneyfoundation.org/poetry/the-sun/>

“how I want to know
that sun,
and how I want to flower...”

Meeting The World

[*Mark Nepo*](#)

There is a wind that keeps blowing since the beginning of time, and in every language ever spoken, it continues to whisper, you must meet the outer world with your inner world or existence will crush you. If inner does not meet outer, our lives will collapse and vanish. Though we often think that hiding our inwardness will somehow protect or save us, it is quite the opposite. The heart is very much like a miraculous balloon. Its lightness comes from staying full, meeting the days with our heart prevents collapse.

This is why ninety-year old widows remain committed to tending small flowers in the spring; why ten-year olds with very little to eat care for stray kittens, holding them to their skinny chests; why painters going blind paint more; why composers going deaf write great symphonies. This is why when we think when we can't possibly try again, we let out a sigh that goes back through the centuries, and then, despite all our experience, we inhale and try again.

Monet Refuses The Operation

Lisel Mueller

On renewing our vision of the interconnectedness and holiness of the world

Full poem at <https://www.poemhunter.com/poem/monet-refuses-the-operation/>

Read by author: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dR1j-o_0x5A

Accompanying his paintings: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eC0sotAbdIA>

Sermon Seeds

Angles, Ideas & Twists To Get Your Sermon Started!

Don't forget to explore the small group packet for additional sermon seeds. It contains quotes and poems to enhance your sermon, as well as numerous sermon angles in the questions and the spiritual exercises.

On renewing our covenant to each other...

On the renewing power of covenant...

Quote - [Rev. Gretchen Haley](#)

Covenantal theology doesn't just say that we become human through our promising, but also we become human when we break those promises, and yet somehow find ways to reconnect and begin again – when we repair the relationship because we know we need each other – even when we think the other isn't doing enough – even when our partner is annoying us, or isn't listening well, or isn't doing things the way we want them done – even then – when we realize right then, that we are still partners, and we can't give up – and so we return, and begin again – it is this beginning again that is what it means to be human.

Quote - Rev. Gretchen Haley

What our faith asks of us, what our faith imagines for us, is that somehow, right at that moment when our hearts break, we will find our way to see through that heartbreak. We will stay put – not close off, not run away, not hurt back – but keep on being in relationship, doing what we can to repair the world and each other.

Quote - Werner Herzog

Whether something lasts or not has nothing to do with whether it's made of stone or steel or wood or fabric. A house built all in wood can be a monument that lasts for hundreds of years because it seduces people to live in it, to use it and maintain it. Eternity depends on whether people are willing to take care of something. In Greece, ordinary white houses are repainted every year. Today we are often told to use materials and structures that are free of maintenance. But no building can be neglected entirely. We need constantly to renew our relationships – to the houses we live in, to our friends, to our own bodies – all the time, every day.

On church community as a place of renewal...

Quote - Howard Thurman (quoted in Mark Morrison Reed's *Black Pioneers*, p. 165)

It was my conviction and determination that the church would be a resource for activists -- a mission fundamentally perceived. To me it was important that individuals who were in the thick of the struggle for social change would be able to find renewal and fresh courage in the spiritual resources of the church.

Quote - Margaret Halsey

On the need to continually renew our commitment people when the society around us urges a commitment to things

“A commercial society urges its citizens to be responsible for things, but not for people. It is the unquestioned assumption of a mercantile culture that things need and deserve attention, but that people can take care of themselves.”

Sermon Angle - Covid as renewing (stirring up) old feelings of vulnerability and unsafety

This is a moment when we lack regularity, security and even safety. If one has a history of feeling unsafe, today's events can trigger an avalanche of old emotions about previous moments of vulnerability. How do we take seriously this dynamic of current fears renewing and eliciting old trauma?

Poem - Let's remake the world with words, by Gregory Orr

Full Poem at: <https://onbeing.org/poetry/lets-remake-the-world-with-words/>

"Let's,
As Wordsworth said, remove
"The dust of custom" so things
Shine again..."

Gregory Orr shares that the poem To remake the world with words is about "becoming aware of the world that we inhabit every day-- to wipe away the dust of "everydayness" that has us not seeing things that are around us, not seeing or feeling the world we live in. The way sometimes after a heavy rain when the sun comes out everything seems washed and fresh and radiant."

On renewing our commitment to the work of racial justice...

Podcast - Why Now, White People?

<https://www.npr.org/2020/06/16/878963732/why-now-white-people>

Quote - [James Baldwin](#)

A country is only as good... only as strong as the people who make it up and the country turns into what the people want it to become... I don't believe any longer that we can afford to say that it is entirely out of our hands. We made the world we're living in and we have to make it over.

Podcast - Jesus Was Divisive: A Black Pastor's Message To White Christians

<https://www.npr.org/sections/codeswitch/2020/06/12/699611293/jesus-was-divisive-a-black-pastor-s-message-to-white-christians>

"Jesus is Trayvon Martin, armed only with a bag of Skittles and an iced tea against an entire world that would rather hang him from a tree than love him. Until we see this, we are lost."

Interview - Rev. William Barber's Renewal of the Poor People's campaign

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5Nlmp8xy3YY>

Sermon - Rev. Dr. Otis Moss III | The Cross and the Lynching Tree: A Requiem for Ahmaud Arber

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=l6985UG0Z3k&feature=youtu.be>

Book - Book: How to Be An Anti-Racist

Dr. Ibram X. Kendi

<https://www.uuabookstore.org/How-to-Be-an-Antiracist-P18538.aspx>

Related worship web reflection: <https://www.uua.org/worship/words/reading/racist-or-antiracist>

Reflection - Visitors in the Struggle for Racial Justice, Aisha Ansano

<https://www.uua.org/worship/words/reading/visitors-struggle-racial-justice>

Quote - The Unitarian Universalism That Does Not Yet Exist Quote, Rev. Natalie Fenimore

<https://www.uua.org/worship/words/quote/unitarian-universalism-does-not-yet-exist>

Quote - In This Delicate Turning, Rev. Marta I Valentín

<https://www.uua.org/worship/words/reading/delicate-turning>

Reflection/Sermon - The Promise of All Lives Mattering Sermon, Rev. Amanda Udis-Kessler

<https://www.uua.org/worship/words/sermon/promise-all-lives-mattering>

Quote/Sermon - Rev. Gretchen Haley

It is the time of year when many of us are prone to setting new goals, or intentions... In each of these official efforts, as well as in the ongoing informal ways we clarify and affirm our identity and our dreams, let us remember not only to articulate what we are for – our great and positive visions of joy, celebration, compassion, kindness and love. But also to claim clearly what we are against – to consider our lives, and this congregation, as a protest, a living breathing act of resistance against all of those things which stand in the way of our vision, those forces in our own hearts which would cause us to stumble, those habits in our own lives which keep us from who we are meant to be, and those dehumanizing forces in the world which work against the Beloved Community. Let us imagine not just that our lives will do no harm, that our community will be place of sanctuary, but also that we will be active agents in undoing the harm that has already been done.

Quote - Thomas Merton

It is my intention to make my entire life a rejection of, a protest against the crimes and injustices of war and political tyranny which threaten to destroy the whole human race and the world. By my life and vows, I am saying no to all the concentration camps, the aerial bombardments, the staged political trials, the judicial murders, the racial injustices, the economic tyrannies, and the whole socio-economic apparatus which seems geared for nothing but global destruction in spite of all its fair words in favor peace. I make silence a protest against the lies of politicians, propagandists and agitators, and when I speak it is to deny that my faith and my Church can ever seriously be aligned with these forces of injustice and destruction. My life, then, must be a protest against [those who invoke their faith in support of war, racial injustice and tyranny]. If I say no to all these secular forces, I also say yes to all that is good in the world and in humanity. I say yes to all that is beautiful in nature...I say yes to all the men and women who are my brothers and sisters in the world.

Video - Segregation Myth: Richard Rothstein Debunks An American Lie

<https://www.facebook.com/NowThisPolitics/videos/270363507375249/>

On renewing and correcting our understanding of modern segregation...

On renewing ourselves for the work of justice and repairing ourselves from injustice's harm...

Quote - @The Nap Ministry / Tricia Hersey

Rest is a form of resistance because it disrupts and pushes back against capitalism and white supremacy.

Article/Interview - It's a Right, Not a Privilege: The Napping Resistance Movement

<https://elemental.medium.com/its-a-right-not-a-privilege-the-napping-resistance-movement-54fc147ba32b>

“Hersey argues that, for Black people in America, napping is nothing short of a revolutionary act. It’s such a rare sight, in fact, that she had trouble finding images for the slideshow that plays behind her as she delivers her sermons...”

Book - Pleasure Activism: The Politics of Feeling Good, adrienne maree brown

<https://www.akpress.org/pleasure-activism.html>

“How do we make social justice the most pleasurable human experience? How can we awaken within ourselves desires that make it impossible to settle for anything less than a fulfilling life? Author and editor adrienne maree brown finds the answer in something she calls “pleasure activism,” a politics of healing and happiness that explodes the dour myth that changing the world is just another form of work...”

Article - In 'Pleasure Activism,' Adrienne Maree Brown Dares Us to Get In Touch With Our Needs

<https://www.colorlines.com/articles/pleasure-activism-adrienne-maree-brown-dares-us-get-touch-our-needs>

“Feeling good is not frivolous...It is freedom.”

Reflection and Resources - Movement Building

<https://www.nourishuu.org/movement-building>

A beautifully written piece from our friends at [Nourish - UU Dinner Church](#) about renewing ourselves for the work of justice through rituals built around gathering, cooking, sharing, and eating food.

Sermon - "Soul Renewal and the Practices of Holy Alchemy," Rev. Dr. Marlin Lavanhar

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UImliDXr3g8>

On doing “shadow work” to renewing the soul from the harms of white supremacy culture
Not permissioned for online worship

On renewing and re-envisioning the structures of policing, public safety & prisons...

GA 2020's Affirmed Action of Immediate Witness to Defund Police Departments

https://www.uua.org/sites/live-new.uua.org/files/20200625_aiw_amen_uprising.pdf

Article - The answer to police violence is not 'reform'. It's defunding, Alex S. Vitale

<https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2020/may/31/the-answer-to-police-violence-is-not-reform-its-defunding-heres-why>

Article - Growing calls to “defund the police,” explained

<https://www.vox.com/2020/6/3/21276824/defund-police-divest-explainer>

Article - Six Reasons Why it's Time to Defund the Police

<https://www.afsc.org/blogs/news-and-commentary/6-reasons-why-its-time-to-defund-police>

Article - Why Police Reform Is Not Enough

https://www.yesmagazine.org/social-justice/2020/06/02/police-reform-training/?fbclid=IwAR3Z0xqp_bivkistolPkhjWQKou9pDSZUhMp4uShLTRG9SRDQUVUPY8oKSO

Podcast - American Police, Throughline

<https://www.npr.org/2020/06/03/869046127/american-police>

Post - A message to white Unitarian Universalists, by UUA president, Rev. Susan Frederick-Gray

https://www.uuworld.org/articles/president-special-message-policing?fbclid=IwAR3DCoRYMYW_sqO7Vhg043YcqKIDdKohb1RZLA9WsfO96VohQTwco9AJw48

Post - Challenged to Think Anew, Rev. Jake Morrill

<https://www.facebook.com/revjakebmorrill/posts/10222571282100171>

Book - From the War on Poverty to the War on Crime, Elizabeth Hinton

<https://www.nytimes.com/2016/05/29/books/review/from-the-war-on-poverty-to-the-war-on-crime-by-elizabeth-hinton.html>

On renewing and deepening the discussion about “violent protests”...

Toolkit - Calling People in Around "Violence"

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1BQVqLVI-3zVb0VcsOZB7JKVaVsHllyjwM6cvdcqWHal/edit?fbclid=IwAR3w2QRnqlAiDaXfiQVbLGbAr9ch_7JLKKgNBN-u9qkXA-m7mQUMODI00_o

A guide for calling in white folks around the violence and property destruction narratives

(source: https://www.facebook.com/ShowingUpForRacialJustice/posts/3105260819520498?_tn=-R)

On renewing our faith by renewing our principles...

Background and resources - The 8th Principle

<https://www.8thprincipleuu.org>

Article - Black Lives of UU Organizing Collective Urges Adoption of 8th Principle in Unitarian Universalism

<https://medium.com/outfront/black-lives-of-uu-organizing-collective-urges-adoption-of-8th-principle-in-unitarian-universalism-377480e615ef>

On pursuing our passions as a source of renewal...

Quote - Howard Thurman

Don't ask yourself what the world needs; ask yourself what makes you come alive. And then go and do that. Because what the world needs is people who have come alive.

On renewing our sense of wonder and being renewed by wonder (1st UU Source)...

On re-awakening to and renewing our appreciation of beauty...

Blog Post - Don't Forget How Strange This All Is

<https://www.raptitude.com/2015/09/how-strange/>

Video - Sartre the absurdity of the world and its power to renew our feeling of freedom

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3bQsZxDQgzU&feature=youtu.be&t=57s>

Quote - Rev. Rod Richards

I all too often take for granted what I once deemed an unmerited gift. And it is often only in the face of a looming transition that I am inspired to remember—not only to bask in the memory, but to recall, remind myself of how I once received this gift with gratitude... Transitions; beginnings and endings; they provide a pathway into awakening and reawakening; into gratitude and a renewal of gratitude... Beginnings: “Today is the first day...” Endings: “What if this were your last day...” They cause us to reassess. They inspire us to consider what is most important. They remind us of the beauty that surrounds us... To paraphrase a popular song from decades ago, “You don't know what you've got till it changes...”

Blessing/Quote - Mary Jean Irion,

Normal day, let me be aware of the treasure you are. Let me learn from you, love you, bless you before you depart. Let me not pass you by in quest of some rare and perfect tomorrow. Let me hold you while I may, for it may not always be so. One day, I shall dig my nails into the earth, or bury my face in the pillow, or stretch myself taut, or raise my hands to the sky and want, more than all the world, your return.

Video Meditation - Gratitude (for the wonder of *this* day) by Louie Schwartzberg

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zSt7k_q_qRU

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4115qFsdWKQ>

Song - Good Morning Melody - So Much

[Lea Morris](#)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=llzzqUjOaFU&list=RDYaidTfyxgl&index=25>

Quote - St. Augustine

People travel to wonder at the height of mountains, at the huge wages of the sea, at the long courses of rivers, at the vast compass of the ocean, at the circular motion of the stars; and they pass by themselves without wondering.

On loving the world all over again...

On renewing our love of the world...

On renewing hope in the face of cynicism and slow progress...

Quote - Brian Andreas

"Anyone can slay a dragon, she told me, but try waking up every morning & loving the world all over again. That's what takes a real hero."

Related poem: [Good Bones](#), by Maggie Smith ([video version](#))

Quote - Greg Anderson

The single overriding objective in wellness is creating constant personal renewal where we recognize and act on the truth that each day is a miraculous gift, and our job is to untie the ribbons. That's the Law of Esprit: living life with joy.

Quote - Rev. Gretchen Haley

What our faith asks of us, what our faith imagines for us, is that somehow, right at that moment when our hearts break, we will find our way to see through that heartbreak. We will stay put – not close off, not run away, not hurt back – but keep on being in relationship, doing what we can to repair the world and each other.

Book & Book Review - Delighted by the Joy of Bad Things, by Dwight Garner

A review of Rebecca Solnit's [A Paradise Built in Hell](#))

<https://www.nytimes.com/2009/08/21/books/21book.html>

On the paradoxical dynamic of having our humanity renewed and reignited by disaster:

"As she moves confidently through her arguments, Ms. Solnit attacks thinkers on the left as well as the right. She criticizes Naomi Klein, the author of "The Shock Doctrine," for portraying civilians as merely frightened and disoriented during times of crisis, rather than invigorated and capable. She notes that the British intellectual Timothy Garton Ash fed stereotypes after Katrina, saying that the storm's "big lesson is that the crust of civilization on which we tread is always wafer thin." Ms. Solnit's optimistic book advances just the opposite worldview..."

Reflection - Getting Through This Day

Rev. Theresa Hardy

Full piece at <https://www.uua.org/worship/words/meditation/getting-through-day>

"I got out of bed this morning because of all those who had to get out of bed before me.

Martin and Coretta, the day after his home was bombed. (What did they tell the children?)

My father, every day of his young life in Lowndes County, Alabama..."

Reflection - Prayer for the Morning

Rev. Audette Fulbright Fulson

Full Piece at <https://www.uua.org/worship/words/prayer/prayer-morning>

Did you rise this morning,
broken and hung over
with weariness and pain
and rage tattered from waving too long in a brutal wind?...
Get up, child.
Pull your bones upright...
I know you wish the work were done...
But remember this,
tired as you are:
you are not alone....

On rest and renewal...

Quote - May Sarton, from *Journal of a Solitude*

I always forget how important the empty days are, how important it may be sometimes not to expect to produce anything, even a few lines in a journal. A day when one has not pushed oneself to the limit seems a damaged, damaging day, a sinful day. Not so! The most valuable thing one can do for the psyche, occasionally, is to let it rest, wander, live in the changing light of a room.

Quote - Maya Angelou

Every person needs to take one day away. A day in which one consciously separates the past from the future. Jobs, family, employers, and friends can exist one day without any one of us, and if our egos permit us to confess, they could exist eternally in our absence. Each person deserves a day away in which no problems are confronted, no solutions searched for. Each of us needs to withdraw from the cares which will not withdraw from us.

Quote - Maya Angelou

If we step away for a time, we are not, as many may think and some will accuse, being irresponsible, but rather we are preparing ourselves to more ably perform our duties and discharge our obligations.

Quote - Eleanor Brown

Rest and self-care are so important. When you take time to replenish your spirit it allows you to serve others from the overflow. You cannot serve from an empty vessel.

Reflection - Always Building and Mending, Mark Nepo

Full piece at <https://www.patheos.com/blogs/fieldnotesonliving/2019/04/13/always-building-and-mending/>
“The birds pausing from their tasks became silent teachers, saying without saying that we need to fall in love with the ordinary rhythms of life, again and again. And when the tasks are done or have become too heavy to complete, we need to pause and perch atop our worries and concerns. So we can return to the world and do what needs to be done, until what sustains us reveals itself like the inside of a seed cracked by our beak...”

Quote - L.R. Knost

Taking care of yourself doesn't mean me first, it means me too.

Reflection - When your spirit feels dry and dormant, Rev. Darcey Laine

Full piece at: <http://livinginspiritrevlaine.blogspot.com/2020/04/when-your-spirit-feels-dry-and-withered.html>

“The story of the amaryllis not only reminds us that renewal is possible, but that renewal is part of a cycle. Dormancy is not a disorder. Periods where we don’t grow, don’t flower are inevitable parts of life, are necessary parts of life, as we rest and preserve our resources for the turning of the season...”

Book - Sabbath: Finding Rest, Renewal, and Delight in Our Busy Lives, Wayne Muller

<https://www.amazon.com/Sabbath-Finding-Renewal-Delight-Lives/dp/0553380117>

Quote - Wayne Muller

Sabbath time can be a revolutionary challenge to the violence of overwork, mindless accumulation, and the endless multiplication of desires, responsibilities, and accomplishments. Sabbath is a way of being in time where we remember who we are, remember what we know, and taste the gifts of spirit and eternity... Like a path through the forest, Sabbath creates a marker for ourselves so, if we are lost, we can find our way back to our center.

Quote - Lance Witt

You can’t live life at warp speed without warping your soul.

Blog Post - Observations from my month-long Sabbath, Tricia Hersey

<https://thenapministry.wordpress.com/2019/12/01/observations-from-my-month-long-sabbath/>

“Things I confirmed on my 30 day Sabbath... Truly practicing rest is a battle and liberation practice. No one wants you to deeply rest, because the majority of people have never had the opportunity to practice it consistently, so there is no model for how to embody it.”

Article - The Lost Practice of Resting One Day Each Week

<https://www.becomingminimalist.com/resting/>

Scripture - Psalm 23:2-3

He makes me to lie down in green pastures; He leads me beside the still waters. He restores my soul.

Article on Psalm 23:2 - What God Meant by Green Pastures

<https://medium.com/@steppesoffaith/understanding-psalm-23-what-god-meant-by-green-pastures-and-still-waters-18051b4e471>

Excerpt: “In the areas around Jerusalem, the hillsides are mainly dirt and sand. There’s not a lot of lush, green grass. All you find are a bunch of rocks and maybe a sprig of grass popping up here and there, which you can see here. So, what could David have been referring to when he says God makes him lie down in green pastures?... It’s not a lot of grass. Just little sprigs. But it’s enough to take a bite then walk a little farther and take another bite. The shepherd leads the sheep through the sprigs until each sheep has had a chance to eat. It’s not a lot of grass sometimes, but it’s enough for today’s meal.

This is how God shepherds us. He doesn’t lead us to lush green cattle pastures where we have everything in abundance. No, God leads us along the right paths through the little sprigs giving us just enough for today. Tomorrow, He will lead us along other paths to supply our daily need. Some days He may bless us with a lot of sprigs, and other days there may only be a little. But, there will always be enough for what we need...

On renewing our balance...

Scripture - The Talmud

Look ahead. You are not expected to complete the task. Neither are you permitted to lay it down.

Quote - Rev. Susan Manker-Seale, Unitarian Universalist Minister

Out of our business, we are called back into balance, back into ourselves and the silence of present being. But it is not just back into ourselves to which we are called; it is also to the awareness of the continuous presence of the environment around us and within us. We are called to remember our relationships and our dependencies. We are called to once again feel the oneness which sustains our being in balance with creation, and to do so with wonder and appreciation.

On renewing nature and nature renewing us...

Poem - The Peace of Wild Things, Wendell Berry

Videos: <https://vimeo.com/99893181> & <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NleNb87WkHU>

In Song: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=x2aCm_Q76dA

Quote - Wendell Berry

The care of the Earth is our most ancient and most worthy, and after all our most pleasing responsibility. To cherish what remains of it and to foster its renewal is our only hope for survival.

Talk - How Nature Heals, by Kris Abrams

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NVQQA2-VjDk>

Meditation/Reflection - Grounding, Jess Reynolds

Full piece found in [Love Like Thunder](#), a UUA meditation manual & Soul Matters "[Common Shelf](#)" Book

"...when I have no more mass than a leaf dead on the branch, still this is enough for the earth to find me. She reaches for what little I have and says, stay... You are born of soil and sun, and all the heaviness of the earth is a call to you. The earth is reaching for you. Reach back. Reach back."

Meditation/Reflection - Conch Shell, Jess Reynolds

Full piece found in [Love Like Thunder](#), (pg. 40), a UUA med. manual & Soul Matters "[Common Shelf](#)" Book

"When the world is too much to bear, leave yourself behind and go down to the shore... You can stand there, your body an empty conch shell, the wind whipping through the space your heart usually occupies, and breathe... The tides slowly wear away at the ragged and scraped edges where we tore ourselves out, and what is left behind is as smooth as breath..."

On renewing and restoring what is supposedly "no longer of use"...

Blog Post - There Are Enough Signs, Shawna Lemay

<http://transactionswithbeauty.com/home/signmuseum?rq=restore>

A blog article on a museum that restores and renews old signs. What is calling you to tenderly renew and restore it?

"I think about now we're all looking for signs of tenderness. But today, I'll settle for signs, tenderly restored, carefully displayed..."

On repentance as renewal of the spirit...

On the renewing power of making amends...

On the renewing power of confession and forgiveness...

Podcast - The Refreshing Practice of Repentance, On Being

<https://onbeing.org/programs/louis-newman-the-refreshing-practice-of-repentance/>

Excerpt: “We cannot literally go back in time and undo what we did. And yet, repentance is precisely that process by which we can — in the moral realm, if not in the physical realm — we can go back to the deed, we can find that part of ourselves that led to doing the transgression, and reform ourselves. I find that inspiring, to think that we are not in bondage to even our most grievous mistakes...repentance really is about coming to terms with who we really are. And that’s true in a couple of a senses. It’s true both in terms of claiming our own mistakes, not running from them, not hiding them, but actually claiming them. Knowing that they’re true and owning them. And also owning the fact that deep down, our core essence is ultimately good... it’s about honesty and truthfulness. It’s about being true to who we really are, ultimately... It’s also about returning... There’s a voice always coming from Mount Sinai inviting us to return. And that sense of responding to an ongoing call that’s there, whether we’re listening to it or not, is very much a part of what we mean by repentance...”

Quote - From “Barry” in the comments section of [The Refreshing Practice of Repentance, On Being](#)

I was happy to hear Yom Kippur talked about positively. Nearly all of the liturgy of Yom Kippur uses the pronouns "us", "our", and "we." The forgiveness and requests for acceptance of our repentance, the desire for a fresh start, requires that we/I do not request these things for myself/ourselves, but for all of us. The creation of the new Year and of a new Start requires that I not only acknowledge my mistakes, as you and your guest discussed, but also that I remember the mistakes of my neighbor - how they hurt me - and that I forgive her. After all, how can I realistically appreciate the impact of the sequelae to my mistakes if I cannot appreciate the impact that others' mistakes had on me and my loved ones. And, if I acknowledge that they have hurt me, just as I have hurt others, then if I am to get a fresh start, what on Earth or Heaven makes me think that others should not receive a fresh start. The same mistakes and pain that I caused and request forgiveness for are the same mistakes and pain that my neighbor caused and receives forgiveness for. We make all the same mistakes and we make many if not all together. The melting of individuality into the reality of connectedness is one of the profound blessings that the day of Yom Kippur grants us.

Book - Standing Naked Before God: The Art of Public Confession, Rev. Molly Phinney Baskette

https://www.amazon.com/dp/B084Z6J1S4/ref=dp-kindle-redirect?_encoding=UTF8&btcr=1

On self-renewal through confession

Meditation/Reflection - Archbishop Desmond Tutu , from No Future Without Forgiveness

I will forgive you
The words are so small
But there is a universe hidden in them
When I forgive you
All those cords of resentment pain and sadness that had wrapped
themselves around my heart will be gone
When I forgive you
You will no longer define me
You measured me and assessed me and
decided that you could hurt me
I didn't count

But I will forgive you
Because I do count
I do matter
I am bigger than the image you have of me
I am stronger
I am more beautiful
And I am infinitely more precious than you thought me
I will forgive you
My forgiveness is not a gift that I am giving to you
When I forgive you
My forgiveness will be a gift that gives itself to me (26-27)

Quote - Patricia Hewitt

You don't repair that relationship by sitting down and talking about trust or making promises. Actually, what rebuilds it is living it and doing things differently – and I think that is what is going to make the difference.

On trusting the work of natural renewal...

Quote - Marty Rubin

The receding wave does not despair; it knows it will rise again.

Scripture - Isaiah 43:19

Behold, I will do a new thing; now shall it spring forth; shall ye not know it? I will even make a way in the wilderness, and rivers in the desert.

Reflection - When your spirit feels dry and dormant, Rev. Darcey Laine

Full piece at: <http://livinginspiritrevlaine.blogspot.com/2020/04/when-your-spirit-feels-dry-and-withered.html>

Excerpt: "If you feel dry and withered right now, that doesn't mean you are doing it wrong. It just means you are in a dry patch. It doesn't always feel good to be dry, to be dormant, especially when we can't see even a sliver of green, to assure us that renewal is possible. But life promises that no matter how old we get, no matter how dried up and withered we feel, something new is always possible. That's the nature of life; life finds a way."

Reflection - I'm Tired, Rev. Darcey Laine

Full piece at <http://livinginspiritrevlaine.blogspot.com/2019/05/im-tired.html>

Excerpt: "so often I assume that I am indispensable... Even if my body and spirit are asking for a break... But if I power through, I am not leaving room for guidance of the spirit... It's a leap of faith to be authentic and honest, rather than ignoring the messages of body and spirit saying, "I'm tired" or "this doesn't feel right" and powering through. It requires faith that we are not alone- faith that we are part of a web of community larger than ourselves. Can we have faith that if the spirit is truly calling us to do something, spirit will help make it happen like a stream helps the paper boats that children set on the water and release?..."

Quote - Rebecca Solnit, A Field Guide to Getting Lost

Leave the door open for the unknown, the door into the dark. That's where the most important things come from, where you yourself came from, and where you will go.

Quote - Rebecca Solnit, A Field Guide to Getting Lost

The people thrown into other cultures go through something of the anguish of the butterfly, whose body must disintegrate and reform more than once in its life cycle. In her novel "Regeneration," Pat Barker writes of a doctor who "knew only too well how often the early stages of change or cure may mimic deterioration. Cut a chrysalis open, and you will find a rotting caterpillar. What you will never find is that mythical creature, half caterpillar, half butterfly, a fit emblem of the human soul, for those whose cat of mind leads them to seek such emblems. No, the process of transformation consists almost entirely of decay." But the butterfly is so fit an emblem of the human soul that its name in Greek is "psyche," the word for soul. We have not much language to appreciate this phase of decay, this withdrawal, this era of ending that must precede beginning. Nor of the violence of the metamorphosis, which is often spoken of as though it were as graceful as a flower blooming.

Miscellaneous Angles...

Quote - Dianne Ackerman, from [Deep Play](#)

A funny notion, feeling whole. In rare moments of deep play, we can lay aside our sense of self, shed time's continuum, ignore gain, and sit quietly in the absolute present, watching the world's ordinary miracles. No mind or heart hobbles. No analyzing or explaining. No questing for logic. No promises. No goals. No relationships. No worry.

Book - Deep Play

Diane Ackerman

https://www.amazon.com/dp/B004ZZJ9LM/ref=dp-kindle-redirect?_encoding=UTF8&btkr=1

Article - Diane Ackerman on the Evolutionary and Existential Purpose of Deep Play

<https://www.brainpickings.org/2016/08/04/diane-ackerman-deep-play/>

Quote - Sue Patton Thoele

Deep listening is miraculous for both listener and speaker. When someone receives us with open-hearted, non-judging, intensely interested listening, our spirits expand.

Quote - Wendy Palmer, from [The Intuitive Body](#)

Our compost pile needs to be turned over. And at the right time, this rich mixture of broken dreams, pain, and fear and the fermented wisdom of our past seasons is spread upon the ground to enrich the soil and nourish our new crop of insights, ideas, and visions. Birth, growth, change, fruition, death, decay, and rebirth lead to more growth in a continuous, ongoing cycle. All of this happens naturally, whether we like it or not. It is our choice, our human prerogative, to open to life, to appreciate it, be awed by it or not. The choice is ours.

Quote - [Richard Rohr](#)

Loss and renewal is the perennial, eternal, transformative pattern. It's like a secret spiral: each time you allow the surrender, each time you can trust the dying, you will experience a new quality of life within you

Sermon - "Rupture Before Renewal," Rev Joseph Boyd

<https://uuyo.org/sermon-aug-6-2017-rupture-before-renewal/>

"It is impossible to experience genuine renewal without experiencing rupture. If we spend our energy trying to manage or avoid rupture, our renewal can be shallow, and can fail to touch us at the source of our living."

Permission Note: *This is for personal inspiration only and not to be used in online worship*

Scripture - Isaiah 40:31

those who wait on the Lord
Shall renew their strength;
They shall mount up with wings like eagles,
They shall run and not be weary,
They shall walk and not faint.

Quote - Rachel Naomi Remen

We restore the holiness of the world through our lovingkindness and compassion. Everyone participates. It is a collective task. Every act of lovingkindness, no matter how great or small, repairs the world.

Quote - Bo Lozoff; It's A Meaningful Life, It Just Takes Practice

Tikkun is a Hebrew word that is often translated as “world repair.” To me, tikkun is not just about external service; it starts in our most basic, almost instinctual view of being involved with life as a helper. ...This spirit of tikkun is the essence of compassionate service—not how much good we do, but rather waking and sleeping, eating and breathing, working and playing, with an unforced, underlying attitude of goodwill; no time off. When we leave from our volunteer stint at the orphanage or the soup kitchen or the AIDS hospice and stop off at the grocery store on the way home, we must understand that noticing the cashier as a human being is as significant as whatever noble cause we just volunteered for. It is nothing short of barbaric to deal with as many human beings as most of us deal with every day and have as little real human contact as many of us do.

Reflection - My Commitments to Myself - A recipe for self-renewal

Laura Mancuso

<https://www.uua.org/worship/words/meditation/my-commitments-myself>

Full of sermon angles!!

More Soul Matters Resources Related to Renewal

Water Communion Worship Packet

Found on our [“Special Topic Worship Packets”](#) page.

Sacred Words Worship Packets

If you purchased the 2019-20 [Sacred Words Worship packets](#), many of those sacred words themes pair well with and provide resources for this year’s 2020-21 themes. For instance, we suggest exploring the Sacred Words “Awakening” packet for ideas about “Renewal.” See our suggestions for pairings for the entire year [HERE](#).

Recommended Sermons

Note about 2020-21 sermon recommendations:

Types of sermons referenced: Our approach to sermon support for 2020-21 will likely evolve as the year progresses. There are a number of emerging discussions about fair use of sermons, particularly around ensuring that congregations compensate preachers fairly and ensuring that systems offering free sermons don't undermine UU preachers who depend on guest preaching income for their livelihood.

So for now, we are only referencing and securing permission for sermon texts and audio clips. The current consensus seems to be that access to free texts and audio files (versus video files) does not undermine those offering sermon videos or virtual guest preaching.

We are exploring various additional ways for you to gain access to sermons and virtual guest preachers on our monthly themes. We will share those options if and when they emerge.

Permissions: To save you time and legwork, we're instituting a new practice of securing online permissions for all the sermons we reference. All of the sermons below have received permission for your online use. Unless otherwise noted, they can be used for both live streaming and recorded services that are posted on YouTube or a podcast.

However, if you want to make any changes to the sermon for brevity or contextualization, **you need to reach out to the preachers directly for such editing permission**. Contact information of each of the referenced preachers is at the end of the Sermon section.

Attending to Our Shared Humanity, Rev. Joan Javier-Duval

https://ucmvt.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/11/November-10_Attending-to-Our-Shared-Humanity.pdf

On renewing each other and our world with our attention.

Return Again, Rev. Joan Javier-Duval

https://ucmvt.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/September-29_Return-Again.pdf

On the longing to renew our lives and "return to who we are."

(Rosh Hashanah focus)

Born and Reborn, Rev. Victoria Safford

<https://whitebearunitarian.org/born-and-reborn-03-13-16-sermon/>

On leaning into and learning from the inevitable unfolding and renewing of our lives.

Feeding Our Souls, Reverend Dr. Kristen L. Harper

<https://barnstableuu.org/worship/KLHsermons.html>

On that which renews up most deeply.

Learning to Craft Community, Rev. Aisha Ansano

<https://www.firstchurchboston.org/media/learning-to-craft-community>

On renewing our communities by bringing our whole selves

Permission Note: Rev. Ansano permits use of her sermon recording in a livestream service but not for services that are recorded and posted on YouTube or to podcasts. Rev. Ansano also would appreciate a quick note if you decide to use the sermon.

Opening to Pain, Rev. Emily Wright-Magoon

<http://www.uumidland.org/blog/2019/03/01/opening-to-pain/>

On allowing pain to open and renew us.

“My doula held my hand and in the few seconds between a contraction she told me: “Now here’s the thing: when you relax and open to the pain, you’re going to feel more pain. And you’re immediately going to want to tense up again. But remember: through the pain is where you want to go.” I was not in a good mood...”

Sabbath as Whole-Heartedness, Rev. Emily Wright-Magoon

<http://www.uumidland.org/blog/2017/10/05/sabbath-as-whole-heartedness/>

On renewal as re-connection rather than rest.

“The monk looks at him with an acute, compassionate ferocity for a brief moment, taking it all in, and then says: ‘You know that the antidote to exhaustion is not necessarily rest? ...The antidote to exhaustion is wholeheartedness...’”

Rebellion Verses Renewal, Rev. Sarah C. Richards

<http://carbondaleuf.org/sermons/rebellion-versus-renewal/>

On moving from rebelling against our religious pasts to reclaiming them as a source of renewal.

“Our facilitator from the MidAmerica Region shared a concept she had learned, about the distinction between a congregation of refugees, and a congregation of pilgrims. Refugees come to the religious community fleeing from something, and pilgrims are drawn to it seeking something. When I first started thinking about this distinction, I saw UU refugees and pilgrims as two separate groups—those escaping discrimination or cruelty in a previous religious community and those who hadn’t. But that kind of clearly bounded dualistic model rarely applies in real life, and I came to think about them as two ends of a spectrum; how one could start as a refugee and through time and an intentional Sankofa-type learning could let go of baggage and move towards a kind of pilgrim/seeker attitude...”

Permission Note: Rev. Richards gives permission for her sermon to be used in online worship (live-stream or recorded) as long as it is only the video/audio that is posted, not the text. Additionally, if edits are made the user needs to make that clear when reading.

An Undivided Life, Rev. Dr. Sandra Fees

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1upfqqTIIg1fivES3wYQC4vbks0NiG3T_EGT0RGojXpQ/edit?usp=sharing

On renewing ourselves through the work of leaving things behind

“Some things needed to be left behind. Including the tree. Bringing forth what is within us means embracing a vision and also leaving some things behind. It sometimes means unbecoming, as Albert Schweitzer calls it...”

Welcoming Repair, Rev. Dr. Sandra Fees

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1ZcGX37EAKJowKOEVhWNzaetko3jtXAzBAG_pGc3doU/edit?usp=sharing

“Baylor realized the friendship was at a crossroads. He was at a crossroads. He needed to decide. Would he walk away or forgive his friend with the hope of renewal...”

Featured Preacher Bios & Contact Information

Rev. Joan Javier-Duval

Bio & Contact information: <https://ucmvt.org/reverend-joan-javier-duval-minister/>

Rev. Victoria Safford

Bio & Contact info: <https://whitebearunitarian.org/ministers-and-staff/>

Rev. Dr. Kristen Harper

Bio & Contact information: <https://barnstableuu.org/about/staff.html>

Rev. Aisha Ansano

Bio: <http://www.aishaansano.com/about>

Contact information: <http://www.aishaansano.com/connect>

Rev. Emily Wright-Magoon

Bio & Contact information: <http://www.uumidland.org/about-us/staff/>

Rev. Sarah C. Richards

Bio & Contact information: <http://carbondaleuf.org/meet-minister-staff/>

Rev. Dr. Sandra Fees

Bio: <https://uuberks.org/about/meet-our-minister/>

Contact information: <https://uuberks.org/about/about-us/contact/>

Closing Words

Prayer for Living in Tension**

Rev. Joe Cherry

Full piece found in [Content for Inclusive UU Ministry in a Time of Pandemic](#)
<https://tinyurl.com/intimeofpandemic>

If we have any hope of transforming the world and changing ourselves,
We must be
Bold enough to move into our discomfort...

Wellspring of Peace**

Marcia Falk

Full piece in #234 in [Lifting our Voices](#)
[Permission Source](#)

To Float into Creator Spirit's Deep Embrace**

Denise Levertov

Full piece in #17 in [Lifting our Voices](#)
[Permission Source](#)

The Moments of My High Resolve**

Rev. Dr. Howard Thurman

"Keep fresh before me the moments of my High Resolve, that in fair weather or in foul, in good times or in tempests... I may not forget that to which my life is committed. Keep fresh before me the moments of my high resolve."

[Permission note](#): *Quote, so fair use*

Support

Join the Soul Matters Worship Leader Support Facebook Page:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/soulmatterssharingcircle/>

Join the Soul Matters Ministers' Support Facebook Page:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/719788338192570/>

Attend one of our two monthly online ministers' brainstorming groups:

First Tuesdays and First Thursdays of each month at 1pm eastern
with this zoom link: <https://zoom.us/j/5857099120>

Attend our monthly online musicians' brainstorming group:

Second Thursdays of each month at 1pm eastern
with this zoom link: <https://zoom.us/j/5857099120>

Inspiration

Our Facebook Inspiration Page:

<https://www.facebook.com/soulmatterssharingcircle/>

Our Instagram Page:

Find us as "soul_matters_circle"

Music Playlists:

Click [here](#) for links to the [Spotify playlists](#) for each month.

Click [here](#) to check out the [YouTube playlists](#).



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