



Soul Matters

Embracing Possibility



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About Online Permissions & Supporting Multi-Platform Worship

This will be a year of transition and trying new things for all of us. As we move back to in-person worship, most of us will likely also continue with some form of online worship, whether that be offering an actual online service or just posting the recordings of our in-person services online.

To support these various kinds of multi-platform worship, we will continue our practice of researching for material that is permissioned for online. Like in the past, we will identify online permissioned material with an asterisk and with more detailed “permission notes.”

Calendar Connections

September 2021

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

Interfaith:

- [Rosh Hashanah](#) - Jewish New Year - Sept. 6 - 8, 2021
- [Yom Kippur](#) - Jewish Day of Atonement - Sept. 15 - 16, 2021
- [Mabon/Autumn Equinox](#) - Wicca - Sept. 22, 2021 (more [here](#) & [here](#))
- [Sukkot](#): Feast of Tabernacles (Jewish) - Sept. 20 - 27, 2021
- [Rumi's birthday](#) - Sept. 30 (1207)
- [Al-Hijra/Muharram](#) - Islamic New Year (day and month) - begins Aug. 9, 2021

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. 6 (*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
- [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

Let Astonishment be Possible *

Rev. Gretchen Haley

[Permission secured by Soul Matters](#)

Whatever you have come in
anticipating
Whatever you expect
Or worry
For our world, for the future
For our lives -
Let it go
Make space in your heart
to be surprised
Make room in your soul
For a new story to take shape
Let astonishment be possible
At this life that remains
a miracle
Imagine here the bursting of joy

Relentless and resilient
Coming in waves
Washing over us
with music,
and story
silence,
and still this dreaming together
Being hope for each other
and courage
to believe
in this new day
dawning
for us all.
Come let us worship, together.

Welcome to this place of possibility! *

Marianne Hachten Cotter

Full piece at <https://www.uua.org/worship/words/opening/5451.shtml>

[Permission Source](#)

Welcome to this place of possibility!...
Here may our sight become vision
to see the unseen,
to glimpse the good that is yet to be.

Spilling the Light *

Rev. Theresa I. Soto

Full piece found in [Spilling the Light](#) (pg. 1), a UUA meditation manual & Soul Matters "[Common Shelf](#)" Book

[Permission Source](#)

"...together we will chase away the sickness, the secrets, and leave only the open
Possibility that the future is a space for growth."

Come Into This Place *

Margaret Weis

Full piece at <https://www.uua.org/worship/words/opening/come-place>

[Permission Source](#)

Come into this place with your whole self – the parts that are raw and exposed...
the part that is seeking the truth, the new, the possibility...

Space for New Possibility *

Rev. Gretchen Haley

[Permission secured by Soul Matters](#)

What's going to happen?
Will everything be ok?
What can I do?
In these days we find ourselves
too often
Stuck with these questions on repeat
What's going to happen? / Will everything be ok? /What can I do?
We grasp at signs and markers, articles of news and analysis
Facebook memes and forwarded emails
As if the new zodiac
Capable of forecasting all that life may yet bring our way
As if we could prepare
As if life had ever made any promises of making sense, or turning out the way we'd thought
As if we are not also actors in this still unfolding story
For this hour we gather
To surrender to the mystery
To release ourselves from the needing to know
The yearning to have it all already figured out
And also the burden of believing we either have all the control, or none
Here in our song and our silence
Our stories and our sharing
We make space for a new breath, a new healing, a new possibility
To take root
That is courage
forged in the fire of our coming together
and felt in the spirit that comes alive in this act of faith:
that we believe still, a new world is possible
That we are creating it, already, here, and now
Come let us worship together

unless we go forth... *

Rev. Karen G Johnston

[Permission secured by Soul Matters](#)

What can we only see in the dark?
How do we know the answer,
unless we venture there – into the dark --
without flashlight or headlamp
without candle or match
or glow of handheld screen?

What can we only know in the dark?
How do we sense the myriad possibility,
unless we go forth, this way and that,
lose track of forward, perhaps even up and down,
a spacious momentum drawing us on
unknowing making space for mystery.

choosing the possibility of thriving... *

Rev. Karen G Johnston

Permission secured by Soul Matters

We could be elsewhere
this fall morning
that offers itself up with sun
and school just in session.

We could be elsewhere,
still hiding under the covers,
or hanging out with funny cat videos,
given the news of horror and dismay
that greets so many mornings.

Yet we came together this morning.
We gather here every Sunday morning,
known by the company we keep,
sowing and reaping seeds of change
from deep with the earth,
choosing the possibility of thriving,
learning how we might lead in love.

What a time to be alive!
What an amazing thing
to gather together
for this blessed hour.

Let us begin our worship together.

Each Day

Rev. Kristen Harper

Found in [Voices From The Margins](#), a UUA meditation manual & Soul Matters "[Common Shelf](#)" Book
Not permissioned for online use

Each day provides us with another opportunity to love again...
This day is not different...

On the Brink

Rev. Leslie Takahashi Morris

Found in [Voices from the Margins](#), a UUA meditation manual & Soul Matters "[Common Shelf](#)" Book
Not permissioned for online use

Welcome Home *

Rachel Rott

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

Welcome home...

There is, in this place, the possibility of healing, of repair, of making things right: within ourselves, between us,
and with the wider world.

As we gather together this morning *

Bets Wienecke

Full piece at <https://www.uua.org/worship/words/opening/5185.shtml>

[Permission Source](#)

As we gather together this morning,
May we learn to recognize and affirm
The pieces of possibility --
The bits of good -- we bring...

The Door Swung Wide *

Rev. Scott Tayler

[Permission secured by Soul Matters](#)

As so much closed,
we were opened.
Normal was taken,
but it was also turned inside out.
Very little is inevitable;
Most of it is a choice: This is what we have learned.

So now the question comes: do we really want to go back?
We can weave a new world, friends.
The straw can be spun into gold.
A door has swung wide,
with possibility trying to pull us through.
And what of today?
Might it be our first step?

Building the Possible*

Written by Rev. Scott Tayler, inspired by and with use of the words of [John Schaar](#)

[Permission secured by Soul Matters](#)

May this flame cast its light
toward the coming days,
reminding us that “the future
is not simply a place we are going,
but a place we are creating.”
The path of new possibilities will not be found, but made.
A new world is waiting to be built.
May our time together light the way.

Meditations & Prayers

To ask what's possible... *

Rev. Sara LaWall

[Permission secured by Soul Matters](#)

Spirit of Life and love, holy mystery
May we hear the voice within calling us
To ask what's possible
To walk to the edge
To shed the fear and need for control
And dance with the infinite for a while

May we set down the list of wrongs and hurts
And see obstacles as invitations for innovation
Beckoning our creativity

May we hear each other's voices
of love and encouragement
May we hear the cries of the world
Asking us who do we choose to be?

May we be vessels of comfort and compassion
May we be vessels of hope and healing
May we be vessels of peace and justice.
May love prevail. In the name of all that is holy we pray. Amen.

Another Direction *

Rev. Sandra Fees

[Permission secured by Soul Matters](#)

The moment comes
when a choice arises.
A holy moment.
A decision must be made.
Do I remain as I am
or do I risk inching, leaping,
flowing in another direction?
Do I risk what I think
I already know and already am?

Do I forfeit my security
for the possibility that a simple shift
may alter the course of my life,
even perhaps the life of another?

I long to let go of all that restrains me
so that I might pursue the impossible
and surmount the insurmountable:

to let go of anger,
to let go of the need to be in control,
to forgive a friend,
to forgive myself,
to refuse what thwarts my spirit,
to refuse what limits my mind,

to surrender to what will come,
to surrender to this holy moment
I have let slip away for too long.

Song of the Universe

Manish Mishra-Marzetti

Found in [Voices from the Margins](#) (pgs. 35-37), UUA meditation manual & Soul Matters "[Common Shelf](#)" Book
Not permissioned for online use

"Can you still hear the song? The one sung for you
when you were born...
Listen carefully ... Can you hear it still? A song of possibility.
A reminder that
we still have time
to be who and what we need to be..."

A Prayer for the Possibility of Both-And *

Rev. Lyn Cox

Full piece at <https://www.uua.org/worship/words/prayer/heart-both-and>
[Permission Source](#)

...Source of Wonder, move us to express and live in gratitude for the beauty of this world, the loving people in our lives, and this day of possibility...

Each Breath *

Leaf Seligman

<https://www.uua.org/worship/words/meditation/each-breath>
[Permission Source](#)

We pause in the stillness to rest for a moment, to quiet ourselves so that we can feel what stirs within us. Each breath draws us closer to the pulse of life and with each exhalation we make room for something new...

Meditation on Letting Go *

Carol Allman-Morton

<https://www.uua.org/worship/words/meditation/meditation-letting-go>
[Permission Source](#)

May we let go of what weighs us down...
In our experience of letting go, may we be open to the possibility that we need not pick our worries back up...

V'ahavta

Aurora Levins Morales

Full poem here: <http://www.auroralevinsmorales.com/main-blog/vahavta>
Not permissioned for online use

Say these words when you lie down and when you rise up....
Inscribe them on your doorposts,
embroider them on your garments...
Another world is possible...

...imagine winning. This is your sacred task...
Defend this world in which we win as if it were your child...

Choose to Bless the World *

Rebecca Parker

<https://www.uua.org/worship/words/blessing/choose-bless-world>
[Permission Source](#)

Your gifts—whatever you discover them to be—
can be used to bless or curse the world...
the gift of speaking, listening, imagining, seeing, waiting

Any of these can serve to feed the hungry,
bind up wounds,
welcome the stranger...

Any of these can draw down the prison door,
hoard bread,
abandon the poor...

You must answer this question:
What will you do with your gifts?

Choose to bless the world...
Together—that is another possibility, waiting.

Holding Reality and Possibility Together *

Samuel A Trumbore

<https://www.uua.org/worship/words/meditation/holding-reality>
[Permission Source](#)

Each moment of wakefulness has so many gifts that offer energy and delight...
Even in moments of great danger, the direction of attention is a choice...
Great possibilities await us even if all we can see is the cliff before us...
Holding reality and possibility together is the holy, hope-filled work of humanity
If...we choose it, again and again, in love.

For A New Beginning

John O'Donahue

Full poem found at <https://soulbridging.com/new-beginning-john-odonahue/>
[Not permissioned for online use](#)

This beginning has been quietly forming
Waiting until you were ready to emerge...

Video Meditation - The Great Correction, Eliza Gilkyson

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qYopmvMQEul&t=113s>
[Not permissioned for online use](#)

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](#).
- 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:** Our monthly meet up times will be decided shortly, so stay tuned. We will use this zoom link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/5857099120>
- 4. NEW! An additional Resource Guide** containing suggestions for public domain sources, free music sources, sheet music purchase sites, etc. This is a living doc and will be updated monthly. Any additional helpful suggestions/resources can be submitted to: [Soul Matters Music](#)
- 5. Recordings** of all of our monthly music brainstorming calls are available [here](#).
- 6. 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 September 2021 - *Embracing Possibility*

from Soul Matters Music Resources Coordinator, [Molly J. Webster](#)

Hymns: Singing the Living Tradition - *online permissioned* *

All of the hymns listed below have permissions for in-person performance, live streaming and online recording/archiving, assuming you have legally obtained copies of the UU hymnals and unless otherwise noted. ([Permission Source](#))

- 16 - 'Tis a Gift To Be Simple
- 83 - Winds Be Still
- 88 - Calm Soul Of All Things
- 95 - There Is More Love Somewhere
- 100 - I've Got Peace Like a River
- 108 - My Life Flows On
- 117 - O Light of Life
- 118 - This Little Light of Mine
- 121 - We'll Build a Land
- 122 - Sound Over All Waters
- 123 - Spirit of Life
- 126 - Come Thou Fount

131 - Love Will Guide Us
142 - Let There Be Light
153 - Oh, I Woke Up This Morning
183 - The Wind of Change Forever Blown
293 - Sing Out Praises for the Journey
298 - Wake Now My Senses
352 - Find a Stillness
361 - Enter, Rejoice, and Come In
391 - Voice Still and Small
397 - Morning Has Come
396 - I Know This Rose Will Open

Hymns: Singing the Living Tradition - *Not permissioned for online*

The following permissions are needed if using in streaming/hybrid/online recorded services

20 - Be Thou My Vision (harmony: Abingdon Press, One License)
34- Though I May Speak with Bravest Fire (Hope Publishing Co., One License)
159 - This Is My Song (arrangement: Westminster John Knox Press, One License)
298 - Wake, Now, My Senses (harmony: Abingdon Press, One License)
305 - De Colores (words: donate to First Unitarian Society of Los Angeles by sending check, with Hodgin Press in memo line, Attn: Rochelle McAdam, First Unitarian Society of LA, 2936 W. 8th St., Los Angeles, CA 90005 and [email](#) the link to her.)
318 - We Would Be One* (arrangement: Westminster John Knox Press, One License)
354 - We Laugh, We Cry (donate to [Heritage UU Church](#) Cincinnati choir or children's music program)

Hymns: Singing the Journey - *permissioned **

All of the hymns listed below have permissions for in-person performance, live streaming and online recording/archiving, assuming you have legally obtained copies of the UU hymnals and unless otherwise noted. ([Permission Source](#))

1000 - Morning Has Come (must own the hymnal in order to use)
1008 - When Our Heart is in a Holy Place
1009 - Meditation on Breathing
1015 - I Know I Can
1018 - Come and Go With Me
1020 - Woyaya
1023 - Building Bridges
1025 - When will the Fighting Cease
1031 - Filled with Loving Kindness
1064 - Blue Boat Home

Hymns: Singing the Journey - Not permissioned for online

The following permissions are needed if using in streaming/hybrid/online recorded services

- 1013 - Open My Heart* (notify by [emailing](#))
- 1017 - Building a New Way (permission for duration of Covid19 crisis only; when a recording is posted, please include song-writing credit to Martha Sandefer)
- 1027- Cuando el Pobre* (words & music: Oregon Catholic Press, One License)
- 1034 - De Noche* (music: G.I.A. Publications, One License)
- 1052 The Oneness of Everything* (make donation on [Jim's website](#))
- 1054 Let This Be a House of Peace* (make donation on [Jim's website](#))
- 1058 - Be Ours a Religion (Seek additional copyright if streaming)
- 1059 - May Your Life Be As a Song* (make donation on [Jim's website](#))
- 1060 - As We Sing of Hope and Joy* (Seafarer Press, One License)

Contemporary Suggestions - Not permissioned for online

*If you are streaming your services/are hybrid, please note that all copyright permissions are your responsibility to obtain***

- *Somewhere Over the Rainbow* from *The Wizard of Oz*
- *This Is Me* from *The Greatest Showman*
- *The Impossible Dream* from *Man of La Mancha*
- *Pure Imagination* from *Willy Wonka and the Chocolate Factory*
- *Defying Gravity* from *Wicked*
- *When You Believe* from *The Prince of Egypt*
- *How Far I'll Go* from *Moana*
- *The Rainbow Connection* from *The Muppet Movie*
- *You'll Never Walk Alone* from *Carousel*
- *There's Been a Change in Me* from *Beauty and the Beast*
- *I Dreamed a Dream* from *Les Miserables*
- *A Million Dreams* from *The Greatest Showman*
- *The Climb* - Jessi Alexander & John Mabe
- *A Change is Gonna Come* - Samuel Cooke
- *Don't Stop Believin'* - Journey
- *Rise* - Katy Perry
- *Brave* - Sara Bareilles
- *The Call* - Regina Spektor
- *Light of a Clear Blue Morning* - Dolly Parton
- *Blackbird* - The Beatles
- *Here Come the Sun* - The Beatles
- *Imagine* - The Beatles
- *Possibility* - Lykke Li

Many of the above songs can be found on JWPepper, MusicNotes.com and the Chords/Tabs for most of the above can be found here:

[Ultimate Guitar](#)

[Ukulele Chords/Tabs - Free to Transpose](#)

[Chordify](#)

Choral/Vocal - Not permitted for online

All listed music can be found on [JWPepper](#) and can be located by title or by the included item #.

- **I Dwell in Possibility** - #11161176 - SSA - Words - Emily Dickinson - Music - Vijay Singh
- **Dwell in Possibility** - #10754523 - SSATBB - Words: Emily Dickinson, Music: Robert Kyr
- **Everything is Possible** - #10068784 (- 8786) - SATB, SAB, Two-part - Arr. Jay Althouse
- **Everything is Possible** - #3297048 - Two-part, Kirby Shaw
- **Realm of Possibility** - #10443532 - SA with opt. horn - Philip E. Silvey
- **I Am Possibility** - SATB - #11347946 - David von Campen
- **The Best of All Possible Worlds from Candide** - #974071 - SATB - Bernstein, Arr. Page
- **Possibility** - Lykke Li (piano/voice sheet music - #310336743E)
- **Show Us How to Love** - SATB - #11100195, Med-High Solo - 11317593 - Mark Miller
- **Broken Yet Chosen** - #10810289 - SATB - Mark Miller
- **Al Shlosha D'varim** - SATB, SA, 2-part - Allan Naplan
- **Hiraita, Hiraita** - SATB - #3303472 - Traditional Japanese Song - Ken Hakoda
- **A Change is Gonna Come** - SATB, SAB, SSA - Sam Cooke, Arr. Althouse
- **On the Pulse of this New Day** - SSA #11317445 - Words - Maya Angelou, Music - Rollo Dillworth
- **A Change Has Come** - SATB #311348245 - Rollo Dillworth & Jim Papoulis
- **Hope is the Thing with Feathers** - Words - Emily Dickinson - there are many arrangements of this piece - here are a few favorites of varying difficulty:
 - Kenny Potter - SATB - #10294909
 - Susan Labarr - SSA - #10340178
 - Sarah Quartel - SATB - #11160108
 - Noah Salem - SATB Divisi - #11195575
- **Light of a Clear Blue Morning** - SATB/SSAA - 10092212/10760290) - Dolly Parton - Arr. Craig Hella Johnson
- **Homeward Bound** - SATB, SAB, 2-part, SSA, TBB - Marta Keen, Arr. Jay Althouse
- **A Dream is a Wish Your Heart Makes** - SATB - #10093075 - Audrey Snyder
- **We Shall Overcome** - many arrangements varying in difficulty for choir, solo, and instrumental on JWPepper
- **Wide Open Spaces** - SATB, SSAA, TTBB - Sarah Quartel
- **Be the Change** - SATB, SA, SSA, SAB - Jake Narverud

Music for Online Worship from UUA - permitted *

The following videos may be used in online and recorded worship services by Unitarian Universalist congregations. The music that follows does not require additional permission for online use (see sidebar). However, be sure to provide full attribution to the composers and lyricists on your screens, not just verbally, for each piece that you incorporate into worship.

These videos are intended to lighten the burdens imposed by online worship. They should not be used to justify decreasing the wages or positions of professional music staff. ([Permission Source](#))

- ["There Is More Love Somewhere" \(YouTube\)](#) (#95 in *Singing the Living Tradition*; [African American hymn](#)). Singing by [Jess Huetteman](#).
- ["My Life Flows On in Endless Song" \(Vimeo\)](#) (#108 in *Singing the Living Tradition*; Quaker text paired with melody written by American Baptist minister Robert Wadsworth Lowry). Piano and melodica by Michael Frye-Hunt; vocals by Dorothy Frye-Hunt.
- ["Spirit of Life" \(YouTube\)](#) twice through (#123 in *Singing the Living Tradition*; music and words by Carolyn McDade). By Jennifer Nicolosi (Lead Music Director, Unitarian Universalist Church West, Brookfield WI).

- ["Spirit of Life" \(GoogleDrive\)](#) (#123 in *Singing the Living Tradition*; music and words by Carolyn McDade, Harmony by Grace Lewis-McLaren.) Choral arrangement by Nylea L. Butler-Moore. Video by the UU Virtual Singers of the Unitarian Church of Los Alamos, NM; Nylea Butler-Moore, Music Director; Rick Bolton, AV Engineer. If you use this video, please email Nylea at nyleab@uulosalamos.org.
- ["I Know This Rose Will Open" \(YouTube\)](#) (by Rev. Mary Grigolia; #396 in *Singing the Living Tradition*). Piano and singing by [Jess Huetteman](#).
- ["To See a World" \(GoogleDrive\)](#) (#398 in *Singing the Living Tradition*; words by William Blake, music traditional Norwegian, arranged by Edvard Grieg.) Video by the UU Virtual Singers of the Unitarian Church of Los Alamos, NM; Nylea Butler-Moore, Music Director; Rick Bolton, AV Engineer. If you use this video, please email Nylea at nyleab@uulosalamos.org.
- Please visit the [Oneness of Everything playlist \(YouTube\)](#), created by Paul Thompson (Music Director at the UU Church of the Palouse, Moscow ID), of multiple hymns from our UU hymnals
- ["Morning Has Come \(YouTube\)"](#) (words & music by Jason Shelton; #1000 in *Singing the Journey*). Created by Paul Thompson (Music Director at the UU Church of the Palouse, Moscow ID).
- ["Meditation on Breathing \(Vimeo\)"](#) (words & music by Sarah Dan Jones; #1009 in *Singing the Journey*). Performed by Mary Pratt and Rev. Jim Magaw, UU Church of the South Hills, Pittsburgh PA.
- ["Open My Heart" \(YouTube\)](#) (words & music by Henry S. Flurry; #1013 in *Singing the Journey*). Performed by [Susan T. Mashiyama](#). If you use this song, [please share that info with Henry Flurry](#) as a form of connection and affirmation.
- ["I Know I Can" \(YouTube\)](#) (words by Dennis Hamilton; music by Jeannie Gagné; #1015 in *Singing the Journey*). Created by Jennifer Nicolosi (Lead Music Director, Unitarian Universalist Church West, Brookfield WI).
- ["Woyaya" \(YouTube\)](#) (words & music by Loughy 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).
- ["Blue Boat Home" \(YouTube\)](#) (words by Peter Mayer; #1064 in *Singing the Journey*). Created by Paul Thompson (Music Director at the UU Church of the Palouse, Moscow ID)
- Original Music: ["The Journey Becomes Our Home \(YouTube\)"](#) written and performed by James Underberg. (Please write to James if you use this video; follow link for address.)

But Wait, There's More... - Not permissioned for online

Please see individual citation preferences/donation opportunities.

Seizing Possibilities - Sharon Scholl - www.freeprintmusic.com

- Sharon would love to hear back from you about any music you download and use. Please contact Amanda Udis-Kessler at amanda@amandaudiskessler.com to reach Sharon. Amanda will pass along your messages and contact information.

The Light Comes as a Rainbow *- queersacredmusic.com - Amanda Udis-Kessler

The Day We Are Given *- queersacredmusic.com - Amanda Udis-Kessler

- If you would like to use any of Amanda's music, she encourages you to donate the money you would have spent on licensing fees to support local or national racial justice organizations.

From *The Justice Choir* Songbook - [Songbook | JUSTICE CHOIR](#)

- #2 - Ain't Gonna Let Nobody Turn Me 'Round
- #4 - Another World is Possible
- #5 - Be the Change
- #8 - Courage to Be Who We Are
- #11 - Pirkei Avot - If Not Now, When?
- #15 - Lift Every Voice and Sing
- #16 - Lift Up Your Voice
- #34 - We Are Rising Up
- #38 - We Walk in Love
-

The Justice Choir Songbook is a powerful new collection of songs for the issues of our time, and includes 43 new and re-purposed songs selected from a national Call for Scores. Made possible by Westminster Presbyterian Church of Minneapolis and many generous songwriters, the Songbook was co-edited by Abbie Betinis, Ahmed Anzaldúa, and Tesfa Wondemagegnehu. We hope you use the Justice Choir Songbook to help you and your community raise your voices together for change, equity, love, and peace.

Each of our songwriters has pre-authorized their song(s) free for all non-commercial use. This means you may duplicate and share these songs for use in your marches, rallies, educational programs, religious services, and any other non-commercial event.

Justice Choir is a template to encourage more community singing for social and environmental justice. Designed around our Justice Choir Songbook, our goal is a grassroots movement to engage in the empathetic, collaborative, and collective power of singing together to create change.

From James Underberg:

- [What Kind of World? \(Virtual Choir\)](#)
- [We Shine](#) - A contemporary take on We Laugh, We Cry (STLT #354)
- [The Journey Becomes Our Home](#) - On the challenges and opportunities of journeying into the unknown, and the need for community along the way (3rd/4th principles)
- [Unlearning My Way Back to Life](#) - In praise of unlearning perfectionism and moving towards and undivided life
- Many thanks to James from [4th UU Society, NYC](#) for sharing his videos and talent - more of his videos can be found here: [James' YouTube Channel](#)
- Anyone who'd like to make a donation to James can do so [here](#).

Extra, Extra!!!

Read all about: This Los Angeles-based choir, *Tonality*, is doing amazing work representing and amplifying marginalized voices and addressing complex issues within their community and beyond! Under the direction of founder and Artistic Director, Alexander Lloyd Blake, "Tonality is best known for creating choral concerts that focus on issues rarely presented in choral music. Concert themes have included gun violence, homelessness, refugees, climate change, mental health, women's rights, and exercising democratic rights."

Find out more here: [Tonality](#)

Stories For All Ages

Picture Books

No permissions secured for online use and recording

Rou and the Great Race - found [here](#) and [here](#)

Sometimes it takes a bit of looking before we notice the hidden possibilities in life.

Say Something - found [here](#) and [here](#)

It's possible for each of us to make a difference. And even more than that, we have the responsibility to help others feel that life is full of possibilities, to believe that justice is possible.

Dreamers - found [here](#) and [here](#)

What Do You Do With A Chance? - found [here](#)

Maybe - found [here](#)

A story about the endless potential in all of us

Be You! - found [here](#)

On embracing the unique possibilities of you!

Kamala and Maya's Big Idea - found [here](#)

"A beautiful, empowering picture book about two sisters who work with their community to effect change, inspired by a true story from the childhood of the author's aunt, Kamala Harris, and mother, lawyer and policy expert Maya Harris."

The Hardest Word - found [here](#), [here](#) and [here](#)

About how forgiveness and apology unleash and make room for new possibilities. Connected to Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur.

Wisdom Tales *

All of these are in the public domain and so can be used in online worship

The Messiah is Among You - found [here](#) and [here](#)

When hope is hard to find, we often look outside ourselves for help. We want a hero to save us, someone who we imagine has more power, smarts or creativity than we do. But our faith reminds us there is more strength, power and possibility inside us and among us and our friends than we think. Or to put it another way: The possible hero just might be you!

Answer Mountain - found [here](#)

Every problem is different. Even when we all face the same problem or challenge, the solution might be different for different people. There is rarely one answer that "fits all." There are, almost always, many possible answers to a problem or challenge. The more we stay open and flexible, the more possibilities we notice!

The Overflowing Teacup - found [here](#)

To embrace the possibility of wisdom we have to be humble, to empty our mind and make room for the new. Pour a cup of tea as a prop and keep on pouring until it overflows into a plate or basin you have ready.

The Power of Half - found [here](#)

On the possibilities unleashed through generosity and meeting needs greater than our own.

The Story of Caroline Veatch - found [here](#)

On the possibilities unleashed through generosity and meeting needs greater than our own.

Maybe Yes Maybe No - found [here](#) and [here](#)

If we can resist assuming the worst or assuming the best, we will notice that every situation keeps unfolding. Nothing stays the same. Each day is a new day. Every situation is full of many possibilities.

See the note below about purchasing a video version of this story from Lea Morris

Lea's Back! This time with story as well as song!

The Soul Matters Team is thrilled to announce that we've entered into another "creative collaboration" with Lea Morris. We let Lea know that we're focusing on wisdom tales this year and she generously offered to build one of her new projects around those wisdom stories we've selected to go with our 2021-22 monthly themes. This project is a story & song venture in which Lea tells a wisdom tale and then shares a song that the story inspired her to write. It's such a beautiful blending of her wonderful story-telling skills and her luminous songwriting and singing.

Her first video aligns with our theme for September - Embracing Possibility - and features the well-known and well-loved story, "Maybe Yes, Maybe No."

- You can preview the video at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cylvR7fBA1Y>
- You can purchase at <https://www.hopesingseternal.me/stories/maybe>

As with all ten of the videos she's creating, the purchase price per video is \$20. With your purchase comes the following usage rights:

- Playing the video in online and in-person worship services (including recorded services)
- Playing the video in online and in-person children's religious education programs/presentations (including ones that are recorded and posted online)
- Sending out a link to the video to parents so they can watch it with their children at home as part of their family spiritual life activities

We will soon share all ten of the stories that Lea will feature, but here are a few that are in the works: [The Parable of the Spoons](#) (for Cultivating Relationship - Oct), [God Loves Stories](#) (for Holding History - Nov), [The Tiger and The Strawberry](#) (Opening to Joy - Dec), and [The Cricket and the Coin](#) (Living with Intention - Jan).

Miscellaneous

Rainstorm Sound Chorus

Here's a popular water-related sound chorus to use for a Water Communion Service. It really sounds like a rainstorm! Scroll down on the webpage to find the Rainstorm activity. The message: Creating as a group can expand possibilities for wonder even more than with one person.

Online description: <https://www.uua.org/youth/library/deepfun/bond-building>

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.

Permissions Notes: In addition to the pieces we've noted as permissioned for online use (marked with*), you can use the fair use sized quotes and fair use sized portions of longer pieces in your sermons/services. Also pay attention to the hyperlinks we include within titles and authors' names; these hyperlinks provide the source material and in some cases direction for you to hunt down permissions on your own.

On the Possibility of a New Day

Quote - Henry David Thoreau, Walden

We must learn to reawaken and keep ourselves awake, not by mechanical aids, but by an infinite expectation of the dawn, which does not forsake us even in our soundest sleep.

Quote & [Prayer](#) - Valarie Kaur

What if this darkness is not the darkness of the tomb, but the darkness of the womb? What if our America is not dead but a country still waiting to be born? What if the story of America is one long labor?

Quote - Henri-Frederic Ariel

Let mystery have its place in you; do not be always turning up your whole soil with the plowshare of self-examination, but leave a little fallow corner in your heart ready for any seed the winds may bring, and reserve a nook of shadow for the passing bird; keep a place in your heart for the unexpected guests, an altar for an unknown God.

Quote - George Eliot

It is never too late to be what you might have been.

Reflection/Reading - Song of the Universe

Manish Mishra-Marzetti

Found in [Voices from the Margins](#) (pgs. 35-37), a UUA meditation manual & Soul Matters "[Common Shelf](#)" Book

"Can you still hear the song? The one sung for you
when you were born...
Listen carefully ... Can you hear it still? A song of possibility.
A reminder that
we still have time
to be who and what we need to be..."

Quote - Lewis Carroll, Through The Looking Glass

"I can't believe that!" said Alice.

"Can't you?" the Queen said in a pitying tone. "Try again: draw a long breath, and shut your eyes."

Alice laughed. "There's no use trying," she said: "one can't believe impossible things."

"I daresay you haven't had much practice," said the Queen. "When I was your age, I always did it for half-an-hour a day. Why, sometimes I've believed as many as six impossible things before breakfast."

Book - The Art of Possibility: Transforming Professional and Personal Life

Rosamund Stone Zander and Benjamin Zander

https://www.amazon.com/Art-Possibility-Transforming-Professional-Personal/dp/0142001104/ref=sr_1_1?ie=UTF8&qid=1538834867&sr=8-1&keywords=the+art+of+possibility+by+benjamin+zander

Related TED talk: https://www.ted.com/talks/benjamin_zander_on_music_and_passion

Related interview with Diane Rehm: <http://wamu.org/programs/dr/01/03/29.php>

On the Possibility of Social Change

Reflection/Reading - Portal

Emily Wright-Magoon

Full piece found in [Shelter in This Place](#) (pg. 24-25), UUA publication & Soul Matters "[Common Shelf](#)" Book

"The pandemic is a portal." -ARUNDHATI ROY

...Psychologists call this the doorway effect. Walking through open doors, crossing a threshold, resets the memory to make room for the creation of a new episode.

We are currently passing through many doorways...

Unless we make room for something new, unless we allow ourselves to be reoriented, no real change happens.

We just find the remote and go back to our show..."

Quote - [Charles Eisenstein](#)

For years, normality has been stretched nearly to its breaking point, a rope pulled tighter and tighter, waiting for a nip of the black swan's beak to snap it in two. Now that the rope has snapped, do we tie its ends back together, or shall we undo its dangling braids still further, to see what we might weave from them?

Quote - [Charles Eisenstein](#)

Covid-19 is like a rehab intervention that breaks the addictive hold of normality. To interrupt a habit is to make it visible; it is to turn it from a compulsion to a choice. When the crisis subsides, we might have occasion to ask whether we want to return to normal, or whether there might be something we've seen during this break in the routines that we want to bring into the future...

Quote (and interview) - Rev. angel Kyodo williams

<https://onbeing.org/programs/angel-kyodo-williams-the-world-is-our-field-of-practice/>

There is something dying in our society, in our culture, and there's something dying in us individually. And what is dying is the willingness to be in denial. And that is extraordinary. The willingness to be in denial is dying in a meaningful number of us, the tipping point. It's always been happening, and when it happens in enough of us, in a short enough period of time, at the same time, then you have a tipping point, and the culture begins to shift. And then what I feel like people are at now is, 'No, no, bring it on. I have to face it; we have to face it.'

Poem - The Hill We Climb

Amanda Gorman, National Youth Poet Laureate and the youngest inaugural poet in U.S. history

Full poem found at <https://www.cnbc.com/2021/01/20/amanda-gormans-inaugural-poem-the-hill-we-climb-full-text.html>

“...Every breath from my bronze-pounded chest,
we will raise this wounded world into a wondrous one...
We will rebuild, reconcile and recover...
our people diverse and beautiful will emerge,
battered and beautiful...
the new dawn blooms as we free it.
For there is always light,
if only we're brave enough to see it.
If only we're brave enough to be it.”

Quote/Prayer - A Sikh Prayer For America, Valarie Kaur

Full prayer at <https://valariekaur.com/2016/11/a-sikh-prayer-for-america-on-november-9th-2016/>

Video: <https://www.today.com/video/what-if-this-is-not-the-darkness-of-the-tomb-but-the-darkness-of-the-womb-watch-valarie-kaur-s-speech-917892675740>

“What if this darkness is not the darkness of the tomb, but the darkness of the womb? What if our America is not dead but a country still waiting to be born? What if the story of America is one long labor?...”

Book - [Emergent Strategy](#): Shaping Change, Changing Worlds

adrienne maree brown

Related articles on the book found [HERE](#) and [HERE](#)

Book - [The New Possible](#): Visions of Our World Beyond Crisis

Philip Clayton

Quote - Howard Zinn

To be hopeful in bad times is not just foolishly romantic. It is based on the fact that human history is a history not only of cruelty, but also of compassion, sacrifice, courage, kindness. What we choose to emphasize in this complex history will determine our lives. If we see only the worst, it destroys our capacity to do something. If we remember those times and places—and there are so many—where people have behaved magnificently, this gives us the energy to act, and at least the possibility of sending this spinning top of a world in a different direction. And if we do act, in however small a way, we don't have to wait for some grand utopian future. The future is an infinite succession of presents, and to live now as we think human beings should live, in defiance of all that is bad around us, is itself a marvelous victory.

Quote & Reflection - We Hold On

Rev. Theresa I. Soto

Full piece in [Spilling the Light](#) (pg. 48-49), UUA meditation manual & Soul Matters “[Common Shelf](#)” Book [Permission Source](#)

“...There is the moment when the dream we share
is newly born, wet and wriggling in our hands.
Sometimes it's true that salvific futures look
vulnerable and small before us. We remain unsure.
Just hold on...”

Article - Why the Coronavirus Is Humanity's Wake-Up Call

David Korten

Full article at <https://www.yesmagazine.org/opinion/2020/03/18/coronavirus-wake-up-call>

“This is humanity’s wake-up call. As we awaken to the truth of the profound failure of our existing institutions, we also awaken to the truth of our possibilities and interconnections with one another and with Earth. With that awakening comes a recognition that we must now learn to live lightly on the Earth, to war no more, and to dedicate ourselves to the well-being of all in an interdependent world... business as usual is simply not an option....”

Article - From Emergency to Emergence

David Korten

Full article at <https://www.yesmagazine.org/opinion/2020/04/23/coronavirus-rebuild-economy>

“While there is an almost universal desire to move rapidly beyond the COVID emergency, the spectrum of what we want post-pandemic is broadening. Many are articulating that they do not want to simply return to business as usual. In the United States, for example, we see the need for:

- A system of health care accessible to everyone regardless of income or documentation;
- Just compensation and job security for those who do our most essential but often least-rewarded work; and
- A guarantee that if your job evaporates, you won’t starve...”

Article - Coronavirus Spells the End of the Neoliberal Era. What’s Next?

Jeremy Lent

Full article at <https://patternsofmeaning.com/2020/04/02/coronavirus-spells-the-end-of-the-neoliberal-era-whats-next/>

“Once the crucible of coronavirus begins to cool, and a new sociopolitical order emerges, the larger emergency of climate breakdown and ecological collapse will still be looming over us. The Neoliberal Era has set civilization’s course directly toward a precipice. If we are truly to “shift course away from our failing trajectory,” the new era must be defined, at its deepest level, not merely by the political or economic choices being made, but by a revolution in values...If we can change the basis of our global civilization from one that is wealth-affirming to one that is life-affirming, then we have a chance to create a flourishing future... “A crisis is a terrible thing to waste.”...”

Article - Universal Basic Income: The Moral Birthright of Every Human Being

Jeremy Lent

Full article at <https://patternsofmeaning.com/2020/11/20/universal-basic-income-the-moral-birthright-of-every-human-being/>

“More fundamentally, UBI has the potential to shift underlying mainstream misconceptions about human nature. The dominant contract between capital and labor has reified the idea that humans are essentially selfish and lazy, and must be forced to work by a combination of fear and greed, which is effectuated by wages and other monetary “incentives.” However, it has been widely demonstrated (and summarized well in Rutger Bregman’s *Humankind*) that humans are nothing of the sort...”

Quote - Parker Palmer

If American democracy fails, the ultimate cause will not be a foreign invasion or the power of big money or the greed and dishonesty of some elected officials or a military coup or the internal communist/socialist/ fascist takeover that keeps some Americans awake at night. It will happen because we—you and I—became so fearful of each other, of our differences and of the future, that we unraveled the civic community on which democracy depends, losing our power to resist all that threatens it and call it back to its highest form.

On How Social Possibilities Become Real

Book - The Tipping Point (How possibilities become realities)

Malcom Gladwell

<https://www.amazon.com/Tipping-Point-Little-Things-Difference/dp/0316346624>

Reflection - Putting the Pieces Together *

Rev. Amanda Poppei

Full piece at <https://www.uua.org/braverwiser/putting-pieces-together>

[Permission Source](#)

Life has often felt to me like a jigsaw puzzle... or really, like the mess of pieces when you first dump out the box... I've learned to stay present to the slow work of sorting — and for that, I need the reminder of my jigsaw puzzles: the just world that seems totally out of grasp until, little by little, advances are made... the mess of a life that appears to have no resolution until, little by little, a new possibility of healing emerges... the path forward that's unimaginable, until it's not. So I'll keep sorting, and finding the corners, and waiting for the picture to emerge.

Quote - [Howard Thurman](#)

Look well to the growing edge! All around us worlds are dying and new worlds are being born; all around us life is dying and life is being born. The fruit ripens on the tree, the roots are silently at work in the darkness of the earth against a time when there shall be new leaves, fresh blossoms, green fruit. Such is the growing edge! It is the extra breath from the exhausted lung, the one more thing to try when all else has failed, the upward reach of life when weariness closes in upon all endeavor. This is the basis of hope in moments of despair, the incentive to carry on when times are out of joint and men have lost their reason, the source of confidence when worlds crash and dreams whiten into ash. The birth of the child — life's most dramatic answer to death — this is the growing edge incarnate. Look well to the growing edge!

Story - The Chair Men

Robert Fulghum

Full story found at <https://www.uua.org/re/tapestry/youth/call/workshop9/chair-men>

"...So. They are eating a chair... For all the goofiness of the project, these young men are learning patience and perseverance. Some things cannot be had except on a little-at-a-time, keep-the-long-goal-in-mind, stay-focused basis. Love and friendship are like that. Marriage and parenthood, too. And peace and justice and social change. As wonderfully silly as it seems, eating a chair may lead my young college friends to wisdom and nobler aspirations. In their foolishness lies the seed of What-Might-Be, little by little"

Book - The Impossible Will Take a Little While: Perseverance and Hope in Troubled Times

Paul Rogat Loeb

<https://www.amazon.com/Impossible-Will-Take-Little-While/dp/0465031730>

On What Our Words Make Possible (or not)

Quote/Article - Robert Macfarlane

“Language is a world-making, world-shaping force. It’s a geological force. It’s shaping the Anthropocene because the discourse we use shapes, of course, everything that we encounter in the world and the ways we frame the world to ourselves... The metaphors we use deliver us hope, or they foreclose possibility. The ways that we represent each to each other, or the human and more-than-human world, are incredibly powerful and determining, in the ways we then go on and behave towards those other entities....”

Illustration/Story - How Vision & Definition Unleash Possibilities

Shared by Rev. Joanna Fontaine Crawford;

From: On the Verge: A Journey Into the Apostolic Future of the Church

The Zenith Drilling Company prided itself on being the best drill-bit-producing company in the world. In many ways, they had revolutionized the industry, using tungsten-tipped drill bits. The problem is the competition caught up with them and began to erode Zenith’s market share to the point where profitability was in question. The board of directors decided to get a new CEO who could perhaps help the company recover its previously held market-leader status.

The new CEO called all the leaders and managers to a three-day crisis conference, where he asked everyone to clarify what they thought the mission of the company was. After much conversation and deliberation, they decided that their mission was not only to make drill bits but also to make the best drill bits in the world. They all agreed this was an excellent purpose for the company.

At this point, the new chief executive said, “No! Your job is not to make the best drill bits in the world; rather it is to make the best holes in the world!” They went on to innovate laser drilling and become the best hole-making company in the world.

Podcast - The Story of The More Beautiful World

<http://newstoryhub.com/2021/06/the-story-of-the-more-beautiful-world-charles-eisenstein/>

“We discuss the myth of separation that has permeated our civilization, and the deep wounds of self-rejection that it has created...”

Quote - Rev. Sara LaWall

Now when I say this line, “Ask what’s possible, not what’s wrong,” is a mantra, I mean that I use it in the truest form that mantras operate in our lives. I repeat it nearly every day, sometimes several times and I still fall short. Admitting my full humanity, I can dwell in the swirl of what’s wrong in the world, in my life, in your lives . . . in the pain of despair, and the weight of bleak pessimism. I can cling to my certainty about things SHOULD go, to my righteousness, and to my own resistance to change.

I am also really good, like so many of us are, at playing the shame game. Shaming myself (and blaming myself) for all the perceived failures in my life, for not being the best parent, the best spouse, the best minister, the best daughter, sister and friend; for not being the most responsible, organized, gracious, invitational person I can be. Oh and I am certain everyone else can be those things so much better than I. Perhaps some of you hear your own voice speaking those same words? Perhaps some of you see yourself in the same struggle?

Those are precisely the moments when a mantra is a helpful tool. We say it aloud again and again, speaking it into truth, hearing ourselves into speech. Ask what’s possible, not what’s wrong. (repeat if necessary)

Quote - Jelani Wilson

When forced into a binary, you always choose wrong.

On Coming Apart to Become Anew

Quote - [Heather Warman](#)

For a seed to achieve its greatest expression, it must come completely undone. The shell cracks, its insides come out and everything changes. To someone who doesn't understand growth, it would look like complete destruction.

Quote - [Rebecca Solnit](#)

There's another analogy that comes to mind. When a caterpillar enters its chrysalis, it dissolves itself, quite literally, into liquid. In this state, what was a caterpillar and will be a butterfly is neither one nor the other, it's a sort of living soup. Within this living soup are the imaginal cells that will catalyze its transformation into winged maturity. May the best among us, the most visionary, the most inclusive, be the imaginal cells – for now we are in the soup. The outcome of disasters is not foreordained. It's a conflict, one that takes place while things that were frozen, solid and locked up have become open and fluid – full of both the best and worst possibilities.

Quote - [Charles Eisenstein](#)

For years, normality has been stretched nearly to its breaking point, a rope pulled tighter and tighter, waiting for a nip of the black swan's beak to snap it in two. Now that the rope has snapped, do we tie its ends back together, or shall we undo its dangling braids still further, to see what we might weave from them?

Poem - *Song of the Shattering Vessels*, Peter Cole

Full poem here: <https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poetrymagazine/poems/56233/song-of-the-shattering-vessels>

Spoken: <https://vimeopro.com/vtvt/vtpol2015/video/126091373>

“That's the nightmare, that's the terror,
that's the Isaac of this art—
which sees that the world might come together
if only we're willing to take it apart....”

On the Possibilities Found in We

Quote - [adrienne maree brown](#)

Meaningful collaboration both relies on and deepens relationship—the stronger the bond between the people or groups in collaboration, the more possibility you can hold. In beginning this work, notice who you feel drawn to, and where you find ease. And notice who challenges you, who makes the edges of your ideas grow or fortify. I find that my best work has happened during my most challenging collaborations, because there are actual differences that are converging and creating more space, ways forward that serve more than one worldview.

Quote - [Paul Rogat Loeb](#)

Moments of doubt are inevitable, especially in a culture that embraces cynicism and mocks idealism as a fool's errand. But if we look at life through a historical lens, we find that the proverbial rock can be rolled, if not to the top of the mountain, then at least to successive plateaus. Indeed, simply pushing the rock in the right direction is cause for celebration. History also shows that even seemingly miraculous advances are in fact the result of many people taking small steps together over a long period of time. For every Desmond Tutu, there are thousands of anonymous men and women who have been equally principled, equally resolute in the same causes.

Quote - [Paul Rogat Loeb](#)

Even in a seemingly futile moment or losing cause, one person may unknowingly inspire another, and that person yet a third, who could go on to change the world, or at least a small corner of it. Mandela called this process “the multiplication of courage.

Poem - Breathe, Lynn Unger

Full poem at <http://www.lynnungar.com/poems/breathe/>

I didn't say to be calm, said the wind,
I said to breathe.
We're going to need a lot of air
to make this hurricane together...

Quote - [Rebecca Solnit](#)

A disaster (which originally meant “ill-starred”, or “under a bad star”) changes the world and our view of it. Our focus shifts, and what matters shifts. What is weak breaks under new pressure, what is strong holds, and what was hidden emerges. Change is not only possible, we are swept away by it. We ourselves change as our priorities shift, as intensified awareness of mortality makes us wake up to our own lives and the preciousness of life. Even our definition of “we” might change as we are separated from schoolmates or co-workers, sharing this new reality with strangers. Our sense of self generally comes from the world around us, and right now, we are finding another version of who we are.

Quote - Dorothee Sölle (or Soelle)

We are destroyed most thoroughly by that affliction that robs us of any possibility of loving any longer. . . . The capacity we need the most [is] the capacity to keep on loving.

On Defying Expectations and Embracing our Possibility and Potential

Quote - [Steve Garnaas-Holmes](#)

Gentle One, under every bridge [I see] the ogres of people's fears and expectations... give me the grace to step outside of this illusion. To see through the smoke and mirrors of pressure and anxiety. To get out of other people's fairy tales...

Quote - Rev. Dr. Frances Sink

Our expectations frame our view of what is to come. Too often that frame is distorted by preoccupations with where we have been, like trying to walk forward while staring back over your shoulder.

Quote - Johann Wolfgang von Goethe

If you treat an individual as he is, he will remain how he is. But if you treat him as if he were what he ought to be and could be, he will become what he ought to be and could be.”

Quote - Christine Valters Paintner

As we release the hold of expectations and disappointments, as we stop trying to live into the imagined life and live the one we have been given, we discover a profound inner freedom to make choices out of love, rather than obligation or resentment.

Sermon excerpt - Rev. Shari Woodbury

Full reflection at

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1g0nHzsQX62lyWkdFOxiqXMA5_I4Pzeblc5Jr6nMJWqU/edit?usp=sharing

On Karen Armstrong's take on the power of expectations and the hero myths that invite us to pursue our own path: "I had too clear a preconceived idea of what I was supposed to be, and was not open to new possibilities. So again I got lost in the wasteland."

Quote - Rev. Scott Tayler

Remember that you are always allowed to quit. There's nothing real about expectations. Their weight can feel solid and inescapable, but they're only imaginings. Your imaginings. Their strength comes only from your consent. The first step is never easy, but trust me, by your second step, you will discover how easy it is to break free.

Quote - Tara Brach

When we put down ideas of what life should be like, we are free to wholeheartedly say yes to our life as it is.

Quote - Unknown

What will mess you up most in life is the picture in your head of how it's supposed to be.

Quote - Rev. Sara LaWall

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Book - Originals: How Non-Conformists Move the World, Adam Grant

Book review: https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=171&v=utIMVnutzAk

2018 UU General Assembly Ware Lecture - Spirit of Expectancy, Brittany Packnett

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WkV2fNuN1C4>

Podcast - The Power of Expectations - Invisibilia

https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=110&v=hbhwIrrw_3o

Podcast - Flip the Script - Invisibilia

<https://www.npr.org/programs/invisibilia/485603559/flip-the-script>

On the possibility of changing ourselves by surprisingly changing our reactions.

On the Possibilities that Lie Beyond (and are born in) Grief

Quote - [adrienne maree brown](#)

One of my favorite examples [of emergent strategy] in the human world is actually the work of Black Lives Matter and the movement for black lives. And feeling like this is a emergent, It's not like someone sat down at a table and was like "I've got it all figured out, I know how we're going to catalyze black people into their liberation fight and taking direct action right now. That's not what happened. Was just a heartbreak. It really to me just grows out of a heartbreak. If you look at the original post Alicia put it was like "My heart is broken and our lives matter" and that that heartbreak was so catalyzing

Quote & TED Talk - We don't "move on" from grief. We move forward with it

Nora McInerney

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kxkJKR-iphw>

Article/Talk - The Alchemy of Heartbreak and Hope, Jeremy Lent

Full article/talk at <https://patternsofmeaning.com/2020/10/23/the-alchemy-of-heartbreak-and-hope-a-spiritual-practice-for-our-time/>

It's impossible to face these realities head on without feeling your heart break. Speaking for myself, when I've contemplated this humanmade enormity, I've sometimes felt swallowed up into an infinite abyss of darkness. Is it any wonder that people turn away from facing these facts, that they see one of those frightening headlines warning about climate breakdown and they click anywhere but there, read their Facebook feed, check out the latest tweet, watch the report on this week's political scandal? We live in a world designed to keep us numb—a culture spiked with incessant doses of spiritual anesthesia conditioning us to deaden our feelings, and adapt to the daily grind. But it's that very heartbreak that can free us...

it's in that place—of feeling the Earth's injuries, and feeling it with each other—that the alchemy emerges. It's in the cauldron of sharing our grief with our community, of gazing at it together and not looking away, that the heartbreak turns to hope..."

Reflection/Reading - Stretch *

Rev. Theresa I. Soto

Full piece found in [Spilling the Light](#) (pg. 74), a UUA meditation manual & Soul Matters "[Common Shelf](#)" Book [Permission Source](#)

"... What will become of failure? What can be built with an honest mistake? Keep paying attention. Keep dreaming and supposing that more is possible..."

Quote - Morrie Schwartz, Tuesdays with Morrie

Death ends a life, not a relationship.

Quote - Maggie Smith

Commit yourself to the present. Loosen your grip on the life you had before — before a loss, an upheaval, a change that called everything into question — so that you can be here, where you're needed, right now.

On the Fear of Possibility

Quote - Susan Hill

I walked up the stairs and hesitated at the open door.

Poem - then on the shore, Grace

Full poem at <https://hellopoetry.com/poem/1770153/-then-on-the-shore/>

"...I feel at home in the liminal, where the tensions hurt and erode but it's safe here, or safe enough... It hurts but not as much as it should."

Quote - Rev. Sara LaWall

But embracing possibility does not mean we stop short of acknowledging our own limitations, challenges, brokenness. Possibility rises within only when we root ourselves in reality, in our truth as we understand it, and then consciously choose to move to the edges of certainty, the edges of knowing, the edges of risk, the edge of potential failure. Embracing possibility means we might fail. We might step in it. We might get stuff wrong. We might get hurt. We might disappoint people; people we love even, we might disappoint each other. Embracing possibility means enduring a few wounds along the way. But that should not stop us from fully living into possibility; that would be allowing fear to take over.

Video Reflection - The Parable of the Trapeze

Danaan Parry

Video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HWvV5N4hOGc>

Text: <https://balanceyourlife.com/2016/01/the-parable-of-the-trapeze/>

Quote - C.S. Lewis

You cannot go on indefinitely being just an ordinary, decent egg. We must be hatched or go bad.

Poem - Magic Carpet, Shel Silverstein

You have a magic carpet
That will whiz you through the air,
To Spain or Maine or Africa
If you just tell it where.
So will you let it take you
Where you've never been before,
Or will you buy some drapes to match
And use it
On your floor?

Poem - For a New Beginning, John O'Donohue

Full poem at <https://www.poetry-chaikhana.com/Poets/O/ODonohueJohn/ForaNewBegin/index.html>

In out of the way places of the heart
Where your thoughts never think to wander
This beginning has been quietly forming
Waiting until you were ready to emerge.

For a long time it has watched your desire
Feeling the emptiness grow inside you
Noticing how you willed yourself on
Still unable to leave what you had outgrown...

Quote - [adrienne maree brown](#)

...there is what I think of as anti- nurturing—the ways we in a western/US context are socialized to work against respecting the emergent processes of the world and each other:

We learn to disrespect Indigenous and direct ties to land.

We learn to be quiet, polite, indirect, and submissive, not to disturb the status quo. We learn facts out of context of application in school. How will this history, science, math show up in our lives, in the work of growing community and home? We learn that tests and deadlines are the reasons to take action. This puts those with good short-term memories and a positive response to pressure in leadership positions, leading to urgency-based thinking, regardless of the circumstance. We learn to compete with each other in a scarcity-based economy that denies and destroys the abundant world we actually live in. We learn to deny our longings and our skills, and to do work that occupies our hours without inspiring our greatness. We learn to manipulate each other and sell things to each other, rather than learning to collaborate and evolve together. We learn that the natural world is to be manicured, controlled, or pillaged to support our consumerist lives. Even the natural lives of our bodies get medicated, pathologized, shaved or improved upon with cosmetic adjustments. We learn that factors beyond our control determine the quality of our lives—something as random as which skin, gender, sexuality, ability, nation, or belief system we are born into sets a path for survival and quality of life.

In the United States specifically, though I see this most places I travel, we learn that we only have value if we can produce—only then do we earn food, home, health care, education.

Similarly, we learn our organizations are only as successful as our fundraising results, whether the community impact is powerful or not. We learn as children to swallow our tears and any other inconvenient emotions, and as adults that translates into working through red flags, value differences, pain, and exhaustion.

We learn to bond through gossip, venting, and destroying, rather than cultivating solutions together.

Perhaps the most egregious thing we are taught is that we should just be really good at what's already possible, to leave the impossible alone.

Miscellaneous

Book - **The Black UU Survival Guide: How to Survive as a Black Unitarian Universalist & How Allies Can Keep It 100**

Xolani Kacela

https://www.amazon.com/Black-Survival-Guide-Unitarian-Universalist/dp/1513667254/ref=tmm_pap_swatch_0?encoding=UTF8&qid=&sr=

Poem - **Die Slowly**

Pablo Neruda

On how life lies in pursuing the possible.

Full poem here: <http://eleternoretorno.blogspot.com/2005/06/pablo-neruda-die-slowly.html>

Video Meditation: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=G6V7t5VByuY&list=PL804FB1BDEFCDDBBA2&index=14>

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

He or she who does not turn things topsy-turvy...
who does not risk certainty for uncertainty,
to thus follow a dream...
dies slowly...

Poem - One Hundred and Eighty Degrees

Federico Moramarco

Full poem found at <https://www.ayearofbeinghere.com/2014/12/federico-moramarco-one-hundred-and.html>

Have you considered the possibility
that everything you believe is wrong,
not merely off a bit, but totally wrong...
How different the world seems then:
everyone who was your enemy is your friend,
everything you hated; you now love...

Reflection - Finding Our Dreams *

Rev. Theresa I. Soto

Full piece found in [Spilling the Light](#) (pg. 6-7), a UUA meditation manual & Soul Matters "[Common Shelf](#)" Book
[Permission Source](#)

...the antidote for doubt is dreaming...
The dreams that seem impossible-
listen: that's their nature. If they
had already happened, then they
would be realities...

Quote - Korie L. Edwards, in *The Elusive Dream: The Power of Race in Interracial Churches*

If churches want to realize Dr. King's dream, they must first embrace a dream of racial justice and equality . . .
must become places that all racial groups can call their own, where all racial groups have the power to influence
the major decisions of the church, where the culture and experiences of all racial groups are not just tolerated,
but appreciated.

Find Additional Resources In Our Specialty Worship Packets

*We make specialty packets on a number of special Sundays and observances. You can check out all of those
specialty packets on our website at: <https://www.soulmatterssharingcircle.com/special-worship-packets.html>*

For this month, you might want to check out the following specialty packets:

- ***Water Communion***
- ***Honoring Pride***
- ***On Forgiveness***

Recommended Sermons

Notes about 2021-22 sermon recommendations:

- **We mostly list written scripts:** In order not to undermine UU preachers who depend on live and online guest preaching income for their livelihood, we mainly focus on sharing sermon texts (and sometimes audio clips), but not videos.
- **Permissions Secured:** To save you time and legwork, we secure permissions for most of the sermon texts 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, to be extra cautious and in good relationship, we ask that you reach out to the minister to let them know you are planning to use their sermon, also asking if they have any particular requests or guidance for how to do that.**
- **And Important Note About Editing:** If you want to make 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.
- **Looking for a virtual guest preacher?:** To support those who are still doing online worship, we've created a "Theme-Based Virtual Pulpit Supply Page" to help congregations more easily identify guest preachers who offer virtual sermons on our monthly themes. You can learn about and access that page at <https://www.soulmatterssharingcircle.com/virtual-pulpit-supply.html>.
If you are a preacher who is interested in guest preaching virtually (either directly or by selling a recording) on one of our 2021-22 themes, contact [Rev. Scott Tayler](#), our Team lead, and he can guide you through the process of advertising your sermon.

Sermons for Use and Inspiration *

The No that Makes Possible Each Yes

Rev. Victoria Safford

Text: <https://whitebearunitarian.org/the-no-that-makes-possible-each-yes-10-04-15-sermon/>

Serpentology

Rev. Gregory Pelley

Text: <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1OcuB8KbWTGkbf8dK5cndAaGocy2KFZd5/view?usp=sharing>

On the possibilities that lie beyond our fear.

Reimagining the Future

Rev. Shari Woodbury

Text: <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1IKPPMJsRZ0r0gYvROfA590deV5XLxGvR/view?usp=sharing>

If we can calm our very valid fears long enough to open our imaginations, I believe we can find a way forward to the world we want... When I feel overwhelmed and unsure what to do, I take comfort in remembering that people often don't understand their moment of history while they are in it..."

A Blessing for Beginning

Rev. Sara LaWall

Related to Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur

Text: <https://docs.google.com/document/d/1rZFUNpfqsCM4AOSIJnV-xg7v6jkso8-UZYJfXGEeSPc/edit?usp=sharing>

Never Forget – a Theology of Forgiveness

On the Possibility of Forgiveness

Rev. Audette Fulbright

Related to Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur

<http://www.uucheyenne.org/multimedia-archive/never-forget-a-theology-of-forgiveness/>

Featured Preacher Bios & Contact Information

Rev. Victoria Safford

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

Rev. Greg Pelley

Bio & Contact information: <https://www.uusmc.org/about/minister-staff/>

Rev. Shari Woodbury

Bio & Contact information: <https://www.firstuomaha.org/staff>

Rev. Sara LaWall

Bio & Contact information: <https://boiseuu.org/about-us/our-minister-and-staff/>

Rev. Audette Fulbright

Bio & Contact information: <https://www.allsouls-nyc.org/worship/sermons/sermons-by-audette-fulbright/>

Sermons for Inspiration Only

Should We Keep Hope Alive, Rev. Amanda Poppei

Rethinking the possibility of hope and opening to the power and possibility of lament

<https://soundcloud.com/ethicalsociety/should-we-keep-hope-alive-amanda-poppei>

Change, Rev. Gail Geisenhainer

Found at <http://uuua.org/index.php/worship/on-sunday/sermons-forums-2/sermon-audio-and-text> (Scroll down to the sermon, found at date: 08/16/15)

A sermon celebrating the possibility found in a “wider we.”

The Art of Possibility, Rev. Shawn Newton

Related to Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur

<https://www.firstunitariantoronto.org/services/the-art-of-possibility/>

Endless Emergence, Lena Gardner, Executive Director of BLUU

Audio <http://firstuniversalistchurch.org/sermon/endless-emergence/#description-tab>

Think it Possible That You May Be Mistaken, Rev. Nancy McDonald Ladd

Audio: <https://rruuc.libsyn.com/think-it-possible-that-you-may-be-mistaken>

Closing Words

Sometimes

Sheenagh Pugh

Full poem at <https://apoemaday.tumblr.com/post/164938363330/sometimes>

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...Sometimes our best intentions do not go
amiss; sometimes we do as we meant to.
The sun will sometimes melt a field of sorrow
that seemed hard frozen; may it happen for you.

The Humanity, Bravery and Goodness Calling Us Forth *

Rev. Sara LaWall

[Permission secured by Soul Matters](#)

When the pull to disappear takes hold
with all its harsh realities
May we conjure up that fierce love
to bring our hopeful vision into being,
Discovering the humanity, bravery, goodness
still calling us forth.
May we breathe into that story and make it come alive.

A New Song, a New Harmony, Adapted from Robert French Leavens *

Rev. Richard Gilbert

<https://www.uua.org/worship/words/closing/a-new-song-a-new-harmony>

[Permission Source](#)

An ending, or merely prelude to more glorious beginnings? *

Michael A Schuler

Full piece at <https://www.uua.org/worship/words/closing/5407.shtml>

[Permission Source](#)

We have reached the end of this time...
for letting the imagination play with future possibilities...
Shall it be concluded, then?
Or will this adventure, now commenced, continue?...
In your hearts lies the answer.

Take From Life Its Coals *

Laurel S Sheridan

<https://www.uua.org/worship/words/chalice-lighting/110092.shtml>

[Permission Source](#)

Stretch *

Rev. Theresa I. Soto

Full piece found in [Spilling the Light](#) (pg. 74), a UUA meditation manual & Soul Matters “[Common Shelf](#)” Book
[Permission Source](#)

“... What will become of failure? What can be built with an honest mistake? Keep paying attention. Keep dreaming and supposing that more is possible...”

We Are Not Done *

Rev. Audette Fulbright Fulson

Full piece at <https://www.uua.org/worship/words/reading/we-are-not-done>
[Permission Source](#)

Do not think we are finished—
oh no
we will never be finished
never just done
until the light of justice is lit behind every eye...

if we imagine...*

Rev. Shari Woodbury

[Permission secured by Soul Matters](#)

What a world there can be, if we imagine, if we share, if we care, if we act. What a world there can be, if we are indivisible in heart, and make the most of our one shot. Let us trust that the seeds we plant in time will flourish, and that we can create the tipping points for a better future. For our children’s children and the great web of life on earth, let us make a new start. So may it be. Amen.

The Door Swung Wide *

Rev. Scott Tayler

[Permission secured by Soul Matters](#)

As so much closed,
we were opened.
Normal was taken,
but it was also turned inside out.
Very little is inevitable;
Most of it is a choice: This is what we have learned.

So now the question comes: do we really want to go back?
We can weave a new world, friends.
The straw can be spun into gold.
A door has swung wide,
with possibility trying to pull us through.
So may today mark our first step.
And may it be one we take side by side.
So be it. Amen

Video Closing - The Great Correction, Eliza Gilkyson

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qYopmvMQEul&t=113s>

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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:

New time TBD. Check the Soul Matters musicians' Facebook page
for the updated meeting day and time:

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

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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<https://www.soulmatterssharingcircle.com>