



*Soul Matters*

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# Cultivating Relationship



Worship Research

October 2021

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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 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

## October 2021

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

### Interfaith:

- [Feast of St Francis of Assisi](#) (Christian) - Oct. 4
- World Communion Sunday (Christian) - Oct. 3, 2021
- National Observance of [Children's Sabbath](#) - 3rd weekend of October
- [Mawlid al-Nabi](#) - the birthday of the Prophet Muhammad - Oct. 18, 2021
- [Reformation Day](#) (Christian) - Oct. 31
- Martin Luther posts [95 theses](#) - Oct. 31 1517
- [Samhain](#) (Wiccan) - Oct. 31 - Nov. 1 [[more](#) and [more](#)]

### Unitarian Universalist:

- Birthday of [e e cummings](#) - Oct. 14
- [Michael Servetus](#) burned at the stake in Geneva - Oct. 27 (1553) (more [here](#))
- UU Merger Vote: Unitarians and Universalists, meeting separately in Syracuse, NY, voted to proceed with consolidation - Oct. 31, 1959. (more [here](#))

### National & Cultural Holidays:

- [LGBTQ History Month](#)
- [Hispanic Heritage Month](#) (Sept. 15 - Oct. 15)
- [Breast Cancer Awareness Month](#)
- [Bullying Prevention Month](#) (more [here](#))
- [ADHD Awareness Month](#)
- Birthday of Mohandas Gandhi - Oct. 2 (1869)
- [Sisters in Spirit Vigils](#) (Canada) - October 4, 2018: Honoring the lives of Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls (MMIWG)
- NASA launches first peopled mission, Apollo 7 - Oct. 11 (1968)
- [Indigenous Peoples Day](#) / Columbus Day (U.S.) - Oct. 11, 2022 (2nd Monday of October) - more [here](#)
- Toni Morrison becomes 1st African American woman to win Nobel Prize for Literature - Oct. 8, 1993
- [National Coming Out Day](#) - Oct. 11
- Thanksgiving Day (Canada) - Oct. 11 (second Monday in October)
- John Brown's Raid - Oct. 16 (1859)
- [United Nations Day](#) - Oct. 24
- Intersex Awareness Day - Oct. 26
- Halloween, All Soul's Eve - Oct. 31
- [Dia de los Muertos](#) - Oct.31 - Nov.2

### For Fun and On the Fringe:

- Country Music Month (designated Oct. 1970 [by Richard Nixon](#)) more [here](#) and [here](#)
- World Vegetarian Day - Oct. 1
- [Clergy Appreciation Day](#) - Oct. 10 (second Sunday of October)

# Chalice Lightings & Opening Words

## **Gathering in Our Own Spaces \***

*Jeff May*

Full piece at <https://www.uua.org/worship/words/opening/gathering-our-own-spaces>

[Permission Source](#)

...We need to be together. We yearn for connection.  
We hunger for the familiar faces of friends,  
the sound of shared voices proclaiming who we are, where we are going.

## **The Heart of Our Faith \***

*Monica Jacobson-Tennessee*

Full piece at <https://www.uua.org/worship/words/opening/heart-our-faith>

[Permission Source](#)

...What is it  
That gives you the power  
To make that change  
To ask that question.  
To take that journey?...  
It is relationship  
The beating heart of our faith...

## **Community Means Strength \***

*Starhawk*

Full piece at <https://www.uua.org/worship/words/reading/community-means-strength>

Source: #36, "Lifting Our Voices"

[Permission Source](#)

...Somewhere, there are people to whom we can speak with passion  
without having the words catch in our throats.  
Somewhere a circle of hands  
will open to receive us, eyes will light up as we enter...

## **The Central Task Of The Religious Community... \***

### **Reading #580 in Singing the Living Tradition**

*Mark Morrison-Reed*

[Permission Source](#)

The central task of the religious community is to unveil the bonds that bind each to all. There is a connectedness, a relationship discovered amid the particulars of our own lives and the lives of others. Once felt, it inspires us to act for justice. It is the church that assures us that we are not struggling for justice on our own, but as members of a larger community. It is the church that assures us that we are not struggling for justice on our own, but as members of a larger community. The religious community is essential, for alone our vision is too narrow to see all that must be seen, and our strength too limited to do all that must be done. Together, our vision widens and our strength is renewed.

### **We Need One Another \***

*Erik Walker Wikstrom*

Full piece at <https://www.uua.org/worship/words/opening/we-need-another>  
[Permission Source](#)

We come together this morning because within us there is something that knows we need more than we can find in our aloneness...

### **Today We Return to the Shelter of Each Other \***

*Rev. Scott Tayler*

[Permission secured by Soul Matters](#)

Today we return to the shelter of each other,  
to arms that hold us in the midst of the storm,  
to voices that help us hear our own,  
to hearts that accept us for who we are.  
May we be for each other a source of safety and sending.  
May we offer each other both comfort and challenge.  
May this place of peace lead us to share peace with others.  
Let us begin.

### **Until we draw together...**

*A. Powell Davies*

What are we, any of us, but strangers and sojourner forlornly wandering through the nighttime until we draw together and find the meaning of our lives in one another, dissolving our fears in each other's courage, making music together and lighting torches to guide us through the dark?  
[May the light we kindle in our time together guide us once again through the dark and into the bright dawn of courage.]

### **Ignite In Us Radical Love... \***

*Rev. Rebekah Savage*

<https://www.uua.org/worship/words/chalice-lighting/promise-and-practice-chalice-lighting-1>  
[UUA permission Source](#) & Soul Matters secured

We light our flaming chalice as a beloved people  
united in love  
and thirsting for restorative justice.

May it melt away the tethers that uphold whiteness in our midst.  
May it spark in us a spirit of humility.  
May it ignite in us radical love that transforms our energy into purposeful action.

This a chalice of audacious hope.  
This chalice shines a light on our shared past,  
signaling our intention to listen deeply, reflect wisely,  
and move boldly toward our highest ideals.

## **A Place of Belonging and Caring \***

*Kimberlee Anne Tomczak Carlson*

Full piece at <https://www.uua.org/worship/words/opening/place-belonging-and-caring>  
[Permission Source](#)

...And so, you began seeking a beloved community:  
A people that does not put fences around love.  
A community that holds its arms open to possibilities of love.  
A heart-home to nourish your soul and share your gifts.  
Welcome home; welcome to worship.

## **Woven Anew \***

Rev. Scott Tayler

[Permission secured by Soul Matters](#)

Come.  
Come with your joy, your incurable curiosity, your hunger for hope.  
But bring too your broken heart, your cracked confidence, your ruptured relationships.  
Let this,  
today,  
be a place of repair.  
May the words spoken become webbing,  
weaving again a path back to wisdom,  
back to forgotten worth,  
back to a place of peace  
now buried by all the striving, worry and wounds.  
May the sounds circling in this space  
sweep you up like a stream whose currents long to carry you home.  
And may the common breath,  
so sweetly shared between us,  
remind you that loneliness eventually lifts  
that we are tethered more tightly than it sometimes seems,  
that, together, our hearts can mend,  
and our world can be woven anew.  
Come.  
Let us begin.

# Meditations, Prayers & Blessings

## **Prayer for Compassion \***

*Elizabeth Tarbox*

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

Spirit of Life, I give thanks for the opportunities to love that present themselves in the turmoil of life. Where the light catches the tears in another's eyes, where hands are held and there are moments without words, let us be present... Let us seek to be present to another's pain, to bathe another's wounds... Let us not defend ourselves against the discomfort of unruly emotion, nor seek to close down our hearts for fear a new love will come to shake our foundations. Let us instead be open...For... in taking care of another, we are cared for.

## **In Gatherings \***

*Rev. Marta I Valentin*

Full piece at <http://www.uua.org/worship/words/poetry/gatherings>  
[Permission Source](#)

...we are stirred  
like the leaves of the fall season  
rustling around sacred trees,  
tossed hither and yon  
until we come to rest together,  
quietly, softly . . .  
We come to gather strength from each other.  
We come to give strength to each other...

## **A Web of Holy Relationships \***

*Rev. Lyn Cox*

Full piece at <https://www.uua.org/worship/words/prayer/web-of-holy-relationships>  
[Permission Source](#)

Spirit of Life,  
Who draws us together in a web of holy relationships,  
Make your presence known with us and in us and among us.  
Remind us that we are not alone in history...  
Remind us that we are not alone in joy and wonder...  
Let our hearts beat in diverse and harmonious rhythms...

## **Broken Relationships and Broken Hearts \***

*Beth Merrill Neel*

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

Holy God, hear our prayer... We have caused pain. We have broken the relationship. Sometimes... we are the ones who suffer, we are the ones who are broken. So we ask for your forgiveness, and we ask for your healing...

## **Know You are Not Alone and Discover the Way Our Voices Rise \***

*Rev. Gretchen Haley*

Permission secured by Soul Matters

For this one moment  
Know only that you are loved  
That you are safe, and whole and loved  
Know that you belong here  
Here among us, here upon this earth  
In your body  
However tired, or broken  
Your heart may be  
Whatever fear, disappointment, anger  
you carry  
For this hour know you are not alone  
Feel the presence of others  
Surrounding you,  
Breathing beside you, and with you,  
Discovering together the way our voices rise, and fall together  
In harmony, in hope  
Claim here a resilient freedom  
The choice for love, for light, to live with joy  
and gratitude and praise  
as a form of resistance

*Suggested transition into silence: "And with this breathing of one breath, this sacred belonging, may we know enter into a time of silence, together..."*

## **Let Us Give Thanks**

*Rev. Max Coots*

Full piece at <https://thesalemgarden.com/2014/11/26/let-us-give-thanks/> &  
<https://emilierichards.com/2013/11/24/sunday-inspiration-let-us-give-thanks-for-a-bounty-of-people/>

Let us give thanks:  
For generous friends...with hearts as big as hubbards and smiles as bright as their blossoms;  
For feisty friends as tart as apples;  
For continuous friends, who, like scallions and cucumbers, keep reminding us we had them;  
For crotchety friends, as sour as rhubarb and as indestructible...



# 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 be using 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 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 October 2021 - *Cultivating Relationship*

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

### Hymns: Singing the Living Tradition - permissioned \*

*All 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.*

[\(Permission Source\)](#)

10 - Immortal Love	149 - Lift Every Voice and Sing
12 - O Life that Maketh All Things New	188 - Come, Come Whoever You Are
21 - For the Beauty of the Earth	298 - Wake Now My Senses
36 - When in Our Music	302 - Children of the Human Race
67 - We Sing Now Together	308 - The Blessings of the Earth and Sky (with no changes to the words)
78 - Color and Fragrance	323 - Break Not the Circle
83 - Winds Be Still	346 - Come Sing a Song with Me
93 - To Mercy, Pity, Peace, and Love	349 - We Gather Together
95 - There Is More Love Somewhere	352 - Find a Stillness
100 - I've Got Peace Like a River	359 - When We Are Gathered
113 - Where Is Our Holy Church?	361 - Enter, Rejoice, and Come In
121 - We'll Build a Land	389 - Gathered Here
128 - For All That Is Our Life	392 - Hineh Mah Tov
131 - Love Will Guide Us	395 - Sing and Rejoice
145 - As Tranquil Streams	402 - From You I Receive
146 - Soon The Day Will Arrive	
147 - When All the Peoples on this Earth	

## Hymns: Singing the Living Tradition - permissions needed

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

- 18 - What Wondrous Love\* (alternative harmony: Abingdon)
- 34 - Though I May Speak with Bravest Fire\* (Hope Publishing Co., One License)
- 84 - How Far Can Reach a Smile (Carl Fischer Inc, One License)
- 134 - Our World Is One World (Galaxy Music Corp., One License)
- 159 - This Is My Song (arrangement: Westminster John Knox Press, One License)
- 170 - We Are a Gentle, Angry People (words & music: Holly Near, One License)
- 175 - We Celebrate the Web of Life (seek additional permissions)
- 203 - All Creatures of the Earth and Sky (music: Oxford Press, One License)
- 298 - Wake, Now, My Senses (harmony: Abingdon Press, One License)
- 299 - Make Channels for the Streams of Love (music & harmony J. Fischer & Bros., One License)
- 317 - We Are Not Our Own (words: David Hurd, music: Hope Publishing; both - One License)
- 318 - We Would Be One\* (arrangement: Westminster John Knox Press, One License)
- 325 - Love Makes a Bridge (seek permissions)
- 354 - We Laugh, We Cry (donate to [Heritage UU Church](#) Cincinnati choir or children's music program)
- 358 - Rank by Rank Again We Stand (music: Oxford University Press, One License)

## 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](#))*

- 1002- Comfort Me
- 1008 - When Our Heart is in a Holy Place
- 1014 - Answering the Call of Love
- 1018 - Come and Go With Me
- 1020 - Woyaya
- 1023 - Building Bridges
- 1025 - When will the Fighting Cease
- 1028 - The Fire of Commitment
- 1031 - Filled with Loving Kindness
- 1046 - Shall We Gather at the River

## Hymns: Singing the Journey - permissions needed

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

- 1004 - Busca el Amor (seek copyright holder)
- 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)
- 1021 - Lean on Me (CCS)
- 1030 - Siyahamba (Walton Music Corp., 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)
- 1074 - Turn the World Around (words & music: Next Decade Entertainment, CCS)

## Contemporary Suggestions - permissions needed

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

- *For Good* from *Wicked*
- *Carried Me with You* from *Onward*
- *Someone Like You* from *Jekyll & Hyde*
- *Love is an Open Door* from *Frozen*
- *The Rainbow Connection* from *The Muppet Movie*
- *You'll Never Walk Alone* from *Carousel*
- *Bridge Over Troubled Water* - Simon & Garfunkel
- *Thank You for Being a Friend* - Andrew Gold
- *We Are Family* - Sister Sledge
- *You've Got a Friend in Me* - Randy Newman
- *Crowded Table* - Highwaywomen
- *The Parting Glass* - Traditional - Ed Sheeran & Wailing Jenny's have great versions
- *Rise Up* - Andra Day
- *Friendship Song* - Bruno Mars
- *With a Little Help from My Friends* - The Beatles
- *You Raise Me Up* - Josh Groban
- *Wind Beneath My Wings* - Silbar/Henley - Bette Midler

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

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

- [In Meeting We Are Blessed - Troy Robertson - SATB, SSA, TTBB](#)
- [Connected - Brian Tate - SATB](#)
- [Someone to Watch Over Me - Arr. Althouse - SATB, SAB, SSA](#)
- [Put a Little Love in Your Heart -- Arr. Althouse, - SATB, SAB, SSA, 2-part](#) ; [Put a Little Love in Your Heart - Arr. Miller - 3-part, 2-part](#)
- [For Good - Wicked, Arr. Shaw - SATB, SSAA, TTBB](#) ; [For Good - Wicked - Arr. Emerson - 3-part, 2-part](#)
- [My Home - Stacey V. Gibbs - SATB](#)
- [Somebody to Love - Arr. Emerson - SATB, SAB, SSA](#)
- [True Colors - Arr. Brown - SATB, TTBB](#)
- [Cover the World With Love - Jerry Estes - 3-part, 2-part](#)
- [I Choose Love - Mark Miller - SATB, SSA](#)
- [Love Has Broken Down the Wall - Mark Miller - SATB](#)
- [Show Us How to Love - Mark Miller - SATB, solo voice](#)
- [Bridge Over Troubled Water - Arr. Kirby Shaw. - SATB, SAB, SSA, TTBB](#)
- [My Companion - Arr. Elaine Hagenburg - SATB](#)
- [Set Me As A Seal - Trotta - SATB](#)
- [I Will Sing - Powell - SATB](#)
- [I Dream a World - Andre Thomas - SATB, SAB, Two-Part, SSA, SSAA](#)
- [Rise Up - Andra Day - SATB, SAB, 2-Part](#)
- [I'll Walk You Through The Rain - Bernon - 3 - part, 2-part](#)
- [You'll Never Walk Alone - Arr. Nicholas - SATB, SSAA, TTBB](#)

## Music for Online Worship from UUA

*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](#).
- ["Filled with Loving Kindness," \(Vimeo\)](#) a version of the Buddhist Metta (lovingkindness) prayer, as taught, sung, and accompanied by [Mark David Buckles](#). "May I (\*you, we, all) be filled with loving kindness; may I\* be well. May I\* be peaceful and at ease; and may I\* be happy.
- ["Come, Sing a Song with Me" \(YouTube\)](#) as an animal puppet video (#346 in Singing the Living Tradition; music and words by Carolyn McDade). Created by MaryJane Wagner for an intergenerational service.
- ["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.
- ["Lean on Me \(MP4\)"](#) (words & music by Bill Withers; #1021 in Singing the Journey). Created by the Minnesota Valley UU Fellowship.
- ["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](mailto: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
- ["We Are" by Dr. Ysaÿe Barnwell \(Vimeo\)](#), performed by Dr. Ysaÿe Barnwell and the UUA General Assembly 2020 virtual choir. Produced and Directed by Benjie Messer. Video Editing and Motion Graphics by Izzy Hyman. Audio Editing by Sam Plattner. Photos by Clint McKoy, Christopher L. Walton, Paul Becker, Janine Gelsinger, and contributed by members of the choir. All audio and videos was captured by musicians in their own homes. Dr. Barnwell notes that if you've purchased scores for each of your singers, there is nothing else required. However, if you wish to use this piece in worship, please send a one-time fee of \$30 to Barnwells Notes, Inc., 2442 Tunlaw Rd Northwest, Washington, D.C. 20007
- ["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.
- ["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).

## But Wait, There's More...

Please see individual citation preferences/donation opportunities.

### [The Journey of Love](#)

- Sharon Scholl - [www.freeprintmusic.com](http://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](mailto:amanda@amandaudiskessler.com) to reach Sharon. Amanda will pass along your messages and contact information.

[As Our Voices Join Together](#) - [queersacredmusic.com](http://queersacredmusic.com) - Amanda Udis-Kessler

["We Are Gathered" \(YouTube\)](#), whose text (to a familiar hymn) was written specifically for virtual worship by Amanda Udis-Kessler. Video by video by Jane Clabaugh.

- 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.

["We Will Not Stop Singing" \(YouTube\)](#) written by The Chapin Sisters (Lily & Abigail). Song copyright The Chapin Sisters, published by sad pony music and foggy mountain music (ASCAP). Arranged by Adam Podd, featuring the First Unitarian Brooklyn Choir (w/ Dennis Wees, Kiena Williams, Brandon Hornsby-Selvin, and Candice Helfand-Rogers).

["Heart Is Wide Open," \(YouTube\)](#) a song to calm and open your heart by Danya River. You can also use the [audio-only file](#). While donations are not necessary, if you are able, please consider donating to [Danya's recording fund](#) so she can continue making meaningful music to share with the world.

["Lifted in Love \(Vimeo\)](#)," written by Carl Karush and Lea Morris, and performed by - [Lea Morris Music](#) - Lea Morris Music

**Permissions:** You can preview the music videos using the YouTube links, she asks that you purchase the files as license to use the recordings in your live-stream and recorded worship. If the cost is prohibitive, you can play the YouTube version in your online worship for free. If you do use the free YouTube option a number of times, we encourage you to make a donation to her on her website at <https://www.thisislea.com/donations>

From James Underberg:

- [We Are Living Earth](#)
- [What Kind of World? \(Virtual Choir\)](#)
- [We Shine](#) - A contemporary take on We Laugh, We Cry (STLT #354)

- 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](#).

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

- #15 - Lift Every Voice and Sing
- #16 - Lift Up Your Voice
- #18 - Love is Love is Love Is Love
- #20 - Oh, Be Swift to Love
- #22 - One Foot/Lead with Love
- #35 - We Choose Love
- #36 - We Shall Overcome
- #38 - We Walk in Love
- #43 - When We Are Singing

\***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.

## Extra, Extra!!!

**Read all about:** [Decolonizing the Music Room](#) - although this resource has a general focus on the music classroom, the majority of these explorations, insights, and ideals can be implemented in all aspects of our musical lives. It is important work, and this is a fantastic organization and site with access to a plethora of resources, interviews, podcasts and much more. You can also find/join the DTMR Group on Facebook.

- "Decolonizing the Music Room is a nonprofit organization using research, training, and discourse to help music educators develop critical practices and center BBIA (Black, Brown, Indigenous, and Asian) voices, knowledge, and experiences in order to challenge the historical dominance of white Western European and American music, narratives, and practices. We at DTMR aim to disrupt the minimization and erasure of non-dominant cultures and identities in the field of music education to build a more equitable future through our work."

# Stories For All Ages

## Old Joe and the Carpenter by Pleasant L. DeSpain

Video: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AFO8Kff2s\\_0](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AFO8Kff2s_0)

Online Story: [HERE](#)

*Two good friend farmers get into an argument. A carpenter arrives and Old Joe asks her to build a fence. Instead, she builds a bridge and the two farmers reconcile.*

## The Parable of the Long Spoons

Video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qhU5JEd-XRo>

Online Story: [HERE](#)

Lea Morris' Story and Song version (for purchase): <https://www.hopesingseternal.me/stories/spoons>

## A Pillow Full of Feathers By Shoshannah Brombacher

[https://www.chabad.org/library/article\\_cdo/aid/812861/jewish/A-Pillow-Full-of-Feathers.htm](https://www.chabad.org/library/article_cdo/aid/812861/jewish/A-Pillow-Full-of-Feathers.htm)

*A Rabbi instructs a man who gossiped and destroyed his relationships.*

## The Legend of the Three Sisters (Oneida and Ganondagan Nations)

<https://ganondagan.org/learn/legend-of-the-three-sisters>

*Cultivating the relationship between corn, beans and squash.*

## Darkness and Light

<https://philipchircop.wordpress.com/2013/07/17/darkness-and-light/>

*When can you tell the darkness from the light?*

## Respect and the Platinum Rule

<https://legacycultures.com/respect-platinum-rule/>

*Treat others how they would like to be treated.*

## Crown: An Ode to a Fresh Cut by Derrick Barnes, illustrated by Gordon C. James.

Book: [HERE](#)

Video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=B1yCg2PdeEA>

*The importance of the role that a barber shop plays in a young black boy's life. Increasing awareness of places you might not expect for relationships to be nurtured and cultivated.*

## Min Jee's Lunch by Elizabeth Kleinrock

Read aloud: <https://youtu.be/2ydEPIrlulA>

Full text: <https://www.learningforjustice.org/magazine/fall-2020/min-jees-lunch>

*When a classmate says Min Jee's Korean lunch is "how everyone got sick," will her friends speak up?*

## Making a Paper People Chain Message Moment

*Cultivating relationships means being part of a community. Cut the paper people chain while chatting about the ways that your congregation cultivates relationships. Invite everyone to cut out a paper people chain and then tape them all together as a grand finale to hang in the social hall.*

Online How to video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kZo68K6vWZ4>

# 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 an asterisk\*), you can use the fair use sized quotes and fair use sized portions of longer pieces in your sermons/services. Pay attention to the hyperlinks we include within titles and authors' names; these hyperlinks provide the source material and direction for you to hunt down permissions on your own.

## ***On Those Relationships Called Church***

### **Reflection - The Grout, Marcus Hartlief \***

Full piece at <https://www.uua.org/worship/words/reflection/grout>

[Permission Source](#)

...We are a people who bring together the broken pieces of our histories and the shining pieces of our seeking and, piece by piece, create a mosaic religion...

But our mosaic making tells another story too, one that is often more difficult to see. One that is essential to the purpose of religious community. One that lies not in the beautiful and broken bits and pieces but in the grout... Grout happens in board meetings and committee meetings and endless emails and slow-moving institutions. It is in weekly potlucks shared by neighbors, a ride to church, and coffee in the social hall after worship...

### **Reflection - I Choose You, I Am Here \***

*Emma Merchant*

Full piece at <https://www.uua.org/worship/words/reflection/i-choose-you-i-am-here>

[Permission Source](#)

... I've always been more enchanted by the idea of chosen family. The thought that we are each making a choice to be here in this family, in this community, is powerful. We have actively chosen to come and be here. I'm not stuck with you because you're my cousin and I'm not allowed to be rude. I could leave if I wanted to, but I don't because of the way that we have each nurtured this community. I choose to be stuck with you, for better or for worse.

And we have continuously made this choice over and over again... The words covenant and right relation are second nature... We make the choice to stay stuck together even when we don't even want to be in the same room...

### **Quote - Raymond Baughan**

Human encounter is common: human acceptance is rare. Religious community is people reaching through all the facades people carefully place around them... The most radical contribution religion can make to human living is that it enables people to experience community as starkly as hunger... It is participation in a religious community that stabs our consciousness into this awareness.



## Sermon - Behaving, Believing, Belonging

Stefan Jonasson

Full piece at <https://www.questformeaning.org/spiritual-themes/behaving-believing-belonging>

"...In his book Sacred Fragments, Rabbi Neil Gillman notes how the founder of Reconstructionist Judaism, Mordecai Kaplan, taught that:

"There are three possible ways of identifying with a religious community: by behaving, by believing, or by belonging..."

In many ways, Unitarian Universalism is akin to this, though with a difference. If we accept Mordecai Kaplan's analysis that people in religious communities tend to identify with those communities by behaving, believing or belonging, we will find ample evidence to support this view... Earl Morse Wilbur's classic threefold slogan of Unitarianism—freedom, reason and tolerance—reflects our ways of behaving, believing and belonging. Our behavior is characterized by freedom. Our beliefs are built upon reason. Our way of belonging is characterized by tolerance..."

### 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 - Rev. Hilary Krivchenia

Parker Palmer wrote: "spirituality refers to the eternal human longing to be part of something larger than one's own ego." Whatever we're about here – it is surely to be part of something larger than one's own ego. But we are trying, to one degree or another, for one hour of words and music to restructure something in ourselves that is formed and pressed by the larger world the other 167 hours.

### Quote - Gordon McKeeman

Ministry is a quality of relationship  
between and among human beings  
that beckons forth hidden possibilities;  
inviting people into deeper, more constant  
more reverent relationship with the world  
and with one another;  
carrying forward a long heritage of hope and  
liberation that has dignified and informed  
the human venture over many centuries;  
being present with, to, and for others  
in their terrors and torments  
in their grief, misery and pain;  
knowing that those feelings  
are our feelings, too...

### Quote - Lisa Ward

A covenant leaves room for chance and change... It claims: I will abide with you in this common endeavor, be present as best as I can in our becoming...

A creed creates a static truth, something that does not incorporate new insights and realities.

A covenant is a dance of co-creation, keeping in step with one another in the flow of our lives...

A creed creates an "us" and "them."

A covenant invites relationship.

## ***On the Wider Self that Makes Us***

### **Quote - [Kristen L. Harper](#)**

I do not wish to breathe another breath if it is not shared with others. The breath of life is not mine alone. I brought myself to be with you, hoping that by inhaling the compassion, the courage, the hope found here, I can exhale the fear, the selfishness, the separateness I keep so close to my skin. I cannot live another moment, at least not one of joy, unless you and I find our oneness somewhere among each other, somewhere between the noise, somewhere within the silence of the next breath.

### **Article - You are a network**

[https://aeon.co/essays/the-self-is-not-singular-but-a-fluid-network-of-identities?utm\\_source=pocket\\_mylist](https://aeon.co/essays/the-self-is-not-singular-but-a-fluid-network-of-identities?utm_source=pocket_mylist)

Selves are not only 'networked', that is, in social networks, but are themselves networks. By embracing the complexity and fluidity of selves, we come to a better understanding of who we are and how to live well with ourselves and with one another...

### **Quote - Anonymous**

No child can escape her community.... The life of the community flows about her, foul or pure; she swims in it, goes to sleep in it, and wakes to the new day to find it still about her. He belongs to it; it nourishes him, or starves him, or poisons him; it gives them the substance of their lives.

### **Quote - Rev. Scott Tayler**

Our society teaches us to ask, "What do I want?" Our religion invites us to ask, "Whose am I?" Two very different questions that lead to two very different lives. One question walks us down the path of accumulation and clinging. The other points to the way of community and connection. One says we find fulfillment in "success." The other say we find ourselves in belonging. So friends, which question will we allow to lead us? Every single sacred tradition says our choice is a matter of life and death.

### **Quote - John Ruskin**

When a [person] is wrapped up in [themselves, they] make a pretty small package.

### **Lecture - Quiet Your Mind, Silence The Lies, Alan Watts**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7ySpfkOmgG8>

## ***On Joining Hands to Do the Work that Must Be Done (The Power of We)***

### **Ritual & Video - Phillip Agnew's 'With These Hands'**

**MUST SEE... AND MUST DO! Easily adaptable for your church setting!**

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

### **Quote - Douglas Steer**

The ancient question, "Who am I?" inevitable leads to a deeper one: "Whose am I?" – because there is not identity outside of relationship. You cannot be a person by yourself. To ask "Whose am I" is to extend the question far beyond the little self-absorbed self, and wonder: Who needs you? Who loves you? To whom are you accountable? To whom do you answer? Whose life is altered by your choices? With whose life, whose lives is your own all bound up, inextricably, in obvious or invisible ways?

### **Quote - Mother Teresa**

If we have no peace, it is because we have forgotten that we belong to each other.

### **Reading - Community Means Strength \***

*Starhawk*

Full piece at <https://www.uua.org/worship/words/reading/community-means-strength>

Source: #36, "Lifting Our Voices"

[Permission Source](#)

...Community means strength  
that joins our strength to do the work that needs to be done.  
Arms to hold us when we falter....

### **Antidote & Children's Story - Walking with the Wind - A story about John Lewis as told by Rev. Karen G. Johnston**

[https://www.uua.org/worship/words/time-all-ages/walking-wind?fbclid=IwAR1i2L9IN3luPFC6mMEAgrUbrJf9yoZBsLVtkTTbvxQLulBkjjVyiDHdl&utm\\_source=pocket\\_mylist](https://www.uua.org/worship/words/time-all-ages/walking-wind?fbclid=IwAR1i2L9IN3luPFC6mMEAgrUbrJf9yoZBsLVtkTTbvxQLulBkjjVyiDHdl&utm_source=pocket_mylist)

Excerpt: "This storm was actually pulling the house toward the sky. With us inside it. That was when Aunt Seneva told us to clasp hands. Line up and hold hands, she said, and we did as we were told. Then she had us walk as a group toward the corner of the room that was rising. From the kitchen to the front of the house we walked, the wind screaming outside, sheets of rain beating on the tin roof. Then we walked back in the other direction, as another end of the house began to lift. And so it went, back and forth, fifteen children walking with the wind, holding that trembling house down with the weight of our small bodies..."

### **Book - The Sum of Us: What Racism Costs Everyone And How We Can Prosper Together**

*Heather Mcghee*

"McGhee embarks on a deeply personal journey across the country from Maine to Mississippi to California, tallying what we lose when we buy into the zero-sum paradigm—the idea that progress for some of us must come at the expense of others."

**Interview with The Daily Show with Trevor Noah:** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IzPse-90KTY>

**Related TED Talk:** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eaCrsBtiYA4&t=1s>

### **Reading - To All Get Free Together \***

*Chris Crass*

Full reading at <https://www.uua.org/worship/words/reading/all-get-free-together>

[Permission Source](#)

"...Our goal is not to have white people sit alongside a person of color so as to affirm that those white people aren't racist. Our goal is to build and be part of beloved community, united to end structural oppression and unleash collective liberation in our faith communities, schools, neighborhoods, workplaces, and throughout society... Our goal is to join our hearts and minds to the task of destroying white supremacy in every worldview, policy, law, institution, and governing body of our society. For our faith communities to be places of healing from the nightmare of racism that haunts people of color and white people..."

### **Quote - bell hooks, Killing Rage: Ending Racism**

Beloved community is formed not by the eradication of difference but by its affirmation, by each of us claiming the identities and cultural legacies that shape who we are and how we live in the world.

## **Blessing - Blessed Are We \***

*Andrea Hawkins-Kamper*

Full piece at <https://www.uua.org/worship/words/blessing/blessed-are-we>  
[Permission Source](#)

...Blessed are we: the chalice-lighters of resistance, justice, love, and faith...

Blessed are we: the border-crossers, the refugees, the immigrants, the poor, the wanderers who are not lost...

Blessed are we: the hand-extenders, the sign-makers, the protestors, the protectors...

## **Quote - Adrienne Maree Brown**

When we are engaged in acts of love, we humans are at our best and most resilient. The love in romance that makes us want to be better people, the love of children that makes us change our whole lives to meet their needs, the love of family that makes us drop everything to take care of them, the love of community that makes us work tirelessly with broken hearts... Love leads us to observe in a much deeper way than any other emotion...

If love were the central practice of a new generation of organizers and spiritual leaders, it would have a massive impact... If the goal was to increase the love, rather than winning or dominating a constant opponent, I think we could actually imagine liberation from constant oppression. We would suddenly be seeing everything we do, everyone we meet, not through the tactical eyes of war, but through eyes of love.

We would see that there's no such thing as a blank canvas, an empty land or a new idea — but everywhere there is complex, ancient, fertile ground full of potential... We would understand that the strength of our movement is in the strength of our relationships, which could only be measured by their depth.

## ***On Bridging Boundaries & the Differences that Make us Stronger***

### **Quote - Eboo Patel**

I believe every inch of America is sacred, from sea to shining sea. I believe we make it holy by who we welcome and by how we relate to each other. Call it my Muslim eyes on the American project. "We made you different nations and tribes that you may come to know one another," says the Qur'an.

### **Reading - We who dwell on the margins know about divisions...**

*Wendy Bartel*

Found in [Lifting our Voices](#) (#154), a UUA worship resource & Soul Matters "[Common Shelf](#)" Book

[Permission Note: This has been authorized for in person or live-streamed \(non-recorded\) worship.](#)

[Permission Source](#)

Beyond binaries, we multiply possibilities...

not one narrative but stories shared.

Separation is illusion.

Love transgresses borders between you, me, us, them...

We must dare to cross...

### **Poem - To the Fig Tree on 9th and Christian, Ross Gay**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9aT0A28IW7E>

### **TED Talk - The Danger of a Single Story**

[https://www.ted.com/talks/chimamanda\\_ngozi\\_adichie\\_the\\_danger\\_of\\_a\\_single\\_story?language=en](https://www.ted.com/talks/chimamanda_ngozi_adichie_the_danger_of_a_single_story?language=en)

## ***On the Healing Power of Empathy and Compassion***

**Quote - Henry David Thoreau**

Could a greater miracle take place than for us to look through each other's eyes for an instant?

**Quote - [bell hooks](#)**

Rarely, if ever, are any of us healed in isolation. Healing is an act of communion.

**Quote - [Leslie Jamison](#)**

Empathy isn't just something that happens to us—a meteor shower of synapses firing across the brain—it's also a choice we make: to pay attention, to extend ourselves. It's made of exertion, that dowdier cousin of impulse. Sometimes we care for another because we know we should or because it's asked for, but this doesn't make our caring hollow. The act of choosing simply means we've committed ourselves to a set of behaviors greater than the sum of our individual inclinations. This confession of effort chafes against the notion that empathy should always rise unbidden, that genuine means the same thing as unwilling, that intentionality is the enemy of love. But I believe in intention, and I believe in work.

**Quote - [Fr Gregory Boyle](#)**

There is a word for that, and the word is kinship. How can we achieve a certain kind of compassion that stands in awe of what the poor have to carry rather than stand in judgement at how they carry it. For the measure of our compassion lies not in our service of those on the margins but in our willingness to see ourselves in kinship with them... That's what we want to achieve, this sense of mutuality, where we obliterate once and for all the illusion that we are separate. No us and them. Just us. For there's an idea that's taken root in the world. It's at the root all that is wrong with it. And the idea would be this: that there just might be lives out there that matter less than other lives. How do we stand against that idea?

## ***On the Gifts of Connection***

**Article - How Your Social Life Might Help You Live Longer, by Elizabeth Hopper**

[https://greatergood.berkeley.edu/article/item/how\\_your\\_social\\_life\\_might\\_help\\_you\\_live\\_longer](https://greatergood.berkeley.edu/article/item/how_your_social_life_might_help_you_live_longer)

"The secret to longevity isn't just diet and exercise—being connected and kind matters, as well..."

**Article - Are Some Social Ties Better Than Others? by Juliana Breines**

<https://www.dailygood.org/story/1661/are-some-social-ties-better-than-others-juliana-breines/>

"Which is more important: your spouse or your Facebook friends? A social psychologist says we need both, for weak ties can make us strong—and sometimes strong ties can make us weak..."

**Article - Friends for Life: An Emerging Biology of Emotional Healing**

<https://www.nytimes.com/2006/10/10/health/psychology/10essa.html>

Excerpt: "Research on the link between relationships and physical health has established that people with rich personal networks... recover more quickly from disease and live longer. But now the emerging field of social neuroscience, the study of how people's brains entrain as they interact, adds a missing piece to that data. The most significant finding was the discovery of "mirror neurons," a widely dispersed class of brain cells that operate like neural WIFI... Mirror neurons offer a neural mechanism that explains emotional contagion, the tendency of one person to catch the feelings of another..."

## ***On the Power of Witnessing Each Other's Worth & Whole Self***

### **Quote - Rev Kim K. Crawford Harvie**

Friend: the one who sees the beauty, even in the brokenness, and reflects that to us, like a mirror.

### **Quote - Toni Morrison, from *Beloved***

She is a friend of mind. She gather me man. The pieces I am, she gather them and give them back to me in all the right order.

### **Reading - Community Means Strength \***

*Starhawk*

Full piece at <https://www.uua.org/worship/words/reading/community-means-strength>

Source: #36, "Lifting Our Voices"

[Permission Source](#)

...Somewhere, there are people to whom we can speak with passion  
without having the words catch in our throats.  
Somewhere a circle of hands  
will open to receive us, eyes will light up as we enter  
voices will celebrate with us whenever we come into our own power...

### **Poem - Now, I Love You. Now, I Witness \***

*Theresa I. Soto*

Full piece at <https://www.uua.org/worship/words/poetry/now-i-love-you-now-i-witness>

[Permission Source](#)

...I am sorry it hurts. Now, I witness  
Your struggle, and mine. Sometimes  
One answer is to be a yes in the face of  
Every no. I am a yes for you. Now and again  
Later, if you need me.

### **Quote - [Mark Nepo](#)**

Unconditional love is not so much about how we receive and endure each other, as it is about the deep vow to never, under any condition, stop bringing the flawed truth of who we are to each other.

### **Quote - [Adrienne Maree Brown](#)**

The harder things are to say, the more necessary they are to say.

## ***On Loneliness***

### **Quote - [Kurt Vonnegut](#)**

What should young people do with their lives today? Many things, obviously. But the most daring thing is to create stable communities in which the terrible disease of loneliness can be cured.

### **Quote - [Carl Jung](#)**

Loneliness does not come from having no people around, but from being unable to communicate the things that seem important to oneself, or from holding certain views which others find inadmissible.

### **Article - [Why Do I Feel So Lonely?](#)**

<https://www.theschooloflife.com/thebookoflife/loneliness-in-the-modern-world/>

### **Article - [The History of Loneliness](#)**

[https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2020/04/06/the-history-of-loneliness?utm\\_source=pocket\\_mylist](https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2020/04/06/the-history-of-loneliness?utm_source=pocket_mylist)

### **Article - [Millennials And The Loneliness Epidemic](#)**

<https://www.forbes.com/sites/neilhowe/2019/05/03/millennials-and-the-loneliness-epidemic/?sh=122c45ad7676>

### **Essay - [The Lonely City: Adventures in the Art of Being Alone](#)**

*Maria Popova*

[https://www.brainpickings.org/2016/07/11/the-lonely-city-olivia-laing/?mc\\_cid=1d875ee9e9&mc\\_eid=04e3c8a6e2](https://www.brainpickings.org/2016/07/11/the-lonely-city-olivia-laing/?mc_cid=1d875ee9e9&mc_eid=04e3c8a6e2)

“Loneliness is difficult to confess; difficult too to categorize. Like depression, a state with which it often intersects, it can run deep in the fabric of a person.”

### **Quote - [Mark Twain](#)**

The worst loneliness is not to be comfortable with yourself.

### **Quote - [Michael Meade](#)**

Loneliness is not simply about being by oneself, but about being unable to communicate the things that truly matter to oneself.

### **Quote - [anonymous](#)**

My friend is one who knows my song and sings it to me when I forget.

### **Song - [Message in a Bottle - Sting](#)**

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WO\\_XrtISWeg](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WO_XrtISWeg)

## ***On the God that Lives In Between***

### **Quote - Martin Buber**

When two people relate to each other authentically and humanly, God is the electricity that surges between them.

### **Essay - On Martin Buber's I and Thou, by M M Owen**

<https://aeon.co/essays/all-real-living-is-meeting-the-sacred-love-of-martin-buber>

### **Quote - Martin Buber, I and Thou**

No purpose intervenes between I and You, no greed and no anticipation; and longing itself is changed as it plunges from the dream into appearance. Every means is an obstacle. Only where all means have disintegrated encounters occur.

### **Book - The Source of Human Good, Henry N. Wieman**

### **Quote - Grace Lee Boggs**

Building community is to the collective as spiritual practice is to the individual.

### **god is no noun**

Glen Thomas Rideout

Full piece at <https://www.questformeaning.org/quest-article/god-no-noun/>

"...we're getting Michelangelo all wrong.

god is not the bearded one surrounded by angels...

no.

god is the closing inch of space

between their reaching fingers...

god is at least a verb,

twirling in the radiant reds of spring

blossoms,

singing in the rare silences between rapid opinions,

attending the tears of dark-skinned deaths, learning in tiny, alabaster smiles..."

### **Quote - Kaaren Solveig Anderson**

For a long time now, I haven't believed in a god with a will, intentionality, or consciousness. I don't put all my eggs in the basket of a god who will save and transform me. Rather, I look to humans, to my relationships with people. Transcendence with life, with the holy, comes through my human relationships. And yes, I get that humans will let me down and will hurt me as well. They will disappoint, betray, and otherwise fail me. But they also have repeatedly saved me from a selfish me-ism that can destroy my well-being and lead me to false idols. They have loved me so fiercely that I am brought back from despair, loneliness, and isolation. They have cajoled me into my better self, when, frankly, I sometimes don't want to bother with the effort. They have challenged me to aspire to possibilities that I fear are unobtainable, because they see something in me that I far too often can't see in myself. They are human. They are the four Fs: flawed, fragile, f\*#&!d up, and, most importantly, fabulous. This understanding is the Humanism that has transcended the intellect, buried itself inside me, and inspires and heals me daily.



## ***On Our Chosen Families***

### **Reflection - I Choose You, I Am Here \***

*Emma Merchant*

Full piece at <https://www.uua.org/worship/words/reflection/i-choose-you-i-am-here>  
[Permission Source](#)

... I've always been more enchanted by the idea of chosen family. The thought that we are each making a choice to be here in this family, in this community, is powerful. We have actively chosen to come and be here. I'm not stuck with you because you're my cousin and I'm not allowed to be rude. I could leave if I wanted to, but I don't because of the way that we have each nurtured this community. I choose to be stuck with you, for better or for worse.

And we have continuously made this choice over and over again... The words covenant and right relation are second nature... We make the choice to stay stuck together even when we don't even want to be in the same room...

### **Quote - David Levithan**

We've all done this - created our mix-and-match families, our homemade safety nets.

### **Quote - Nishan Panwar**

Real family does not come from your blood. It is the people standing beside you when no one else is.

### **Quote - Unknown**

Family isn't always blood. It's the people in your life who want you in theirs.

### **Quote - [Sandy Allen](#)**

I have often contemplated the inadequacy of the term “biological family” — especially if we’re trying to form a sort of binary, an opposition between the family into which we were born and the family we’ve made for ourselves as adults. I’ve heard people call the former a “family of origin” and the latter a “logical family” (as opposed to a biological family). But really, the term “biological family” has always struck me as inadequate because, as I think this moment demonstrates so well, we are all biological family. No human being is unrelated to any other; otherwise, how else could COVID-19 make such easy prey of us? For decades, genetic researchers have understood that we humans have so much more in common with one another than we have differences — even people who were born on opposite sides of the globe, even people whose characteristics seem very different from one another, even people who may share no language or ideology. We are family, inextricably, all of us.

### **Quote & Essay - Netflix's Tales Of The City Made Me Rethink What I Want From Chosen Families, by Sly**

<https://www.flare.com/tv-movies/tales-of-the-city-netflix/>

“Tales of the City also made me realize that the function of a chosen family in the ‘60s, ‘70s or ‘80s can’t be entirely the same the same as it is today, because the circumstances have changed so dramatically. Watching Tales, I realized that what I want out of chosen family isn’t the unconditional support that the residents of 28 Barbary Lane show each other, even though that’s what I used to think would make me whole.

As Michael reflects towards the end of the series, sometimes unconditional support can foster stagnancy. The cachet associated with chosen family right now risks reducing chosen family into a fashion statement, and that’s a problem is because it dishonors the history of where chosen families came from. But the idea that chosen family is a social unit in which individuals isolate themselves in comfort zones, and where ideas and norms internal to that unit cannot be challenged, doesn’t honor the queers who came before us, either. Watching Tales of the City made me realize that what we deserve out of chosen family today is a group of people who push us to grow and evolve...”

## TV Series - Tales of the City

<https://www.netflix.com/title/80211563>

## Movie - [Paris is Burning](#)

"Paris is Burning is a rite of passage. It's one of the most important queer movies of all time. And it has beautiful depictions of family... Even 30 years after its release, the documentary is real, relevant and revolutionary when it comes to family and chosen families." - [source](#)

## *On Friendship*

### Quote - Unknown

Friends are those who treat you kindly behind your back.

### Quote - Eleanor Roosevelt

Friendship with oneself is all-important because without it one cannot be friends with anyone else in the world.

### Quote - C.S. Lewis

Friendship is born at that moment when one person says to another, "What! You too? I thought I was the only one."

### Quote - Henri Nouwen

When we honestly ask ourselves which person in our lives means the most to us, we often find that it is those who, instead of giving much advice, solutions, or cures, have chosen rather to share our pain and touch our wounds with a gentle and tender hand.

### Quote - Anonymous

Love is blind. Friendship tries not to notice.

### Quote - Rev Kim K. Crawford Harvie

Friend: the one who sees the beauty, even in the brokenness, and reflects that to us, like a mirror.

### Quote - C.S. Lewis

Friendship is unnecessary, like philosophy, like art... It has no survival value; rather it is one of those things that give value to survival.

### Reading/Prayer - Let Us Give Thanks, Max Coots

Full piece at <https://thesalemgarden.com/2014/11/26/let-us-give-thanks/> & <https://emilierichards.com/2013/11/24/sunday-inspiration-let-us-give-thanks-for-a-bounty-of-people/>

Let us give thanks:

For generous friends...with hearts as big as hubbards and smiles as bright as their blossoms;

For feisty friends as tart as apples;

For continuous friends, who, like scallions and cucumbers, keep reminding us we had them;

For crotchety friends, as sour as rhubarb and as indestructible...

## Article - Treasure them

Full article at [https://aeon.co/essays/treasure-your-friends-the-top-of-your-love-hierarchy?utm\\_source=pocket\\_mylist](https://aeon.co/essays/treasure-your-friends-the-top-of-your-love-hierarchy?utm_source=pocket_mylist)

Excerpt: "...in the West, we're missing out on experiencing everything that love has to offer because our field of view is too narrow...The top position is occupied by parental love with dad regularly relegated to assistant parent, whether he likes it or not; parental love is usually embodied in the love between mother and child. Running a close second is romantic love, with an overwhelming focus on finding your 'soulmate'....

After all these, the next category comes a rather distant fourth – our friends... I found that those based in the UK or the US were often very happy to quickly declare their love for their cat or dog, but ask them whether they loved their friends and many had to pause and think.

This dismissal is based on a misunderstanding of how foundational friends are as members of our social network – they are its largest group – and how they hold the key to our health and survival. My work has shown that our friendships can provide a level of understanding and emotional intimacy that can eclipse any we might experience with a lover...

At the same time, our society has profoundly changed in the past 50 years, putting the established hierarchy of love on shaky ground. It's no longer the case that you have to be 'coupled up' to fit society's norms, to have children or, as a woman, to make sure you're economically provided for. As a consequence, within the West – although not necessarily elsewhere – romantic love has become a choice rather than a necessity. If children aren't your thing, then greater control of your own fertility means that you can also dispense with parental love. But you discard the love that exists within your friendships at your peril, because, new findings show, friends are your key to a long, happy and chilled life..."

## On the Secret of Slowness

### Quote - Rev. Scott Tayler

We must remember to go slow. It's the secret so rarely mentioned. Simply put, relationships are really hard to build when we are running.

### Reflection/Story - More Than a Cup of Soup

*Kathleen McTigue*

Found in [Falling into the Sky](#) (pg.4), a UUA worship resource & Soul Matters "[Common Shelf](#)" Book  
Permission Note: UUA anthologies [not](#) permissioned for online use

Excerpt: "Not far from where I work there is a little hole-in-the-wall cafe... all this place ever serves is soup... The woman who works behind the counter always looks glad to be there, doing what she's doing, and she often knows her customers by name. Last week there were at least a half-dozen people waiting in line to be served, but she still lingered with an old man at the counter... It was a wonderful thing, just then, to be marooned on this little island of calm amidst the impatience, irritability, and general craziness of life... Watching her at work, it's easy to believe that some small corner of the world's fabric is being patiently, lovingly stitched back together..."

### Essay - Look With Your Heart: Lessons From My Time With My Grandmother

Full piece at <https://www.dailygood.org/story/832/look-with-your-heart-lessons-from-my-time-with-my-grandmother-mia-tagano/>

Excerpt: "Slowly, without words, we were building a relationship based on kindness... After this, she slowly shared more about her life and I found out more of who this woman is, found out more about her spirit... Amazing. It doesn't take long to make a real intimate genuine human connection with someone. It only takes stopping for a moment, listening deeply, and looking with your heart rather than your eyes..."

## ***On Being Restored by Our Relationship with the Natural World***

### **Quote - Louise Erdrich**

Life will break you. Nobody can protect you from that, and living alone won't either, for solitude will also break you with its yearning. You have to love. You have to feel. It is the reason you are here on earth. You are here to risk your heart. You are here to be swallowed up. And when it happens that you are broken, or betrayed, or left, or hurt, or death brushes near, let yourself sit by an apple tree and listen to the apples falling all around you in heaps.

### **Video - Grace, by Anna Borstad**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=R81KWM6leI8>

**Additional resources** on our relationship with the natural world can be found in the Soul Matters specialty packet, "Earth Day." Find it at this link: <https://www.soulmatterssharingcircle.com/special-worship-packets.html>

## ***Miscellaneous***

### **Article - The Japanese words for "space" could change your view of the world**

<https://www.dailygood.org/more.php?n=7839>

"Instead of framing space as a relationship between objects and walls, the Japanese concept of space is about the relationships among people. By shifting this view, we can discover an interesting way of thinking about the spaces we make and use in everyday life—and the relationships that they create..."

### **Video & Articles - Karma Kitchen!**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=S5r7fbLvvc&t=28s>

"Imagine a restaurant where there are no prices on the menu and where the check reads \$0.00 with only this footnote: "Your meal was a gift from someone who came before you. To keep the chain of gifts alive, we invite you to pay it forward for those who dine after you..."

Article: <https://www.karmakitchen.org/index.php?pg=about>

Related article on the concept behind it - "gift ecology": <https://www.dailygood.org/story/2349/gift-ecology-a-conversation-with-nipun-mehta-elizabeth-denley/>

## **Find Additional Resources In Our Specialty Worship Packets**

*In addition to our "regular" monthly themed 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 **our specialty packet, On Forgiveness.***

*Found at <https://www.soulmatterssharingcircle.com/special-worship-packets.html>*

*You might also want to check out our packet on the theme of **Beloved Community.***

*Found at <https://www.soulmatterssharingcircle.com/individual-packets.html>*

# 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:** 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.**
- **An 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.

## Sermons for Use and Inspiration \*

### Big B Belonging and Huge H Helping, Rev. Joshua Pawelek

<http://uuse.org/big-b-belonging-and-huge-h-helping/?fbclid=IwAR3zJFCgP6319qkFslqhnSYTCZoqXPzyOR8bEI6-B8nStdoo7HodiiEWIQ#.XTnqBC2ZO2u>

Excerpt: “What longing lies at the heart of your presence here [at church]? Here’s my answer to the question... the gentle, sustaining, wordless power flowing through everything, connecting everything, making everything whole; and I know the hurting, grieving, violent world. I long to feel whole and connected. And I long to respond in some meaningful way to the world’s immense hurt. In more concise language, I long to belong, and I long to help. In the end, these two longings are why I went into ministry. They are why I go to church... Having said that, the human longing to belong goes much deeper than belonging to a congregation. Belonging to a congregation is belonging with a small b. Belonging with a big B—or Big B Belonging—is that sense of belonging to the larger human family, or belonging to the whole of life, or belonging to God or Goddess, or to some holy power...”

### Walking with the Wind, Rev. Victoria Safford

<https://whitebearunitarian.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/01/01-19-2020-sermon.pdf>

“The Beloved Community [is] not a goal or destination, and it was not any kind of idealistic, Christian utopian dream, but instead a way of being - spiritually, politically, economically, emotionally, intellectually. Beloved Community is an attitude, an orientation of the heart; it’s a disciplined understanding of your own relationship to other people, to everyone else on the planet, to every living thing. If you are religious, this is a religious discipline, and it goes by many names. If you are seeking spiritual wholeness, spiritual balance, it is a spiritual discipline. If you are an ethical humanist, it is a deliberate moral stance. It is a daily practice, a spiritual politics, that requires inclusivity, nonviolence, and the hard discipline of radical hospitality. It requires love, agape...”

### The Promise and the Practice: The Healing is Not Done, Rev. Rebekah Savage

<https://www.uua.org/worship/words/homily/promise-and-practice-healing-not-done-reflection>

**The Gift of Being Let Down, Rev. Gretchen Haley**

<https://revgretchenhaley.wordpress.com/2013/12/29/the-gift-of-being-let-down/> =

“How we respond to failure – our own, or others’ – can mean the difference between despair and transformation, between isolation and beloved community...”

**Whose Are We?, Rev. Dr. John T. Morehouse**

<https://uuwestport.org/whose-are-we-september-17-2017-video-available/>

“I still think it’s important to ask what matters most... [But] In recent years, I ask another question alongside what matters most. I ask, “whose are we?” To whom do we belong?...”

**Are You Listening?, Rev. David Ruffin**

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1knRSntliWeDNRdeEV98FOyz-QsoWa6im/view?usp=sharing>

On listening as one of the central spiritual practices of relationship building and justice making

## **Featured Preacher Bios & Contact Information**

**Rev. Josh Pawelek**

Bio & Contact information: <http://uuse.org/ministries/rev-joshua-pawlek-biography/#.X-pIFS1h1QI>

**Rev. Victoria Safford**

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

**Rev. Rebekah Savage**

Bio & Contact Information: <https://uucr.org/connect/get-know-us/staff/rev-dr-rebekah-savage>

**Rev. Gretchen Haley**

Bio & Contact information: <https://revgretchenhaley.wordpress.com/author/foothillsuu/>

**Rev. Dr. John T. Morehouse**

Bio & Contact Information: <https://uuwestport.org/mission-statement/about-our-ministers-2/>

**Rev. David Ruffin**

Contact Information: Can be reached through [Soul Matters](#)

## **Looking for a Virtual Guest Preacher? Check Out The Soul Matters Virtual Pulpit Supply Page**

To support those who are still doing online worship, we’ve created a “Theme-Based Virtual Pulpit Supply Page.” The aim is 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.

# Closing Words

## **So are we bound together, by Elizabeth Lerner Maclay \***

Full piece at <https://www.uua.org/worship/words/affirmation/so-are-we-bound-together>  
[Permission Source](#)

As drops of rain that find each other and build to become a track, a rivulet, a stream, a river, a sea, so are we drawn together...

## **May You Be Filled, by Eric Williams \***

Full piece at <https://www.uua.org/worship/words/closing/294188.shtml>  
[Permission Source](#)

May you be filled with the blessings of this covenanted community...  
May you discover the places in the world where these blessings are needed...

## **The Hand In Yours... by Erika A. Hewitt \***

(Invite the congregation to join hands.)

Full piece at <https://www.uua.org/worship/words/closing/hand-in-yours>  
[Permission Source](#)

The hand in yours belongs to a person  
whose heart is sometimes tender...  
whose eyes sometimes fill with tears...  
As you leave this sanctuary...  
may your hands remained outstretched.

## **We Are One, by Hope Johnson \***

Full piece at <https://www.uua.org/worship/words/affirmation/we-are-one>  
[Permission Source](#)

We are one, a diverse group of proudly kindred spirits, here not by coincidence but because we choose to journey together...

We are one, working, eating, laughing, playing, singing, storytelling... asking questions, listening, living our answers, learning to love our neighbors, learning to love ourselves...creating the beloved community together...

## **Blessed Are We, by Andrea Hawkins-Kamper \***

Full piece at <https://www.uua.org/worship/words/blessing/blessed-are-we>  
[Permission Source](#)

...Blessed are we: the chalice-lighters of resistance, justice, love, and faith...

Blessed are we: the border-crossers, the refugees, the immigrants, the poor, the wanderers who are not lost...

Blessed are we: the hand-extenders, the sign-makers, the protestors, the protectors...

## **You are not alone..., Rev Wayne B. Arnason**

Take courage friends.

The way is often hard, the path is never clear,  
And the stakes are very high.

Take courage.

For deep down, there is another truth:

You are not alone.

## 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:**

First Tuesdays of each month at 4pm 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](#).



**Soul Matters**

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Learn how to join at

<https://www.soulmatterssharingcircle.com>