



Soul Matters

Opening to Joy



Worship Resources

December 2021

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About Online Permissions, Multi-Platform Support & Referencing Resources

This is a year of transition and trying new things for all of us. As we cautiously shift back towards in-person worship, most of us will likely continue with some form of online worship, whether that be offering an online service simultaneously, posting the recordings of our in-person services online or some other hybrid innovation.

To support these various kinds of multi-platform worship, we are continuing our practice of researching material that is permissioned for online use. We will identify those online permissioned pieces with an asterisk and add “permission notes” to document and clarify the source of that permission. The use of the single asterisk indicates that that piece is permissioned for use in online service, including those recorded pieces posted on your social media outlets and webpages. If permission is more limited than that we will explicitly make a note about it.

(Note: last year we used a one asterisk and two asterisks system to differentiate between use in unrecorded online services and recorded/posted services. Our experience is that this distinction is no longer relevant because virtually all writers are permissioning for both live and recorded/posted material. Thus our switch to only one asterisk. If we find that someone only allows non-recorded/posted permissions, we will explicitly note that in the permission comments.)

A Reminder About Partial Texts and “Pointing not Publishing”: To honor legal and relational standards, we do not include the full pieces of authors’ works unless we’ve received explicit permission to do so. We want all subscribers to clearly understand that our worship packets are research packets not publications, which means we focus on “pointing” to where you can find fair use and publicly available pieces, rather than on “publishing” original writings and full resources. Our main service is theme-based *curation* and *research*, done in the service of saving professionals’ time.

A Note About Author Titles: Many of the authors we refer to are ministers. Some ministers prefer to be credited with their title “Rev.”, others don’t, and still others are fine either way. Our practice is to follow whatever practice was used in the source material we reference.

December Calendar Connections

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

Interfaith:

- [Advent](#) (Christian) Nov. 28 -Dec. 24, 2021 (more [here](#) and [here](#))
- [Bodhi Day](#) (Buddha's Enlightenment) - [Dec. 8](#) (more [here](#) and [here](#))
- [Chalica](#) (UU) Dec. 3 - Dec. 9 (more [here](#))
- [Hanukkah](#) (Jewish) - Nov.28 -Dec. 6, 2021 (more [here](#) and [here](#))
- [Yule](#), Solstice (Pagan/Wiccan) - Dec. 21
- Christmas Eve - Dec. 24, 2021 (Friday)
- Christmas Day - Dec. 25, 2021 (Saturday)
- [Holy Innocents Day](#) (Christian) - Dec. 28
- [Watch Night](#)/Freedom's Eve (Christian) - Dec. 31
- [Kwanzaa](#) - Dec. 26 - Jan. 1 (more [here](#) and [here](#))

National & Cultural:

- [Seasonal Depression](#) Awareness Month
- [World AIDS Day](#) - Dec. 1 (more [here](#) and [here](#))
- [Rosa Parks](#) Arrested - Dec. 1 (1955)
- International Day of [Persons with Disabilities](#) - Dec. 3
- [Human Rights Day](#) - Dec 10th
- Anniversary of [Sandy Hook](#) Shootings - Dec 14
- [Montgomery's buses](#) are desegregated - Dec. 21 (1956)
- [Boxing Day](#) (Canada) Dec. 26 (more [here](#))

For Fun and On the Fringe:

- [Nobel Prize](#) Day - Dec 10
- How [the Grinch](#) Stole Christmas shown for first time - Dec 18, 1966
- [Festus](#) for [the rest of us](#) – Dec 23

Chalice Lightings & Opening Words

Joy calls unto joy... *

Gordon B McKeeman

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

Deep calls unto deep, joy calls unto joy, light calls unto light...

Warmth, Joy, Togetherness *

Ben Soule

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

...Out of the warmth, joy.
Out of the joy, togetherness...

Mindful

Mary Oliver

Full piece at <https://www.poetry-chaikhana.com/Poets/O/OliverMary/Mindful/index.html>

Every day
I see or hear
something
that more or less
kills me
with delight...

Still So Much Good, and beauty, and joy... *

Rev. Gretchen Haley

[Permission secured by Soul Matters](#)

Come in, all who long to know
how to love this world
How to keep eyes open
hands unclenched
arms wide
Breathing deeply
In, and out
This is a time to practice
Because there is
still so much good, and beauty, and joy
But it can be hard to keep telling this tale
With all the news
and the wind, and the rain, and the trembling earth
(Who wants to love this life, anyway?)
Come in, all who teeter

on this edge of cynicism
broken hearted and trying still to remember
laughter and kindness
And the chance to be alive
in these days when so much is at stake
In this place we remind each other
Why we persist
Giving each other courage
to take this path that is not always easy
to keep practicing
This love
That cannot, will not let us go
And still calls us on
Come, let us worship together

Let there be joy... *

Carl G Seaburg

Full piece at <https://www.uua.org/worship/words/opening/5359.shtml>

[Permission Source](#)

Let there be joy in our coming together this morning.

Let there be truth...

It's Flung *

Rev. Scott Tayler

[Permission secured by Soul Matters](#)

Joy doesn't simply arise

It flies.

It flings.

No, it is flung.

It is passed,

it is spread,

between you and me,

between the one who just received a gift

and the one that has been looking for it a long time.

It's a beautiful and elegant contagion,

over which we have more control than we think.

If only we share it.

If only we notice that joy is not ours to keep,

but ours to pass on.

So let's light up the world, friends!

Joy blesses us with its exuberance,

so we can make that blessing grow!

Meditations, Prayers & Blessings

Meditation on Gratitude and Joy

Jack Kornfield

Found at <https://gratefulness.org/resource/meditation-on-gratitude-and-joy/>

Excerpt: "...breathe gently. Bring to mind someone you care about; someone it is easy to rejoice for. Picture them and feel the natural joy you have for their well-being... With each breath, offer them your grateful, heartfelt wishes:

May you be joyful.

May your happiness increase.

May you not be separated from great happiness...

gradually open the meditation to include neutral people, difficult people, and even enemies until you extend sympathetic joy to all beings everywhere, young and old, near and far..."

Joy is Hard*

Rev. Joe Cherry

[Permission secured by Soul Matters](#)

Joy is hard.

Joy requires us to feel safe enough,
to be safe enough, to open to vulnerability.

To feel joy, you must be brave.

Joy walks into a room after the space has been cleared

Cleared of shame,

Cleared of doubt

Cleared of self-recrimination.

Joy is hard.

Joy *is* hard

and joy is worth the hard work of preparation.

Preparing oneself and setting down all the defenses

all the shoulds and could'ves,

all the should not haves and might haves.

Joy is worth the work.

You are worth the work.

You can start small:

the simple pleasure of your favorite tea,

the grand freedom of a full belly laugh.

Invite Joy to be your companion.

Beannacht

John O'Donahue

Full piece at <https://www.scottishpoetrylibrary.org.uk/poem/beannacht-blessing/>

...And when your eyes
freeze behind
the grey window
and the ghost of loss
gets into you,
may a flock of colors...
come to awaken in you
a meadow of delight...

Witnessing the Miracle

Andrea Mason ©2011

Permission secured by Soul Matters

In this time of waiting
Sitting quietly as the skies darken
And the days grow shorter
When all is outwardly tranquil
While readiness builds and grows within
We sit
Quietly
Waiting
Dreaming a dream
And hoping for a miracle

And if the soldiers come to disturb the dream
Breaking the tranquility
We will rise up against them
Taking back our dream
And the oil – only enough for one night –
Will burn for eight
And we will be witnesses to the mystery of a
miracle

And if the authorities call us for counting
Demanding our attendance
But there is no place for us
To lie down and rest
We will find fresh straw
And gentle animals to create a bed chamber.
And we will be witnesses to the mystery of a
miracle

And if the ones who believe that only they have the
TRUTH
Come to tell us
That we may no longer celebrate the wisdom of the
ancients...
We will cast a circle so we can dance
The Moon will rise
Shining her face upon us
And we will be witnesses to the mystery of a
miracle

So we will sit quietly as the skies darken
Waiting
Filled with anticipation
Dreaming a dream
Hoping for a miracle
And just before the skies gain light
When we are at our most tired
When despair begins to crowd out the hope and the
dream
There will be light again.

Then all the waiting
And all the hoping
And all the dreaming
Will give way to joy

If You Knew Yourself For Even One Moment

Jalal Al-Din Rumi

Full piece at <https://gratefulness.org/resource/if-you-knew-yourself-for-even-one-moment/>

Why not move into your house of joy
and shine into every crevice!
For you are the secret
Treasure-bearer...

The Fourth Sign Of The Zodiac (Part 3)

Mary Oliver

Full poem and reading at <https://www.brainpickings.org/2015/02/09/mary-oliver-blue-horses-fourth-sign-of-the-zodiac/>

I know, you never intended to be in this world.
But you're in it all the same.
So why not get started immediately.
I mean, belonging to it.
There is so much to admire, to weep over...

Welcome Morning

Anne Sexton

Full poem at <http://mondaypoem.blogspot.com/2013/06/welcome-morning-by-anne-sexton.html>

There is joy
in all:
in the hair I brush each morning,
in the Cannon towel, newly washed,
that I rub my body with each morning,
in the chapel of eggs I cook
each morning...
All this is God,
right here in my pea-green house
each morning...

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. Monthly online musicians' brainstorming group:** We meet on the first Tuesday of each month at 6pm eastern time. To join the call use this Zoom link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/5857099120>. No pre-registration necessary. Just come as you are able.
- 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.
- 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.
- 7. 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](#).

Suggestions For December 2021 - *Opening to Joy*

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

Hymns: Singing the Living Tradition - 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](#))

- | | |
|--|---|
| 29 - Joyful, Joyful, We Adore Thee | 345 - With Joy We Claim The Growing Light |
| 33 - Sovereign and Transforming Grace | 361 - Enter, Rejoice, and Come In |
| 100 - I've Got Peace Like a River | 368 - Now Let Us Sing |
| 108 - My Life Flows On in Endless Song | 384 - Alleluia |
| 122 - Sound Over All Waters | 392 - Hineh Mah Tov |
| 123 - Spirit of Life | 394 - Hava Nashirah |
| 131 - Love Will Guide Us | 393 - Jubilate Deo |
| 135 - How Happy Are They | 395 - Sing & Rejoice |
| 142 - Let There Be Light | |
| 144 - Now is the Time Approaching | |
| 149 - Lift Every Voice and Sing | |
| 168 - One More Step | |
| 188 - Come, Come Whoever You Are | |
| 282 - Let the Whole Creation Cry | |
| 301 - Touch the Earth, Reach the Sky! | |

Hannukah/Advent/Christmas: 221 - 258

Please see [permissions](#) for the following:

221, 224, 225, 226, 228, 229, 232, 239, 240, 244, 247, 254, 256

Hymns: Singing the Living Tradition - permissions needed

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

- 36 - When in Our Music (Hope Publishing, One License)
- 58 - Ring Out, Wild Bells (music: Oxford University Press, One License)
- 203 - All Creatures of the Earth and Sky (music: Oxford Press, One License)
- 275 - Joyful is the Dark (music: Carlton R. Young, words: Hope Publishing, Both: One License)
- 298 - Wake, Now, My Senses (harmony: Abingdon Press, One License)
- 364 - Alleluia, Alleluia (G.I.A Publishing, One License)
- 370 - All People That on Earth Do Dwell (Written credit as follows: "Lyrics by: Alicia S. Carpenter, © 1990; used with the permission of The Estate of Alicia Carpenter")
- 385 - Gloria (G.I.A Publishing, One License)
- 390 - Gaudeamus Hodie (music: Carl Fischer, inc., One License)
- 391 - Voice Still and Small (must sing "dark and rain" NOT "storm and rain")
- 404 - What Gift Can We Bring (Hope Publishing, Co., One License)
- 410 - Surprised by Joy (Hope Publishing, 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](#))

- 1023 - Building Bridges
- 1024 - When the Spirit Says Do
- 1028 - Fire of Commitment (must own hymnal)
- 1031 - Filled with Loving Kindness
- 1032 - Daoona Nayeesh
- 1036 - Calypso Alleluia
- 1050 - Jazz Alleluia

Hymns: Singing the Journey - permissions needed

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

- 1010 - We Give Thanks (seek copyright holder)
- 1013 - Open My Heart (please inform of use via [email](#).)
- 1027 - Cuando el Pobre (words and music: Oregon Catholic Press, One License)
- 1030 - Siyahamba (Walton Music Corp., One License)
- 1048 - Ubi Caritas (to show printed music: G.I.A. Publications, One License)
- 1052 - The Oneness of Everything (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)

Choral/Vocal

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

- [Shout for Joy - Andre Thomas - SATB](#)
- [Alleluia, Rejoice - Hughes - SATB, SA - with handbells](#)
- [Joy - Hiruth - Teasdale - SATB Divisi](#)
- [Joy - Juneau - SA](#)
- [Joyful, Joyful - Beethoven, Arr. Stutzman, SATB](#)
- [I Sing Because I'm Happy - Dillworth - SATB](#)
- [Joyful, Joyful from Sister Act 2 - Arr. Warren/Snyder - 3-part, 2-part](#)
- [There is Joy, Joy, Joy - Besig/Price - SATB](#)
- [Joy - Papoulis - SSA w/ djembe](#)
- [Bells of Joy - Clark/Moses - SATB - Carol of the Bells & Joy to the World](#)
- [Joyful, Joyful to the World - Althouse - SATB, SAB, 2-part](#)
- [Solstice - VOCES8 - Arr. Davis - SATB Divisi](#)
- [Solstice - Purifoy - SATB, SSA](#)
- [For This Joy - LaBarr - SATB](#)
- [Ready for Joy - Tate - SATB](#)
- [Joy to the World \(Jeremiah Was a Bullfrog\) - Arr. Jeff Funk - SATB, SAB, 2-part](#)
- [Solstice Song - Jan Garrett - SATB -](#)
- [Winter Solstice - Schram - 3-part, 2-part, unison](#)
- [Solstice Carole - Kim Baryluk - SATB, SSA](#)
- [Season of Light - Narverud - SATB](#)
- [In the Silence - Narverud - SATB](#)
- [Et in terra pax - \(And on Earth Peace\) - Purifoy - SATB](#)
- [The Beautiful Sing - Eric William Barnum - SATB](#)
- [Gaudete - Juneau - SATB, opt handbells, percussion](#)
- [Gaudete - Burkhardt - SATB/unison](#)
- [Alleluia Incantation - Miller - 3 voices](#)
- [Winter Sun - MacDonald - SATB Divisi](#)
- [Gloria - Vivaldi - SATB w/optional orchestra](#)
- [Gloria - Chilcott - SATB with optional orchestra](#)
- [Gloria - Mozart, Arr. Liebergen - SATB, SSA](#)
- [S'vivon - Flummerfelt - SATB](#)
- [S'vivon - Barteaux - SATB](#)
- [Light One Candle - Yarrow, Arr. DeCormier - SATB](#)
- [The Virgin Mary Had a Baby Boy - Stacey V. Gibbs - SATB](#)
- [Mary Had A Baby - Gibbs - SATB](#)
- [Go Tell It On the Mountain - Gibbs - SATB](#)
- [African Noel - Andre Thomas - SATB](#)
- [What a Wonderful Child - Rollo Dillworth - SATB, SAB, SSA, TTBB](#)
- [Veni, veni Emmanuel - Trotta - SATB, SA, SSA, TTBB](#)
- [Angels We Have Heard on High - Saunder Choi - SATB](#)
- [One - Songs and Chants to Nurture Joy, Cultivate Peace, and Honor the Earth - Linda Smith Koehler](#)

Instrumental/Handbell:

- [Joyful, Joyful- Arr. Harmon - Organ](#)
- [Winter Solstice - Carols for Organ - Arr. Roberta Rowland-Raybold](#)
- [Open - Whatley - Double Bass & Piano](#)
- [Joy to the World/Joyful, Joyful - Arr. DeCesare - C instrument duet, wind duet, clarinet solo](#)
- [Solstice - Arr. Cole - Flexible Instrumentation](#)
- [Veni, veni Emmanuel - Trotta - String Quartet](#)
- [Joyful, Joyful - Beethoven, Arr. Stephenson - 3-5va](#)
- [Joy - McChesney - 3va](#)
- [Joy to the World - Eithuns - 2va](#)
- [Springs of Joy - Wissinger - 3-6va](#)

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](#))

- ["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."
- ["I've Got Peace Like a River" \(Vimeo\)](#) (by Marvin V. Frey; #100 in *Singing the Living Tradition*) led and accompanied on guitar by [Mark David Buckles](#).
- ["For All That Is Our Life \(YouTube\)"](#) (#128 in *Singing the Living Tradition*; music by Patrick L. Rickey, words by Bruce Findlow). Piano and singing by [Jess Huetteman](#).
- ["Now Let Us Sing" \(YouTube\)](#) (#368 in *Singing the Living Tradition*; anonymous). Taught and sung by Rev. Suzelle Lynch.
- ["Dona Nobis Pacem" \(YouTube\)](#) (#388 in *Singing the Living Tradition*; traditional Latin canon). Singing by [Jess Huetteman](#), Chelsea Sardoni, and Morayo Akande.

But Wait, There's More...

Please see individual citation preferences/donation opportunities.

Many, many thanks to **Sharon Scholl** for her ongoing generosity in the sharing these four pieces with us:

- [Joy](#)
- [December Stillness](#)
- [Jubilate](#)
- [Solstice Song](#)
- 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.

[What Kind of World - James Underberg](#)

- Many thanks to James from [4th UU Society, NYC](#) for sharing his videos and talent with us all! More of his videos can be found here: [James' YouTube Channel](#).
- Anyone who'd like to make a donation to James can do so at this link: [James Underberg PayPal](#)

Extra, Extra!!!... Watch this video: [Roundtable Discussion on Spirituals with Anton Armstrong & Andre Thomas](#)

Stories For All Ages

Your Name is a Song by Jamilah Thompkins-Bigelow

Book: [HERE](#)

Video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RETE1eKpUpw>

Whimsical songs in each person's name.

Online Permission Note

Innovation Press has authorized its books for online use as long as you follow their specific use guidelines found [HERE](#).

The Word Collector by Peter H. Reynolds

Read aloud with Michelle and Barack Obama: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NJ_MUs_MCkg

Book: [HERE](#)

Opening to joy with generosity.

Online Permission Note

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The Strawberry

Original Zen koan found [HERE](#)

Lea Morris' Story and Song version:

Preview the video at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7f9V3zuspXM>

Purchase at <https://www.hopesingseternal.me/stories/stories>

Pursued by 2 tigers, about to fall off a cliff, a woman sees a strawberry. Mindfulness brings us perspective and joy, even in tough times.

Video: Flash Mob Ode to Joy - Beethoven Symphony No.9 (5:40 min)

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

Creating joy with a flash mob.

[The Treasure](#) as told by Rabbi Nachman

To find treasure and joy, one must travel to Tzaddik.

[Hindu Creation Story](#) as told by Rev. Gretchen Haley

The secret to happiness is put in the human heart.

[Are You Searching in the Wrong Place](#) as told by Osho

Searching for a needle outside when you have lost it inside.

[The Rebirth of the Sun](#) as told by Starhawk

Solstice story

The Legend of Amaterasu

<https://jslingerland.wordpress.com/2012/11/19/the-legend-of-amaterasu/>

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 Reacquainting Yourself with Ordinary Joy

Reflection - Amateur Joy, from What On Earth Have I Done?

Robert Fulghum

Full piece at <https://www.spiritualityandpractice.com/book-reviews/excerpts/view/17760>

"But somehow, hyperstimulation was not what I wanted for Christmas. Some low-key joy would do. Amateur joy..."

Quote - Brené Brown, Daring Greatly

Joy comes to us in moments – ordinary moments. We risk missing out on joy when we get too busy chasing down the extraordinary. Scarcity culture may keep us afraid of living small, ordinary lives, but when you talk to people who have survived great losses, it is clear that joy is not a constant. Without exception, all the participants who spoke to me about their losses, and what they missed the most, spoke about ordinary moments. "If I could come downstairs and see my husband sitting at the table and cursing at the newspaper..." "If I could hear my son giggling in the backyard..." "My mom sent me the craziest texts – she never knew how to work her phone. I'd give anything to get one of those texts right now".

Quote - Brené Brown, The Gifts of Imperfection

Twinkle lights are the perfect metaphor for joy. Joy is not a constant. It comes to us in moments—often ordinary moments. Sometimes we miss out on the bursts of joy because we're too busy chasing down extraordinary moments. Other times we're so afraid of the dark that we don't dare let ourselves enjoy the light. A joyful life is not a floodlight of joy. That would eventually become unbearable. I believe a joyful life is made up of joyful moments gracefully strung together by trust, gratitude, inspiration, and faith.

Anecdote - Ode to Joy

<https://www.utne.com/science-and-technology/depression-research-classical-music-miller-mccune/>

Study suggesting that listening to music is more impactful than talk therapy. Beethoven beats behavioral psychology.

Book excerpt - Wendell Berry, from The Hidden Wound (also referenced in [this essay](#))

"There were two heavy facts that Nick accepted and lived with: life is hard, full of work and pain and weariness, and at the end of it a man has got to go farther than he can imagine from any place he knows. And yet within the confines of those acknowledged facts, he was a man rich in pleasures. They were not large pleasures, they cost little or nothing, often they could not be anticipated, and yet they surrounded him; they were possible at

almost any time, or at odd times, or at off times. They were pleasures to which a man had to be acutely and intricately attentive, or he could not have them at all. There were the elemental pleasures of eating and drinking and resting, of being dry while it is raining, of getting dry after getting wet, of getting warm again after getting cold, of cooling off after getting hot. There was pleasure to be taken in good work animals, as long as you remembered the bother and irritation of using the other kind. There was pleasure in the appetites and in the well-being of good animals. There was pleasure in quitting work. There were certain pleasures in the work itself. There was pleasure in hunting and in going to town, and in visiting and in having company. There was pleasure in observing and remembering the behavior of things, and in telling about it. There was pleasure in knowing where a fox lived, and in planning to run it, and in running it. And... Nick knew how to use his mind for pleasure; he remembered and thought and pondered and imagined.”

Essay excerpt - [Herman Hesse](#)

The high value put upon every minute of time, the idea of hurry-hurry as the most important objective of living, is unquestionably the most dangerous enemy of joy... I would simply like to reclaim an old and, alas, quite unfashionable private formula: Moderate enjoyment is double enjoyment. And: Do not overlook the little joys!... a tree, or at least a considerable section of sky, is to be seen anywhere. It does not even have to be blue sky; in some way or another the light of the sun always makes itself felt. Accustom yourself every morning to look for a moment at the sky and suddenly you will be aware of the air around you, the scent of morning freshness that is bestowed on you between sleep and labor. You will find every day that the gable of every house has its own particular look, its own special lighting. Pay it some heed if you will have for the rest of the day a remnant of satisfaction and a touch of coexistence with nature. Gradually and without effort the eye trains itself to transmit many small delights, to contemplate nature and the city streets, to appreciate the inexhaustible fun of daily life. From there on to the fully trained artistic eye is the smaller half of the journey; the principal thing is the beginning, the opening of the eyes.

Quote - [Ross Gay](#)

I dreamed a few years back that I was in a supermarket checking out when I had the stark and luminous and devastating realization—in that clear way, not that oh yeah way—that my life would end. I wept in line watching people go by with their carts, watching the cashier move items over the scanner, feeling such an absolute love for this life. And the mundane fact of buying groceries with other people whom I do not know, like all the banalities, would be no more so soon, or now.

Poem - #80 Tomato On Board, by Ross Gay

Full piece at <https://douceurs.tumblr.com/post/190406467423/excerpt-from-the-book-of-delights-by-ross-gay>

Read by author: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HcLEwL4WQnc>

Children’s book - Me & Mama, written and illustrated by Cozbi A. Cabrera

“warm mother-daughter story, in which the young girl protagonist begins and ends a normal, rainy day with her mama. But, far from ordinary, her day with her mama centers around joyful experiences, insightful observations, and loving moments. Each page evokes a smile and encourages all of us to cherish each small moment with our loved ones. Perfect for budding poets and painters, this book’s gorgeous illustrations and words will inspire more time for cuddling and creating.”

On Joy Changing the World & A Joy that Sets Us Free

Quote - [Toi Derricotte](#)

Joy is an act of resistance.

Essay - Joy As Resistance, and joy that my dignity demands, Austin Channing Brown

Full piece at <https://austinchanning.substack.com/p/joy-as-resistance>

Poem on which essay is based: <https://www.rattle.com/from-the-telly-cycle-by-toi-derricotte/>

“Black girls and Black women alike have our joy misconstrued as disrespectful, arrogant, or perpetually inappropriate. Our joy is suspicious. And what right have we to joy when we have so much work to do? Ms. Derricotte, with the wonder that only poetry can unearth, gives an answer. We aren’t just pursuing racial justice when we are organizing or voting or protesting or speechmaking or volunteering or working... we are also pursuing justice when we indulge in joy...”

Quote - adrienne maree brown

Feeling good is not frivolous, it is freedom.

Quote - Pleasure Is the Point, Adrienne Maree Brown

from *Pleasure Activism*, pp. 437-8, 441; also at <https://www.uua.org/worship/words/quote/pleasure-point>

Pleasure reminds us to enjoy being alive and on purpose... Pleasure—embodied, connected pleasure—is one of the ways we know when we are free. That we are always free. That we always have the power to co-create the world. Pleasure helps us move through the times that are unfair, through grief and loneliness, through the terror of genocide, or days when the demands are just overwhelming. Pleasure heals the places where our hearts and spirit get wounded. Pleasure reminds us that even in the dark, we are alive. Pleasure is a medicine for the suffering that is absolutely promised in life... Pleasure is the point. Feeling good is not frivolous, it is freedom.

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

“...draws from Black feminist luminaries to teach us how embracing what brings us joy is central in organizing against oppression... She also highlights the many ways that people of color, sex workers, disabled people and queer, trans and nonbinary people have been denied joy—and why we must center their pleasure as an organizing principle. “Feeling good is not frivolous,” brown writes. “It is freedom.”” - [review](#)

Related Essay: <https://fortelabs.co/blog/pleasure-as-an-organizing-principle/>

Quote - [adrienne maree brown](#)

Oppression makes us believe that pleasure is not something that we all have equal access to. One of the ways that we start doing the work of reclaiming our full selves — our whole liberated, free selves — is by reclaiming our access to pleasure... As a black woman in this country, I have to walk around every day knowing that, had I been born at a different time in this country’s history, it would’ve been a policy, like part of the law, that I could be raised for the pleasure of whoever owned me in that time. I’m trying to come all the way back from that to living in my own dignity and like, the self-actualization of my own pleasure, my own body — not for someone else to use, not for someone else to have ownership of.”

Video - Black and Jubilant: Unpacking Black Joy, video from *The Root*

https://www.theroot.com/black-and-jubilant-unpacking-black-joy-from-the-revolu-1846288040?utm_source=pocket_mylist

Article - What Black Joy Means, Chante Joseph

https://www.vogue.co.uk/arts-and-lifestyle/article/what-is-black-joy?utm_source=pocket_mylist

Quotes from Pleasure Activism - [adrienne maree brown](#)

- "I touch my own skin, and it tells me that before there was any harm, there was miracle..."
- "Pleasure activism is the work we do to reclaim our whole, happy, and satisfiable selves from the impacts, delusions, and limitations of oppression and/or supremacy."
- "...it must become an incredible pleasure to be able to be honest, expect to be whole, and to know that we are in a community that will hold us accountable and change with us."

Article - **The Promise and the Practice: "Black Joy" Reading, By Kimberly Quinn Johnson**

Full piece at <https://www.uua.org/worship/words/reading/promise-and-practice-joy-unspeakable-reading>

"It is the joy created through our collective healing — our laying down of burdens, to be picked up and shared by our people, our community. This is not joy in spite of suffering — a mask put on to hide pain... This Black Joy reminds me that I am not alone, that trouble don't last always, that I am held and carried forward by a power beyond what I can comprehend..."

On Finding Joy in the Midst of Dark Times

Quote - Rev. Dr. Rebecca Parker, from *Proverbs of Ashes*.

This passage is about a time when Parker was in deep despair. In the midst of that she found herself in a situation where she was invited to look through a telescope focused on Jupiter. Reflecting on that moment, she writes:

"It would be wrong to think of this moment as one in which joy triumphed over despair... Such a view assumes that bad feelings need to be excised, or suppressed by stronger, better feelings. Peace or happiness or even survival are imagined to be accomplished by cutting something out or dominating some aspect of the self. Viewing the soul this way internalizes violence.... I did not defeat negative feelings of anguish and despair because I saw something more lovely and good. Rather, I became able to feel more. My feeling broadened. Pain, sadness, and despair were not eliminated and overcome. I embraced them with a larger heart...my consciousness had been broadened to embrace memories of the religious community, immediate experiences of the world's beauty and the kindness of human beings, and a vivid sense of future possibility"

Reflection - **Open to Joy, Elea Kemler ***

Full piece at <https://www.uua.org/braverwiser/open-joy>
[Permission Source](#)

... This year, of course, it is hard to forget we are waiting. We are waiting for a vaccine, waiting for an end to sickness and isolation, waiting for justice, waiting for these days of strangeness and sorrow to be over. How do we even think about joy?

The old stories we retell at this time of year have clues. They tell us something important about the nature of joy—that joy can break through like starlight or candlelight in the darkness, but that it is surrounded by the hard stuff of everyday life. Maybe that makes it all the more precious. The stories remind us there is still and always joy in this world, and it is for everyone. But it usually comes right alongside the struggle...

Poem - For Joy, Jan Richardson

<https://adventdoor.com/2012/12/20/advent-4-for-joy/>

Quote - [Robin Wall Kimmerer](#)

Even a wounded world is feeding us. Even a wounded world holds us, giving us moments of wonder and joy. I choose joy over despair. Not because I have my head in the sand, but because joy is what the earth gives me daily and I must return the gift.

Quote - [Saoirse McClory](#)

The following quote came to me “Find a place inside where there’s joy, and the joy will burn out the pain.” (Joseph Campbell). I don’t know whether this will resonate with you at, all but there’s something about that invitation, to constantly come back to the place inside us which can (and does) feel the tender (and sometimes exuberant!) pulse of joy – and recognition of a far vaster picture – that feels very compelling to me.

Quote - Mark Nepo

Joy is the transformation of our suffering, not the escape of all we have to face.

Quote - Philip Gulley

I wonder if gratefulness is the bridge from sorrow to joy, spanning the chasm of our anxious striving. Freed from the burden of unbridled desires, we can enjoy what we have, celebrate what we’ve attained, and appreciate the familiar. For if we can’t be happy now, we’ll likely not be happy when.

Quote - Howard Thurman

Whatever may be the tensions and the stresses of a particular day, there is always lurking close at hand the trailing beauty of forgotten joy or unremembered peace.

Quote - Rebecca Solnit

When all the ordinary divides and patterns are shattered, people step up to become their brothers’ keepers. And that purposefulness and connectedness bring joy even amidst death, chaos, fear, and loss.

Video from movie, Inside Out

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sVPTbSkHa9s>

“They came to help because of sadness!”

Related article: <https://www.indiewire.com/2015/06/inside-out-and-the-vital-importance-of-sadness-in-pixars-blockbuster-hit-262727/>

Quote - Ross Gay, from his essay [Joy Is Such a Human Madness](#)

What if we joined our sorrows, I’m saying. I’m saying: What if that is joy?

Quote - [Ross Gay](#)

I will pause here to offer a false etymology: de-light suggests both “of light” and “without light.” And both of them concurrently is what I’m talking about. What I think I’m talking about. Being of and without at once. Or: joy...

I dreamed a few years back that I was in a supermarket checking out when I had the stark and luminous and devastating realization—in that clear way, not that oh yeah way—that my life would end. I wept in line watching people go by with their carts, watching the cashier move items over the scanner, feeling such an absolute love for this life. And the mundane fact of buying groceries with other people whom I do not know, like all the banalities, would be no more so soon, or now.

Podcast - Tending Joy and Practicing Delight, OnBeing podcast interview with Ross Gay

<https://onbeing.org/programs/ross-gay-tending-joy-and-practicing-delight>

“There’s a question floating around the world right now — how can we be joyful in a moment like this? To which Ross Gay responds in word and deed, how can we not be joyful, especially in a moment like this? He is a writer, a gardener — also a former college football player. To be with him is to train your gaze to see what’s terrible but also to see what’s wonderful and beautiful. To attend to and meditate on what you love, even within the work of justice. We practice tenderness and mercy in part because to understand that we are all suffering is one quality of what Ross Gay calls “adult joy.”...

Quote - [Kahlil Gibran](#)

When you are joyous, look deep into your heart and you shall find it is only that which has given you sorrow that is giving you joy. When you are sorrowful look again in your heart, and you shall see that in truth you are weeping for that which has been your delight.

Children’s book - [Saturday](#), written and illustrated by Oge Mora

In this mother-daughter story, Saturday plans go awry one after the other and threaten to ruin Ava and her mother’s special day together. Yet despite cancellations, noise, and other mishaps, Ava and her mother are able to remain at peace and joyful on their precious Saturday. Cut and painted paper collages provide radiant textures and movement to this action-packed, emotion-filled narrative. Perfect for any story time and for lovers of plot-driven stories, this delightful book promotes resiliency and more quality time with family every day of the week.

Scripture - [Niv, The Gospel According To Luke 15:7-10 \(Christian\)](#)

I tell you that in the same way there will be more rejoicing in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous persons who do not need to repent. Or suppose a woman has ten silver coins and loses one. Does she not light a lamp, sweep the house and search carefully until she finds it? And when she finds it, she calls her friends and neighbors together and says, 'Rejoice with me; I have found my lost coin.' In the same way, I tell you, there is rejoicing in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner who repents.

Video - [Joy in the Wilderness \(Christian\)](#)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qvOhQTuD2e0&list=PLH0Szn1yYNeclOdfwWBawnNT5ZkGFHxBf&index=13>

Poem - [Barbara A. Holmes, Joy Unspeakable](#)

https://cac.org/joy-unspeakable-2018-05-23/?utm_source=pocket_mylist

Poem - [Joy Is The Justice We Give Ourselves, J. Drew Lanham](#)

Full piece at <https://emergencemagazine.org/poem/joy-is-the-justice-we-give-ourselves/>

Joy is the justice,
we give ourselves.
It is Maya’s caged bird
sung free past the prison bars
holding spirits bound—
without due process
without just cause...

On Joy and Paying Attention

Quote - adrienne maree brown

“[Happiness] is about pure aliveness and actually being present for the world around you.”

Anecdote - on joy and attention, from [Parabola](#)

“in a recent Harvard study by Matthew Killingsworth and Daniel Gilbert, more than two-thousand adults were asked what they were thinking about during their day-to-day activities. It turns out that forty-seven percent of the time their minds were not focused on what they were doing. Even more striking was that they reported feeling less happy when their minds were wandering.

Those who have learned how to focus their attention on the present moment are good athletes, good listeners, good thinkers, and good workers at anything they do because this gathering of the attention connects mind, heart and body in a balanced, harmonious state of awareness, of readiness to act or to be present.”

Essay Excerpt - [Herman Hesse](#)

Our eyes, above all those misused, overstrained eyes of modern man, can be, if only we are willing, an inexhaustible source of pleasure. When I walk to work in the morning, I see many workers who have just crawled sleepily out of bed, hurrying in both directions, shivering along the streets. Most of them walk fast and keep their eyes on the pavement, or at most on the clothes and faces of the passers-by. Heads up, dear friends!...

Just try it once — a tree, or at least a considerable section of sky, is to be seen anywhere. It does not even have to be a blue sky; in some way or another the light of the sun always makes itself felt. Accustom yourself every morning to look for a moment at the sky and suddenly you will be aware of the air around you, the scent of morning freshness that is bestowed on you between sleep and labor. You will find every day that the gable of every house has its own particular look, its own special lighting. Pay it some heed if you will have for the rest of the day a remnant of satisfaction and a touch of coexistence with nature. Gradually and without effort the eye trains itself to transmit many small delights...

Book Excerpt - Annie Dillard, from *Pilgrim at Tinker Creek*

The world is fairly studded and strewn with pennies cast broadside from a generous hand. But — and this is the point — who gets excited by a mere penny?... It is dire poverty indeed when a man is so malnourished and fatigued that he won't stoop to pick up a penny. But if you cultivate a healthy poverty and simplicity, so that finding a penny will literally make your day, then, since the world is in fact planted in pennies, you have with your poverty bought a lifetime of days. It is that simple.

Book - *The Book of Delights: Essays* by Ross Gay

Review at <https://www.npr.org/2020/03/23/820293500/encore-ross-gay-writes-the-book-of-delights>

Poem - *From Blossoms*, by Li-Young Lee

Full poem at <https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poems/43012/from-blossoms>

...There are days we live
as if death were nowhere
in the background; from joy
to joy to joy, from wing to wing,
from blossom to blossom to
impossible blossom...

On Sharing and Spreading Joy

Quote - [Gretchen Rubin](#)

One of the best ways to make yourself happy is to make other people happy.
One of the best ways to make other people happy is to be happy yourself.

Quote - Gautama Buddha

Thousands of candles can be lighted from a single candle. Happiness never decreases by being shared.

Quote - William Carey Jones

The joy of brightening other lives, bearing each other's burdens, easing other's loads and supplanting empty hearts and lives with generous gifts becomes for us the magic of Christmas.

Quote - Dolly Parton

I always just thought if you see somebody without a smile, give'em yours!

Poem - Joy, Rev. Jay Wolin

Full poem at

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1UH4yVolYqT6ScZFLOkkEKZU3zU2WLiEVdis38Z9pMv0/edit?usp=sharing>

"...And so I choose to smile
Even if you do not know why
Feel free to choose to smile back."

Quote - Mark Twain

To get the full value of joy you must have someone to divide it with.

Video - Why We Pursue Happiness But Overlook Joy, Ingrid Fetell Lee

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

Anecdote - Joan Halifax Roshi

One of the ways that Buddhists share sympathetic joy is to dedicate the merit of whatever good has arisen in their lives to the wellbeing of others. At the end of a session of meditation, we say "May the merit of this practice penetrate into each thing in all realms and benefit all beings."

Scripture - Tablets Of Bahá'u'lláh, P. 22 (Baha'i)

It is permitted that the peoples and kindreds of the world associate with one another with joy and radiance.

Book Excerpt - The Book of Delights: Essays, by Ross Gay

It astonishes me sometimes — no, often — how every person I get to know — everyone, regardless of everything, by which I mean everything — lives with some profound personal sorrow. Brother addicted. Mother murdered. Dad died in surgery. Rejected by their family. Cancer came back. Evicted. Fetus not okay. Everyone, regardless, always, of everything. Not to mention the existential sorrow we all might be afflicted with, which is that we, and what we love, will soon be annihilated. Which sounds more dramatic than it might. Let me just say dead. Is this, sorrow, of which our impending being no more might be the foundation, the great wilderness? Is sorrow the true wild? And if it is — and if we join them — your wild to mine — what's that? For joining, too, is a kind of annihilation. What if we joined our sorrows, I'm saying. I'm saying: What if that is joy?

On Joy and Self-love

Quote - [adrienne maree brown](#)

Ultimately, love for the self is the deepest pleasure we deny ourselves. I work daily to be courageous enough to indulge in the purest pleasure of self-love.

Quote - [Gretchen Rubin](#)

One of the best ways to make yourself happy is to make other people happy;
One of the best ways to make other people happy is to be happy yourself.

Quote - Jacob Nordby

Every pain, addiction, anguish, longing, depression, anger or fear is an orphaned part of us seeking joy, some disowned shadow wanting to return to the light and home of ourselves.”

Poem - We Have Not Come to Take Prisoners, Hafiz

Full poem at <https://www.thehouseofyoga.com/magazine/we-have-not-come-here-take-prisoners-hafiz>

We have not come here to take prisoners
But to surrender ever more deeply
To freedom and joy.
We have not come into this exquisite world
to hold ourselves hostage from love.
Run my dear, From anything
That may not strengthen
Your precious, budding wings...,
your beautiful heart...

On the Joy of Simplicity and Letting Go

Book Excerpt - Annie Dillard, from Pilgrim at Tinker Creek

The world is fairly studded and strewn with pennies cast broadside from a generous hand. But — and this is the point — who gets excited by a mere penny?... It is dire poverty indeed when a man is so malnourished and fatigued that he won't stoop to pick up a penny. But if you cultivate a healthy poverty and simplicity, so that finding a penny will literally make your day, then, since the world is in fact planted in pennies, you have with your poverty bought a lifetime of days. It is that simple.

Poem - Joe Heller, by Kurt Vonnegut

Full poem at <https://genius.com/Kurt-vonnegut-joe-heller-annotated>

... “And Joe said, "I've got something he can never have."
And I said, "What on earth could that be, Joe?"
And Joe said, "The knowledge that I've got enough."..."

Video - Awakening Joy: James Baraz (Buddhist perspective)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=h7jGXsJ1NXM>

Poem - Joy by Thomas Centolella

Full poem at <https://www.coppercanyonpress.org/books/lights-mysteries-by-thomas-centolella/>

...When...
you yourself return,
joy is simple, unassuming.
Red tulips on their green stems.
Early spring vegetables, bright in the pan....

Reflection - I Ride Bus, Rayla D. Mattson (Braver/Wiser) *

Full piece at <https://www.uua.org/braverwiser/i-ride-bus>
[Permission Source](#)

"...And each day when she gets off the bus, she says with as much joy as she did the very first day and with as much enthusiasm as she can muster: "Momma, I ride bus!" And for me, shouldn't her joy be enough?"

On Our Dance with Worry, Vulnerability and Joy

Video Interview - Dr. Brené Brown on Joy: It's Terrifying

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RKV0BWSPfOw>

Quote - Brené Brown, Daring Greatly

I'd argue that joy is probably the most difficult emotion to really feel...In a culture of deep scarcity—of never feeling safe, certain, and sure enough—joy can feel like a setup...We're always waiting for the other shoe to drop... Scarcity and fear drive foreboding joy. We're afraid that the feeling of joy won't last, or that we won't be enough, or that the transition to disappointment (or whatever is in store for us next) will be too difficult. We've learned that giving in to joy is, at best, setting ourselves up for disappointment and, at worst, inviting disaster. And we struggle with the worthiness issue. Do we deserve our joy, given our inadequacies and imperfections? What about the starving children and the war-ravaged world? Who are we to be joyful?

Quote - Leo Buscaglia

Worry never robs tomorrow of its sorrow. It only saps today of its joy.

Quote - Michelle Mays

Staying in a state of disaster preparedness robs us of our ability to feel joy.

Quote (and [sermon](#)) - Rev. Elea Kemler

Mostly what I do is what my husband calls rehearsing suffering... I wish I could tell you that... I have learned this lesson, but I have not. I still worry about the wrong things though of course it is only in retrospect that I know they were the wrong things because they seem like totally reasonable worries at the time. But mostly what I do is what my husband calls rehearsing suffering... . This is not helpful I assure you. What rehearsing suffering does though is make it harder to have room for joy, to recognize joy, to rest in joy when it comes...

On Joy and Transcendence

Blessing - Rev. Karen G. Johnston

Spirit of Life, we seek to touch that joy that never leaves this world, that is not happiness built on happenstance, but is a living, breathing joy, greater than any single moment. In those moments we cannot feel it, let us seek to remember it is always there, around us and in us.

Video Interview - Theology of Joy: Michael Fishbane

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bSnERfkW4o&list=PLO-6cjKGDlet70bQZVjSyl5dsRWFCCSAn&index=4>

On the connection in Judaism between joy, transcendence and responsibility, with a wonderful articulation of "the joy of the commandments."

Quote - Rebecca Parker (from *You Have to Know Your Body as the Home of God*)

The bright star in the night sky is the sudden clarity of your instinct for joy.

Poem - Joy, By Terri Pahucki *

Full piece at <https://www.uua.org/worship/words/poetry/joy>

[Permission Source](#)

...And every morning, I plead
with the dew-moist buds
to know their secret joy:
to open and close without holding,
to surrender all to light,
to sing
I am completely yours
over and over again.

Surprised by Joy

Quote - [C.S. Lewis](#)

It is that of an unsatisfied desire which is itself more desirable than any other satisfaction. I call it Joy, which is here a technical term and must be sharply distinguished both from happiness and from Pleasure. Joy (in my sense) has indeed one characteristic, and one only, in common with them; the fact that anyone who has experienced it will want it again. Apart from that, and considered only in its quality, it might almost equally well be called a particular kind of unhappiness or grief. But then it is a kind we want. I doubt whether anyone who has tasted it would ever, if both were in his power, exchange it for all the pleasures in the world. But then Joy is never in our power and pleasure often is.

Quote - C. S. Lewis

Joy bursts in our lives when we go about doing the good at hand and not trying to manipulate things and times to achieve joy.

Poem - For Joy, Jan Richardson

<http://adventdoor.com/2012/12/20/advent-4-for-joy/>

Reflection - Open to Joy, Rev. Elea Kemler

<https://www.uua.org/braverwiser/open-joy>

Miscellaneous

Book - **Dancing with Joy: 99 Poems**

edited by Roger Housden

"In his collection *Risking Everything*, Housden addressed love's many aspects. Now, in *Dancing with Joy*, he assembles 99 poems from 69 poets that celebrate the many colors of joy. Anything can be a catalyst for joy, these poems reveal."

Video Interview - **Theology of Joy: Willie James Jennings**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1fKD4Msh3rE&list=PLO-6cjKGDlet70bQZVjSyl5dsRWfCCSAn&index=5>

On Joy as defiance of death, making joy of what is "disposed" and the importance of challenging "segregated joy."

Related video: On joy that joins: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CwiFx_mJA14&list=PLO-6cjKGDlet70bQZVjSyl5dsRWfCCSAn&index=21

Scripture - 'abdu'l-Bahá, **Paris Talks, P. 109 (Baha'i)**

Joy gives us wings! In times of joy our strength is more vital, our intellect keener, and our understanding less clouded. We seem better able to cope with the world and to find our sphere of influence.

Scripture - Niv, **The Gospel According To Luke 2:10 (Christian)**

But the angel said to them, 'Do not be afraid. I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people.'

Interview - **Five Foolproof Ways to Feel More Joy**

interview by Christine Carter with James Baraz, author of *Awakening Joy*

Full piece at

https://greatergood.berkeley.edu/article/item/five_foolproof_ways_to_feel_more_joy_in_2015

- Grateful heart
- Identify activities that make you happy
- Express your caring in a fulfilling activity
- Talk kindly to yourself
- Spend some regular time with a creative outlet like singing, art, or writing. It makes you feel alive.

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.

The Joy that Finds Us

Rev. Elea Kemler

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1cBMqq-QApAIbK_kyGIAIT43TOF5G9AE17-ttMteXGM/edit?usp=sharing

“And just as we can miss joy because we think it is going to be bigger or louder or longer than it is, we get confused about where to look for joy too and when we will find it. We think it is only found in lovely places, in museums or concert halls or in the presence of something special or beautiful. But joy is not like that. Joy is right there in the chaos, right there in the midst of our less than lovely, picturesque lives. Joy is not just for happy people, not just for the healthy or sober or employed or people whose families are all speaking to each other. Joy is not a luxury, and it is not limited by circumstances...”

Surprised By Joy (Homily)

Rev. Julia Hamilton

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1y56QT6jcGw8gy0mgj2WdQ3yBNJFf10i3/edit?usp=sharing&oid=101245613595157190644&rtpof=true&sd=true>

“Joy shows up most often when we are present and open to the uncontrollable beauty of life. Joy recedes when we lose touch with the present, when we are so preoccupied with the future, with trying to control where things are going, that we can’t see what delights might be popping up right in front of us...”

Surprised by Joy

Rev. Rod Richards

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1hOeD-pi3CRsgjFhWVAgeWpa0vfzaVCARO8RXicP4rB8/edit?usp=sharing>

“This more expansive joy may, indeed, be what allows us to find joy in random moments or particular events...but this joy also runs beneath our concerns; it is even sometimes present in the midst of our sorrows and our suffering; it is sometimes almost painful in itself. Indeed, the joy we seek to inspire may have less to do with creating joyous experiences for one another... as with deepening our connection to the very source of joy, that recognition of the mystery and miracle of being here at all...”

Joy to the World, even now

Rev. Laura Bogle

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1_zC706VVk-Sf43m4vtA9Ovcj8YKRt-IlhrNtqVoScPw/edit?usp=sharing

Special permission note: Notify Rev. Bogle in advance of use. If your congregation has a budget to pay guest preachers, then an honorarium is requested.

“There is a joy in experiencing creative love, love that brings forth new life, love that taps into our deepest desires, God’s deepest desires for us.

Audre Lorde—black woman, feminist, lesbian, cancer survivor, and poet-- called this kind of creative love “a self-connection shared.” A self-connection shared—when I am in touch with my own deepest desires, and I share that with another—becomes a moment of joy...”

This Very Moment

Rev. Peter A. Friedrichs

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1B91iB9aCLvWo26hV2ea84at7r2ngoV3z2-TlxM7M7pU/edit?usp=sharing>

On finding joy in the balance...

“There is, as the Buddhists like to remind us, a middle path. The danger of living in the past or constantly hoping for the future is that we miss out on the present, the things that are right in front of us... This picture of a life in dynamic balance gives me permission to move freely from the past to the present and on into the future, then back again. It relieves me of the pressure to seek that perfect point of the present and to hold onto it, sometimes desperately, when I find it...”

Featured Preacher Bios & Contact Information

Rev. Elea Kemler: <https://uugroton.org/kemler.html>

Rev. Julia Hamilton: <https://ussb.org/about/staff/>

Rev. Rod Richards: <http://uuslo.org/contact-us/>

Rev. Laura Bogle: <http://www.fuuf.org/minister-and-staff>

Rev. Peter A. Friedrichs: <https://www.uucdc.org/about/meet-our-minister/>

Closing Words

Greater than any single moment..., Rev. Karen G. Johnston *

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Spirit of Life, we seek to touch that joy that never leaves this world, that is not happiness built on happenstance, but is a living, breathing joy, greater than any single moment. In those moments we cannot feel it, let us seek to remember it is always there, around us and in us.

Surprised by Joy, Rev. Rod Richards *

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We strive for happiness, it's true.
For pleasure; satisfaction, too.
When techniques fail which we employ
We find ourselves surprised by joy.

Joy, Rev. Jay Wolin *

Full piece at

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1UH4yVoIYqT6ScZFLOKkEKZU3zU2WLiEVdis38Z9pMv0/edit?usp=sharing>

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"...And so I choose to smile
Even if you do not know why
Feel free to choose to smile back."

On the Brink, Rev. Leslie Takahashi *

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

Also found in [Voices from the Margins](#) (pg.25), a UUA resource & Soul Matters "[Common Shelf](#)" book

[Permission Source](#)

It's Flung, Rev. Scott Tayler *

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Joy doesn't simply arise
It flies.
It flings.
No, it is flung.
It is passed,
it is spread,
between you and me,
between the one who just received a gift
and the one that has been looking for it a long time.
It's a beautiful and elegant contagion,
over which we have more control than we think.
If only we share it.
If only we notice that it's not ours to keep,
but ours to pass on.
So let's light up the world, friends!
Joy blesses us with its exuberance,
so we can make that blessing grow!

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](#).



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