

**Oberlin Unitarian Universalist
Fellowship
“Cooperation, Covenant,
Community (a Conversation)”**



Sunday, November 6, 2011
Cal Frye, service leader
Katie Cross, pianist
Andy Frantz
Christa Champion

Gathering Music

#1008, When Our Heart is in a Holy Place

Welcome and Announcements

Lighting the Chalice, OUIF Middle School Faith

Development Class, 2008-09 **Chalice Lighter: Maya Peters**

Opening Song: #347, Gather the Spirit

Joys and Concerns

Reading, “We Pause This Hour” by Bruce Southworth

Story For All Ages,

“The Three Questions,” by Jon J Muth

Children Leave for Classes

#413, Go, Now, in Peace

Reading, Inspired by the Salem Covenant of 1629

Offertory: Oberlin Community Services

Music, #1017 We Are Building a New Way,
with Christa Champion, bass, and Andy Frantz, drums.

Homily, Cal Frye, “Cooperation, Covenant, Community”

Closing Song: #121, We’ll Build a Land

Closing Words

Extinguishing the Chalice

Postlude, Bouree in G Major by J.S. Bach

Chelsea and Katie Cross

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Gathering Music

#1008, When Our Heart is in a Holy Place¹

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Welcome and Announcements

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Welcome, everyone, to the Oberlin Unitarian Universalist Fellowship. Whomever you are, where ever you have come from, whomever you love, we welcome you. I am Cal Frye, this morning's service leader, and I am a member of this Fellowship. We are glad to have you with us this morning.

I'd like to draw your attention to the announcements page, the pink sheet, for events of the week and the service next week. If you didn't pick up one with your program, you can find copies on the table behind you. Other announcements may be found on bulletin board in the lobby, and I encourage you to look these over following the service during our coffee hour.

In addition to the printed announcements and those listed here, I have the following special announcements:

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The Fellowship has been in search of a building, and has placed an offer on the building on the corner of Orchard and East Lorain St, next to Computers

¹ Joyce Poley & Lorne Kellett, 2005, *Singing the Journey*, Unitarian Universalist Association, Boston.

Unlimited. After the service this morning, the space and building team will give another short presentation on this building and attempt to answer your questions about this potential new home. A tour of the building will follow. We are excited by this opportunity.

I hope you will join us for next Sunday's service on Training the Two Inner Wolves with our minister, Rev. Mary Grigolia at the pulpit.

Again, I bid you welcome. Let our service begin.

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Lighting the Chalice, Maya Peters, chalice lighter

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There is much material available on the UUA's web site to assist service leaders in preparation. I looked there for fresh words to open our service this morning, and found something appropriate that had been developed right here in our Fellowship. Our Chalice Lighter this morning is Maya Peters. Maya, would you come light the chalice for us as I share the words of the Oberlin Fellowship's Middle School Faith Development Class from a few years ago?

We light this chalice to find inner peace, love for each other, and faith in ourselves.

Also, to be welcoming to whomever we meet and kind to all living creatures.

So gather around this light of hope as we share this time together.

- OUUF Middle School Faith Development Class (08-09) ²

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Opening Song: #347, *Gather the Spirit*³

1. Gather the spirit, harvest the power!
Our separate fires will kindle one flame.
Witness the mystery of this hour!
Our trials in this light appear all the same.

Gather in peace, gather in thanks!
Gather in sympathy now and then!
Gather in hope, compassion and strength!
Gather to celebrate once again!

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2. Gather the spirit of heart and mind!
Seeds for the sowing are laid in store,
Nurtured in love, and conscience refined,
With body and spirit united once more.

Gather in peace, gather in thanks!
Gather in sympathy now and then!

² <http://www.uua.org/worship/words/chalice/submissions/142511.shtml>

³ Jim Scott, 1993, *Singing the Living Tradition*, Unitarian Universalist Association, Boston.

Gather in hope, compassion and strength!
Gather to celebrate once again!

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3. Gather the spirit growing in all,
Drawn by the moon and fed by the sun,
Winter to spring, and summer to fall,
The chorus of life resounding as one!

Gather in peace, gather in thanks!
Gather in sympathy now and then!
Gather in hope, compassion and strength!
Gather to celebrate once again!

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Celebrating our Joys, Sharing our Concerns

As part of our free religious community, we share both our joys and concerns each week. I invite you as you are moved to come forward and light a candle to mark that you would share with us this morning. Please remember to state your name as you do so.

As is our custom, I light one further candle to honor those joys or sorrows held in the silence of our hearts, and I invite you to read with me...

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14 **Reading,** *“We Pause This Hour”* by Bruce Southworth⁴
(*Congregation reads the italicized or blue lines*)

We pause this hour to honor the spirit and to accept ourselves as fragile humans, equally full of nobility and strength.

We gather, weary of life’s trials, yet cheered by infinite possibilities for love’s grace.

We meet with smiles and glad voices for old friends and new—every stranger a gift of potential friendship.

We rejoice in the keen intellect and the warm heart.

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15 We remember those whose opportunities and needs our society thwarts, and

We give thanks for the blessings that are ours.

We praise all who extend a hand in service and whose vision of justice commands action.

We pause; We gather;

We meet; We rejoice;

We give thanks; We praise;

We proclaim our community.

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16 **Story For All Ages,**

⁴ <http://www.uua.org/worship/words/readings/submissions/183455.shtml>

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(17) Three Questions, by Jon J Muth⁵

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There once was a boy named Nikolai who sometimes felt uncertain about the right way to act. “I want to be a good person,” he told his friends, “But I don’t always know the best way to do that.”

Nikolai’s friends understood and they wanted to help him.

“If only I could find the answers to my three questions,” Nikolai continued, “Then I would always know what to do.”

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“What is the best time to do things?”

“Who is the most important one?”

“What is the right thing to do?”

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Nikolai’s friends considered his first question. Then Sonya, the heron, spoke. “To know the best time to do things, one must plan in advance,” she said.

⁵ Jon J Muth, 2002, Scholastic Press, New York.

Gogol [GOH-gul], the monkey, who had been rooting through some leaves to find something good to eat, said, "You will know when to do things if you watch and pay close attention."

Then Pushkin [Poosh-kin], the dog, who was just dozing off, rolled over and said, "You can't pay attention to everything your self. You need a pack to keep watch and help you decide when to do things. For example, Gogol, a coconut is about to fall on your head!"

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Nikolai thought for a moment. Then he asked his second question. "Who is the most important one?"

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"Those who are closest to the heaven," said Sonya, circling up into the sky.

"Those who know how to heal the sick," said Gogol, stroking his bruised noggin.

"Those who make the rules," growled Pushkin.

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Nikolai thought some more. Then he asked the third question. "What is the right thing to do?"

"Flying," said Sonya.

"Having fun all the time," laughed Gogol.

"Fighting," barked Pushkin right away.

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Then the boy thought for a long while. He loved his friends. He knew they were all trying their best to help him answer his questions. But their answers didn't seem quite right.

Then, an idea came to him. *I know!* he thought. *I will ask Leo, the turtle. He has lived a very long time. Surely he will know the answers I am looking for.*

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Nikolai hiked high up into the mountains where the old turtle lived all alone.

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When Nikolai arrived, he found Leo digging a garden. The turtle was old, and digging was hard for him.

"I have three questions and I came to ask your help," Nikolai said. "When is the best time to do things? Who is the most important one? What is the right thing to do?"

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Leo listened carefully, but he only smiled.

Then he went on with his digging.

"You must be tired," Nikolai said at last. "Let me help you." The turtle gave him his shovel and thanked him.

And because it was easier for a young boy to dig than it was for an old turtle, Nikolai kept on digging until the rows were finished.

Slide 29 But just as he finished, the wind blew wildly and rain burst from darkened clouds. As they moved toward the cottage for shelter, Nikolai suddenly heard a cry for help.

Slide 30 Running down the path, he found a panda whose leg had been injured by a fallen tree.

Slide 31 Carefully, Nikolai carried her into Leo's house and made a splint for her leg with a stick of bamboo.

Slide 33 The storm raged on, banging at the doors and windows. The panda woke up.

"Where am I?" she said. "And where is my child?"

Slide 34 The boy ran out of the cottage and down the path. The roar of the storm was deafening. Pushing against the howling wind and drenching rain, he ran farther into the forest. There he found the panda's child, cold and shivering on the ground.

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Slide 36 The little panda was wet and scared, but alive. Nikolai carried her inside and made her warm and dry. Then he laid her in her mother's arms.

Slide 37 Leo smiled when he saw what the boy had done.

Slide 38 The next morning the sun was warm, birds sang, and all was well with the world. The panda's leg was healing nicely, and she thanked Nikolai for saving her and her baby from the storm.

At that moment, Sonya, Gogol, and Pushkin arrived to make sure everyone was all right.

Slide 39 Nikolai felt great peace within himself. He had wonderful friends. And he had saved the panda and her child. But he also felt disappointed. He still had not found the answers to his three questions. So he asked Leo one more time. The old turtle looked at the boy. "But your questions have been answered!" he said. "They have?" asked the boy.

Slide 40 "Yesterday, if you had not stayed to help me dig my garden, you wouldn't have heard the panda's cries for help in the storm. Therefore, the most important time was the time you spent digging in the garden. The most important one at that moment was me, and the

most important thing to do was to help me with my garden.

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“Later, when you found the injured panda, the most important time was the time you spent mending her leg and saving her child. The most important ones were the panda and her baby. And the most important thing to do was to take care of them and make them safe.

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“Remember then that there is only one important time, and that time is now. The most important one is always the one you are with. And the most important thing is to do good for the one who is standing at your side. For these, my dear boy, are the answers to what is most important in this world.

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“This is why we are here.”

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Children Leave for Classes

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#413, *Go, Now, in Peace*⁶

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Reading, “*We covenant with one another*”
I invite you to read with me the following, based on the Salem Covenant of 1629...⁷

⁶ Natalie Sleeth, 1993, *Singing the Living Tradition*, Unitarian Universalist Association, Boston.

⁷ <http://www.uua.org/worship/words/readings/submissions/5894.shtml>

We covenant with one another
and do bind ourselves together
in the presence of this religious community
To express our deepest and most cherished
convictions,
as they are borne by each person
to find a common vision for a better world;
To seek the life of the spirit,
as it is known by each person,
choosing with reverence its name;
And to walk together in the way of truth and love,
as it is shown to us and to all people,
in word and in deed.

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Offertory: Oberlin Community Services
Music, #1017 *We Are Building a New Way*,⁸
OUUF Choir, with Christa Champion, bass,
and Andy Frantz, drums.

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Your Donations today will go for the benefit of Oberlin Community Services, specifically the Helping Hands for Families program. OCS provides a safety net to help people get back on their feet. We assist with food, housing, utilities, clothes, transportation, medicine, counseling, and much more. This year the staff met with more than 100 clients each month, a quarter of whom had never needed assistance before.

⁸ Martha Sandefer & Jim Scott, 2005, *Singing the Journey*, Unitarian Universalist Association, Boston.

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Homily, Cal Frye, "Cooperation, Covenant, Community (a Conversation)"

"We pause; We gather;
We meet; We rejoice;
We give thanks; We praise;
We proclaim our community."

Last month I asked the question, "just what is it that holds Unitarian Universalists together and brings us here Sunday mornings?" What is it that takes us from all those people we welcome through our doors at the beginning of the service and makes us something more, a team, a community, a fellowship?

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Today I'm going to extend that question a bit further, looking again at our history and also at our future.

This discussion is again drawn from a set of lectures given back in 2000 by Rev. Alice Blair Wesley⁹ on "The Spirit and the Promise of Our Covenant." I also am pulling a bit of material from a report from the UUA's Commission on Appraisal in 2005¹⁰, entitled, "Engaging our Theological Diversity."

The Commission on Appraisal asked the important question, "Do UU commonalities and interconnections

⁹ <http://minnslectures.org/archive/wesley/wesley.htm>

¹⁰ <http://www.uua.org/documents/coa/engagingourtheodiversity.pdf>

find support in common theological ground? Some... have doubted this, or even its desirability." I think one reason you might doubt this is that tricky word "theology." The Oxford English Dictionary starts off with this definition, "The study or science which treats of God, His nature and attributes, and His relations with man and the universe; 'the science of things divine,'" but it does not end there. If we take the word in a rather abstract sense, we can indeed discuss UU theology in a meaningful way. May I take us back to 17th century New England for a moment, again?

I last told you the story of the church in Deadham, Massachusetts, founded around 1637. That community was not unusual for its time. The covenant we just read was derived from the Salem church, drawn up about the same time. These Pilgrims, these Puritans came to this country why? "To escape religious persecution" we're taught. But what sort of persecution drove them to cross the fearsome Atlantic and brave the American wilderness?

1) The law required that everybody attend services in their parish church every Sunday. 2) Church services in the Church of England consisted mostly of a lot of old ceremony, which had hardly any meaning for our spiritual ancestors. They considered the services - about which the lay members had no say - dull as dishwater,

with ill-educated, ill-trained and poorly paid assistant ministers (curates) in charge. 3) The Bible had been translated into English. The Bible, of course, is not really a book, but a collection of many little books from many different centuries. And, as more and more laypeople in England got a copy, many of them found the Bible very interesting - and exciting - just full of the neatest stories. 4) Meanwhile also, the professors at Oxford and Cambridge Universities - especially Cambridge - had got very interested in the Bible. Cambridge students were on fire with their Bible studies in Hebrew, Greek and English, and with all the new and scholarly Bible commentaries coming off Continental presses. 5) Some ministers - mostly Cambridge graduates - and some Cambridge professors were, then, doing some mighty interesting Bible preaching in some of the churches.

So, having endured for so long all those boring services in their own parish churches, the laypeople went "gadding about", to use Rev. Wesley's term. On a Sunday, they left their own neighborhoods and went to hear exciting preaching in other parishes. Moreover, they wanted to discuss what they had heard with their neighbors, compare what different preachers had to say with their own interpretations of stories they had read, themselves. So, the laypeople met in their houses of an

evening, with a few other families, for discussion. They met in groups of village and town shop-owners - butchers, grocers, hatmakers and so on - and their families. The lawyers, especially, met in professional groups for discussion. Sometimes the laypeople even arranged regional meetings, for folks in several neighborhoods to meet and discuss. They were not plotting, or scheming, or trying to subvert the Church of England. They just wanted to hear good preaching and talk - and talk and talk and talk - especially since their Cambridge professors taught them to understand that nearly all the stories in the Bible could be read as having clear political implications with regard to the liberty of church laypeople.

Well, the bishops of the Church of England did not take kindly to all this gadding about. They ordered the people to stop gadding, to stay home and in the evenings, to stay in their own houses. Any preachers whose sermons the laypeople liked to hear and meet to talk about, the bishops were apt to remove from their pulpits. The bishops also made life as uncomfortable as possible for the Cambridge professors. So, the lawyers and business people, shop owners and crafts people established "lectureships" on marketdays, during the week, outside the churches. On marketday, when lots of people came to town, the Cambridge professors would

“lecture” to the crowds who wanted to hear them. The bishops shut down these lectureships.

But the bishops didn’t get near enough of the gadding about - and talking - shut down before the laypeople in wide sections of England had worked out, in considerable detail, what a free church would look like, and how authority would be delegated in free churches, the kind of free churches the people had in the Bible stories, without bishops, the kind Paul wrote to.

But all the English Protestant kings and Queen Elizabeth supported the bishops, and supplied them government agents, to deal as government agents the world over tend to deal with discussion meetings their bosses don’t take kindly to.

Right here is the point at which the free church tradition in North America begins, as a lay movement. At some point in the reign of King Charles I - no one knows just how or where - when things got really bad in England for free church wannabes, a little group of laypeople - lawyers mostly, with a few wealthy land and business owners - got together to plan a solution. They formed themselves into a new business corporation, called the Massachusetts Bay Company, for which they had to get a charter from the king. By law, if they had a charter from the king to run a business corporation, the Officers of the corporate board could run it as they saw fit, as

long as they didn’t do anything illegal. And, so long as the corporation stayed in business, members of the governing board could both elect their own board Governor, and change or enlarge the membership of the board. A corporation board was - by law - both self-governing and self-selecting.

Well, these lay lawyers and businessmen got their charter, from King Charles I, and a royal grant of land in North America. (The grant was way bigger than they or the king knew, since nobody in Europe had a clue in the 1600s how big the North American continent was.)

Of course, the MBC was really no ordinary corporation. What they did - and intended all along to do - was to set up a colony, actually an independent government only nominally under the king’s jurisdiction, and far enough away from London that English laypeople who wanted could settle in the New England colony and here establish a whole community of free churches, without bishops.

Or, as these laypeople put it, they had a charter - not from the king, but from the Holy Spirit of Love - to gather themselves into corporate bodies of faith, into churches. These laypeople hoped they could, in New England, show, illustrate, demonstrate to all England - to all the world - how just, how peaceful and how comfortably well ordered a society could be if in that

society the people were free to found and establish free churches governed by the spirit of love, the kind of free churches there had once been in other long forgotten times of history, when the great free church tradition had been well understood by the laypeople.

And so they did. They did, however, keep up their gadding and talking habits. They kept their University educated ministers lecturing, on all sorts of topics, in late afternoons, during the week - over and above their morning and afternoon Sunday sermons. The laypeople went to one another's churches to hear late afternoon lectures and often stayed, to talk about the issues raised, into the night. Governor Winthrop, their own colonially elected governor, decided all these lectures and discussions were taking too much time away from work. And so he moved to suppress them.

The laypeople's reaction was swift and to the point. They said, We came 3000 miles across the ocean, Governor Winthrop, for the liberty of the Gospel, not to have you tell us we do too much gadding about. Note: The "liberty of the Gospel" by their reading included liberty to learn about and discuss many more topics than the Bible. These are our people!

Well, Governor Winthrop offered a compromise, which the churches accepted. Lectures would mostly be on Thursday afternoons, thereby reducing the gadding

somewhat, and discussions would, as a "safety precaution," break up in time for people to get home before dark - and up early the next morning to work. These Thursday lectures continued in our Unitarian churches well into the 19th century. But I digress...

The covenantal organizational pattern of the free church was the key element in our ancestor's doctrine. It is a doctrine grounded in an understanding of how the power of mutual love deepens and works among individuals in free religious groups. Moreover, the organizational pattern of the free church is precisely the one element of our ancestors' doctrine we have most consistently kept in our liberal free churches. It's just a remarkable thing that this should be true. Many liberals, by the early 19th century, had forgot the originating meaning of the word covenant. And by the mid 20th century, many if not most liberals had all but completely forgot where we got the organizational pattern of our free churches, and had forgot that no free church organization can work very well if it is not consciously, explicitly grounded in the spirit of love.

The term we now use for covenantal free church organization is congregational polity. That means our churches are democratic, but what does that have to do with our religion? It has everything to do with what we hold, even if unconsciously, is most important

religiously. Here is a one sentence summary of the lay doctrine of the free church as it was developed by laypeople, our institutional ancestors, in the 17th century: Show me the patterns of your church organization, and I'll show you what the people of the church find worthiest of their loyalty as churchpeople. Our organization and our theology are not two different things. Our organization is a function of our actual theology, a theology which has survived not only "The Unitarian controversy" of William Ellery Channing's day and the Transcendentalists which followed, but also the blending of the Unitarians with the Universalists which culminated in 1960 after a century-long courtship, right into today where we're still trying to balance the language of rationality and spirituality, of reason and experience.

America has been described as a vast melting pot, and Unitarian Universalism has been no less. As we become ever more inclusive, as the circle widens ever more broadly, we risk becoming "a mile wide and an inch deep," as our critics have claimed. There are Buddhist UUs, Christian UUs, and Pagan UUs. Most of the signers of the original Humanist Manifesto were UUs. What is it about Unitarian Universalism that these "hyphenated UUs" find compelling?

The Commission on Appraisal found these following points on which to describe the theology of Unitarian Universalism:

"We are a grounded faith. We are a faith with roots, however lightly held, that go back two thousand years and more. Unlike other more recently evolving nontraditional faiths, ours is solidly grounded in both the realm of history and the realm of ideas."

Ours is an ecological faith. The "interdependent web" concept of our seventh Principle is not new to history (the "net of Indra" in Hindu and Buddhist thought has been around for several thousand years). But in the West this vision of interconnectedness has had an uphill struggle to displace a more hierarchical vision of the nature of the cosmos. Neither the Earth nor humans, we have placed the web squarely at the center of our shared worldview.

We are a profoundly human faith. Whether we see our charge as loving our neighbor or ending the suffering of all sentient beings, whether a transcendent dimension is part of our worldview or not, our primary focus for religious action is the well-being of this world. We wrestle with our ideas about human limitation and human power and acknowledge that our understandings are imperfect.

We are a responsible faith. At our best, we are able to respond to our deep sense of interconnectedness with both the natural and human worlds. Whatever our source of religious inspiration, we understand that humanity must take its responsibility for the state of the world seriously. We humans have created many of the ills from which we and all creatures on this planet suffer. We have the ability to ameliorate suffering, if only we find the will to do so. Our diverse sources of religious inspiration power our will to act.

We are an experiential faith. We are focused more on experience (our own and that of trusted others, past and present) than beliefs. We do not hold with beliefs that contradict our experience, although we recognize that there are realities that can draw us beyond the present limits of our knowledge.

We are a free faith. We are free both as individuals and as congregations. We recognize the authenticity and integrity of each individual's life journey, and concepts such as "building your own theology" or "composing a faith" resonate with us. We are a faith of heretics (from the Greek *haireisis*, "to choose").

We are an imaginative faith. We engage with image and story, garnering wisdom from many traditions and building bridges between them, making a place where creativity can flourish.

We are a relational faith. While we support the individual journey, we ground it in caring community. Relational language occurs more frequently than any other in core-of-faith statements the Commission gathered from ministers and lay UUs alike. We are a covenantal faith. We are held together, from our Reformation roots, by our chosen commitment to each other rather than by creed, ecclesiastical authority, or revealed truth. We began to reclaim that heritage with the language of our Principles.

We are a curious faith. Freedom and tolerance have been central to our tradition. The psychological characteristics and values of people drawn to our ranks suggest openness is a compelling characteristic, even if we do not always live our values of tolerance, acceptance, and respect as well as we might. We acknowledge that our perspective is limited, that we could be wrong, that we live in the midst of uncertainties, yet we are ever open to new insights.

We are a reasonable faith. We do not ask people to check their rationality at the door, and we encourage the practice of disciplined inquiry toward personal and societal assumptions. We challenge idolatries, especially our own.

We are a hopeful faith. We are a faith of possibilities, aspiring to be (though we often fall short) a

transformative faith, a justice-seeking faith. We would create a space for the realization of possibility, whether we call it the “commonwealth of God” or the “Beloved Community.”

A powerful vision! And one that can be claimed by all strands of the UU tradition. At the same time, UUs should not lose sight of the critiques mirrored by the more newly visible strands in the UU web of community. For theological concerns surface organically when they are called forth by the cry of the heart and the need of the world; these strands are growing because the times call for what they offer.

Neopaganism reminds UUs that we would do well to become a more embodied faith, respecting the power of ritual and the importance of beauty. The rise of Buddhist influence in Unitarian Universalist circles reflects a hunger for a more mindful faith, willing to be disciplined, fully present in the moment, and aware of the depths as well as the drama of being, and of UUs’ compassionate connection with all sentient beings.

Feminist and liberation theologies call us to a more prophetic faith, a more risk-taking faith, daring to name what is broken, to challenge assumptions and to take actions requiring discomfort and sacrifice, that we might contribute more effectively to the repair and

transformation of our world. They remind us that talking is not enough.

All of these newer emphases within the UU faith tradition call us to the disciplined embodiment of our values and commitments and the strengthening of those qualities that will help us to live them with integrity—to be more whole and to contribute to making the world more whole. This is more than a new spin on “salvation by character” and “service to humankind—onward and upward forever.” It challenges UUs to incorporate a wholeness of being and contemporary ideas into the UU tradition’s long-held commitments.

Every strand of the UU tradition holds up a mirror to our lives and to the society in which we live. Each brings both critique and constructive practice. Every strand has evolved in recent decades toward a more inclusive vision of wholeness and interconnectedness. Each brings a somewhat different perspective and body of wisdom to the circle of dialogue. As UUs grow more diverse, we are also growing toward more solid common ground. Gather in peace, gather in thanks, gather to celebrate once again.

From wherever you stand, may we long continue to grow, to walk together on a common path, and

understand deeply what we are saying in the liberal free churches these people founded.

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Closing Song: #121, *We'll Build a Land*

We'll build a land where we bind up the broken.
We'll build a land where the captives go free,
where the oil of gladness dissolves all mourning.
Oh, we'll build a promised land that can be.

Come build a land where people together,
united in Love, may then create peace:
where justice shall roll down like waters,
and peace like an ever-flowing stream.

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We'll build a land where we bring the good tidings
to all the afflicted and all those who mourn.
And we'll give them garlands instead of ashes.
Oh, we'll build a land where peace is born.

Come build a land where people together,
united in Love, may then create peace:

where justice shall roll down like waters,
and peace like an ever-flowing stream.

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We'll be a land building up ancient cities,
raising up devastations from old;
restoring ruins of generations.
Oh, we'll build a land of people so bold.

Come build a land where people together,
united in Love, may then create peace:
where justice shall roll down like waters,
and peace like an ever-flowing stream.

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Come, build a land where the mantles of praises
resound from spirits once faint and once weak;
where like oaks of righteousness stand her people.
Oh, come build the land, my people we seek.

Come build a land where people together,
united in Love, may then create peace:

where justice shall roll down like waters,
and peace like an ever-flowing stream.

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56 Closing Words, (Jon Muth, after Tolstoy)

Remember that there is only one important time,
and that time is now.

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The most important one is always
the one you are with.

And the most important thing is to do good
for the one who is standing at your side.

This is why we are here.

Slide

58 Extinguishing the Chalice, (Kenneth R. Warren)

please read together...

May the love that is the doctrine of this church
be also the strength and the spirit of this congregation
and of our individual lives.

Slide

59 Postlude, *Invention No. 4 (D Minor)* by J.S. Bach
played by Katie Cross

Notes following the service:

Well received, “inspirational.”

Pay no attention to the copyright notice on these pages. I’d like to take more credit for this work, but as it turns out, I plagiarized the bulk of this homily, thinly editing first from Rev. Wesley, and lifting entire paragraphs from the Commission on Appraisal report. It is particularly hard to extract from Rev. Wesley, as her style is similar enough to my own that a paraphrase reads much like the original. As Rev. Wesley’s lecture is a set of six, heading toward a different goal than that I’ve presented in this service and the last, I will take a tiny bit of credit for the adaptation and the “arc and sweep” of the service as a whole.

The choir really outperformed themselves today, putting the right swing into When Our Heart is in a Holy Place and We’re Building a New Way. I am very grateful for their work.

The welcome came just a mite too early, before 10:00, and we finished at about 10:50am. Not bad, as the Three Questions is a bit long itself. More music!