

Sunday Morning Worship - June 28
Salt Lake City, Utah
9:00 AM

Ingathering Music

(Allison Wilski leading Choir and Congregation)

Allison:

Good morning. It's wonderful to see you all here today. I invite us to join into a time of song as we begin to worship this morning. Our first song is "Guide My Feet," an African-American spiritual which comes to us from the oral tradition. Although we can never know the people who originated these songs, we acknowledge and respect the various peoples and cultures that have passed these songs to us. Many hands and voices have shaped these songs over time, and we are grateful for them all.

Guide my feet while I run this race,
 Guide my feet while I run this race,
 Guide my feet while I run this race,
 For I don't want to run this race in vain! (race in vain!)

Hold my hand while I run this race,
 Hold my hand while I run this race,
 Hold my hand while I run this race,
 For I don't want to run this race in vain! (race in vain!)

Stand by me while I run this race,
 Stand by me while I run this race,
 Stand by me while I run this race,
 For I don't want to run this race in vain! (race in vain!)

Search my heart while I run this race,
 Search my heart while I run this race,
 Search my heart while I run this race,
 For I don't want to run this race in vain! (race in vain!)

Allison:

Our second song this morning is *De Colores*, which appears in *Singing the Living Tradition*, and also in our new Spanish Language Hymnal, *Las Voces del Camino*. We will be singing two verses in Spanish, and one in English, so, for those of who need it, let's practice our Spanish first. I'll speak the text first. Please repeat after me:

De colores, de colores se visten los campos en la primavera.
 De colores, de colores son los pajaritos que vienen de a fuera.

De colores, de colores es al arco iri que vemos lucir.
 Y por eso los grandes amores de muchos colores me gustan a mi.
 Y por eso los grandes amores de muchos colores me gustan a mi.

Allison: Bueno! Let's learn our second Spanish verse.

De colores, si di blanco y negro y rojo y azul y castano.
 Son colores, son colores de gente que rie, y estrecha la mano.
 Son colores, son colores de gente que sabe de la libertad.
 Y por eso los grandes amores de muchos colores me gustan a mi.
 Y por eso los grandes amores de muchos colores me gustan a mi.

Allison: Excellent! Now let's sing together from the beginning.

vs. 1

De colores, de colores se visten los campos en la primavera.
 De colores, de colores son los pajaritos que vienen de a fuera.
 De colores, de colores es al arco iri que vemos lucir.
 Y por eso los grandes amores de muchos colores me gustan a mi.
 Y por eso los grandes amores de muchos colores me gustan a mi.

vs. 2

All the colors, yes the black and the white and the red and the brown and the yellow.
 All the colors, all the colors of people who smile and shake hands and say "Hello!"
 All the colors, yes the colors of people who know that their freedom is won.
 All the colors abound for the whole world around and for everyone under the sun.
 All the colors abound for the whole world around and for everyone under the sun.

vs. 3

De colores, si di blanco y negro y rojo y azul y castano.
 Son colores, son colores de gente que rie, y estrecha la mano.
 Son colores, son colores de gente que sabe de la libertad.
 Y por eso los grandes amores de muchos colores me gustan a mi.
 Y por eso los grandes amores de muchos colores me gustan a mi.

Allison:

Our final song is "Come, Come, Whoever You Are," with music by Unitarian Universalist minister Lynn Ungar and words based on the words of the Sufi poet, Rumi. Many of us are familiar with this hymn as it is in *Singing the Living Tradition*. In addition to the words you already know, we would like to teach you a chant to add in as a fourth part. It goes like this:

Though you've broken your vows a thousand times.
 Though you've broken your vows a thousand times.

Since this is a round, we'll sing it through once in unison, and then break into parts. Let's have this section start, then this section, then this section, and finally the folks in the back. I invite

you to sing all the way through the round twice, and when you come to the last phrase, repeat it until we are all singing together.

Come, come, whoever you are,
wanderer, worshipper, lover of leaving,
ours is no caravan of despair,
come, yet again come.
Though you've broken your vows a thousand times,
though you've broken your vows a thousand times.

Welcome

Reverend William G. Sinkford speaking:

Good morning. I am Bill Sinkford and I serve, at least for another few hours, as President of the Unitarian Universalist Association of Congregations.

I want to extend a particularly warm greeting to the folks from the larger Salt Lake community who decided to worship with us today. You are welcome here.

I want to welcome the members and friends of our congregations in the Salt Lake valley who are here this morning. Would you raise your hands? You are welcome here.

And to the delegates and attendees of this 48th (?) General Assembly, who have learned so much and worked so hard in these last four days, you are warmly welcome.

We gather in worship to nurture our spirits, to renew our commitments, to confront our challenges and to remind ourselves of whose we are. Our faith calls us to help build the Beloved Community in which every person is valued and no person has to deny any part of who they are. All are welcome here.

Our offering this morning, which will be taken up later in the service, is dedicated to the Utah Pride Center, a community-based organization that provides support, education, outreach and advocacy for Utah's gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender community and their allies. I'd like to introduce Valerie Larabee, Executive Director of the Utah Pride Center, to share the important work that they do. I know you will be enthusiastic to offer your support.

Utah Pride Center Presentation

SHOW DVD

Upon completion of DVD:

Valerie Larabee speaking:

What a privilege this is today! I am proud to be here on this wonderful Sunday morning representing the Utah Pride Center.

Our organization, founded in 1992, was born at a time when few, if any, spaces in Utah existed where lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people could be themselves without fear, harassment or violence. Over time, we have endured the many inherent challenges of our work including hate, bigotry, and the terrible impact of these. Today, despite these challenges and more, our community-based organization (still the only one of its kind in Utah) provides a wide variety of on-site services and support groups, as well as statewide education, outreach and advocacy in support of LGBT people living in Utah.

Our nations LGBT youth are marginalized, disenfranchised and at-risk. We hope you will join together today in support of our work here in Utah to provide every opportunity for these youth to bolster their self-esteem and pave the way for their acceptance at home, school and in other social situations. We hope you will join us in our commitment to preserving families, eliminating homelessness and saving lives in every corner of our State.

Choral Invocation

(Allison Wilski leading Choir)

Allison:

Our invocation this morning is by UU Composer Thomas Benjamin, with words by Theodore Parker. Dr. Benjamin is the Director of Music Ministry at the UU Congregation of Columbia in Elicott City, Maryland.

Be Ours a Religion by Thomas Benjamin, words by Theodore Parker

Be ours a religion which like sunshine goes everywhere;
its temple all space, its shrine the good heart,
its creed all truth, its ritual works of love.
Its profession of faith divine living.
Be ours a religion which like sunshine goes everywhere.

Chalice Lighting

Abhi Janamanchi and Leslie Takahashi Morris speaking

Abhi recites Sanskrit – Leslie recites English translation

Leslie :

The wide universe is the sacred temple of the Divine Impulse.
A good heart, the true land of pilgrimage;
Truth, the everlasting scripture;
Faith, the essence of all religion;
Love, the supreme spiritual ideal;
Selflessness, the only asceticism.

Opening Hymn

(Allison Wilski leading Choir and Congregation)

Allison: Our song this morning is number 1008, "When Our Heart is in a Holy Place," written by Canadian UU Composer Joyce Poley. This song reminds us to listen with a loving mind and hear our voices in each other's words. Please rise in body or in spirit as we join our voices together in song.

When our heart is in a holy place,
when our heart is in a holy place,
We are blessed with love and amazing grace,
when our heart is in a holy place.

When we trust the wisdom in each of us,
Ev'ry color ev'ry creed and kind,
And we see our faces in each other's eyes,
Then our heart is in a holy place.

When our heart is in a holy place,
when our heart is in a holy place,
We are blessed with love and amazing grace,
when our heart is in a holy place.

When we tell our story from deep inside,
and we listen with a loving mind,
And we hear our voices in each other's words,
then our heart is in a holy place.

When our heart is in a holy place,
when our heart is in a holy place,
We are blessed with love and amazing grace,
when our heart is in a holy place.

When we share the silence of sacred space,
And the God of our Heart stirs within,
And we feel the power of each other's faith,
Then our heart is in a holy place.

When our heart is in a holy place,
when our heart is in a holy place,
We are blessed with love and amazing grace,
when our heart is in a holy place.
When our heart is in a holy place.

A Story for All Ages “The Story of Trisanku”

Bill Sinkfird, Leslie Takahashi Morris, Abhi Janamanchi speaking:

(note – slides will be shown)

BILL: We share with you this morning, the story of Trisanku, (**THREE-SHUN-KOO**) from the ancient Hindu epic, the Ramayana (**RAAMAA-YANAA**), by sage Valmiki. (**VAAL-MEEKEE**)

LESLIE: Trisanku(**THREE-SHUN-KOO**) was a famous king of the Solar dynasty. He was so much in love with his body that he could not bear the thought of parting with it at death. Therefore, he undertook a sacrifice to ascend to heaven with his body. He asked the sage Vasistha (**VA-SHIS-TAA**) to perform the sacrifice for him, but Vasistha (**VA-SHIS-TAA**) refused saying,

ABHI: “Humans are not allowed to enter heaven with their bodies intact.”

LESLIE: So Trisanku (**THREE-SHUN-KOO**) sought the sage, Visvamitra, (**VISHWAA-MITHRA**) and begged him to help him. Visvamitra (**VISHWAA-MITHRA**) assured Trisanku (**THREE-SHUN-KOO**) that he would be able to enter heaven with the body he had. He summoned other sages to assist him; all of them obliged except Vasistha’s (**VA-SHIS-TAA**’s) sons.

SLIDE #1

BILL: At Visvamitra's (**VISHWAA-MITHRA's**) command, the sages began to perform the sacrifice to bring Trisanku to heaven with his body. As Trisanku began to ascend to heaven, Indra, the king of gods, appeared before him, crying,

ABHI: "Trisanku, you arrogant fool, there is no place for you in heaven. Fall headlong down to earth, destroyed by the curse of your guru." Then Trisanku fell, crying out to Visvamitra (**VISHWAA-MITHRA**) ,

LESLIE: "Save me! Save me!"

SLIDE #2

LESLIE: When Visvamitra (**VISHWAA-MITHRA**) heard him, he shouted furiously,

ABHI: “Stay there!” Trisanku’s descent came to an abrupt stop and he was left hanging upside down midway between earth and heaven

BILL: And Visvamitra (**VISHWAA-MITHRA**) stood among the sages like a second Creator, and began to create another garland of constellations. Then he said,

ABHI: “Now I create another Indra, or else let the worlds be without Indra.” And in his fury he began to create gods.

BILL: The gods and sages were confused and scared; they prayed to Brahma, the Creator, for help. Brahma appeared and pleaded with Visvamitra (**VISHWAA-MITHRA**) to stop what he was doing and reminded him that Trisanku was unworthy of going to heaven with his body because of his unreasonable and narcissistic ambition. Yet Visvamitra (**VISHWAA-MITHRA**) replied,

ABHI: “I promised Trisanku that he would get to heaven with his body and I cannot go back on my word. So let Trisanku with his body have his heaven forever,

SLIDE #3

ABHI: and let all the constellations that I have made remain firm as long as the worlds endure.”
And Brahma replied,

LESLIE: “Your constellations will remain, and Trisanku will stay, head downwards, like an immortal for eternity,” and Visvamitra (**VISHWAA-MITHRA**) agreed to halt his creative process.

BILL: And thus Trisanku remained suspended upside down and alone midway between earth and heaven,

SLIDE #4

BILL: a lone creature inhabiting his own self-contained world.

Prayer and silent meditation

Bill Sinkford speaking:

Please enter with me now the space of silence and honesty which is known by many names. I will offer a spoken prayer which will be followed by a period of silence. After the silence, remain seated and we will sing “Spirit of Life.”

Will you pray with me?

Spirit of Life and of Love. Dear God.

Our lives are rarely simple. We have our moments of confidence, of acceptance, even of triumph, when life seems to deliver up our desires, when relationships go smoothly, when fear seems a forgotten visitor and happiness a constant companion. We have moments when we feel your embrace, made manifest in the hands and hearts of those around us. Moments when our ethnic or religious or sexual identity, when our economic circumstances or our abilities don’t stand in the way of your love.

But life also calls us to know loss and grief, the disappointment of hopes unrealized. Anxiety often troubles our dreams. We sometimes hold our questions open too long and our certainties too firmly. And all too often, people put fences around your love, trying desperately to separate the sheep from the goats, to rule that some are worthy and some are not.

Even in our own hearts we are torn. Where do we truly belong? Do we belong?

We yearn for acceptance, for peace, for security, for a sense of “home”, where we know we will be loved for exactly who we are.

But often we find ourselves suspended, like Trisenku, stranded in between our yearning for happiness and the challenges of our lives. We find ourselves “no place”, unable or unwilling to live entirely in either hope or in despair. Where can we find solid ground?

May this community and this faith be a place where ground is solid, where acceptance is real.

May this be a place where both our questions and our answers are welcome. May this be a faith where we know we belong. Though our identities are complex, though our spiritual paths are varied, though our triumphs and our struggles are particular, may this faith offer true hospitality to the human spirit. Love is the spirit of this church.

Spirit of Life, Spirit of Love, Dear God, may we know you in our lives as we struggle to find both peace and justice. We are all your children. Help us to find “home,” here.

So may it be.

Amen

Congregational Response - “Spirit of Life” – Allison Wilski leading

Allison:

Please join in singing “Spirit of Life,” #123 in *Singing the Living Tradition*, with words and music by Carolyn McDade.

Spirit of life, come unto me.
 Sing in my heart, all the stirrings of compassion.
 Blow in the wind, rise in the sea,
 move in the hand, giving life the shape of justice.
 Roots, hold me close,
 Wings set me free,
 Spirit of Life, come to me, come to me.

Offering

Leslie Takahashi-Morris speaking:

Leslie: We make real our commitments in many ways, but importantly through our generosity. This morning’s offering is dedicated to the Utah Pride Center whose critical work you heard described earlier and which we are so happy to support. Please open your hearts before you open your wallets or your checkbooks. The morning offering will now be given and received.

Anthem – Allison Wilski and Choir – **Choose to Bless the World**

Allison: our anthem this morning is by Nick Page, with words by Rev. Rebecca Parker. In the words of the composer: “This piece is for all of us. We all make choices; we can choose to be complacent, or we can choose to be involved. Rev. Parker’s words urge us to live with a moral purpose – to choose to bless the world.”

Choose to Bless the World, by Nick Page, words from a poem by Rev. Rebecca Parker, additional words by Nick Page

You who light the world, oh you who love the world,
 Be the light today, be the love today.

Choose to bless the world.
 Oh, the power of your mind
 can bless or curse the world.
 The strength of your hands
 can bless or curse the world.
 The reaches of your heart
 can bless or curse the world.
 To work for justice, or ignore injustice,
 to praise the sacred or obscure the sacred,
 To offer love or withhold the love,
 You who light the world, oh you who love the world,

Choose to bless the world.
 Be the light today, be the love today.
 Choose to bless the world.
 In the midst of a broken world
 A benevolent rage,
 urging, insisting,
 Bind the wounds.
 Work for justice.
 In the midst of a broken world,
 Beauty and grace,
 an embrace of kindness.

Those who bless the world, and those who love the world,
 this beauty and this rage,
 Are drawn to each other, a heritage passed on.
 A heritage passed on.
 the power of your mind
 can bless or curse the world.
 The strength of your hands
 can bless or curse the world.
 The reaches of your heart
 can bless or curse the world.

To work for justice, or ignore injustice,
 to praise the sacred or obscure the sacred,
 To offer love or withhold the love,
 You who light the world, oh you who love the world,

Be the light today, be the love today,
 Oh, Alleluia.
 You who light the world, oh you who love the world,
 Oh, Alleluia.
 Jubilate deo, alleluia
 Choose to bless the world.

Reading - "Marginal Wisdom"

Leslie Takahashi Morris, Bill Sinkford and Abhi Janamanchi speaking:

Bill: They teach us to read in black and white.

Abhi: Truth is this—the rest is false.

Leslie: You are whole—or broken.

Abhi: Who you love is acceptable—or not.

Bill: My life tells its truth in many hues.

Abhi: We are taught to think in "either/or"s

Bill: I believe the teachings of Jesus—OR Buddha.

Leslie: I believe in human potential—OR a power beyond a single, human will.

Bill: I am broken or I am powerful.

Abhi: My life embraces multiple truths, speaks of “both,” of “and.”

Leslie: They teach us to see in absolutes:

Abhi: Good versus evil.

Bill: Male versus female,

Abhi: Old versus young.

Leslie: My vision sees the fractions, the spectrum, the margins?

Bill: Let us open our hearts to the complexity of our worlds.

Leslie: Let us make our own lives a sanctuary, to nurture our many identities.

Abhi: The day is coming when they will know:

Bill: That the rainbow world is more gorgeous than monochrome;

Leslie: That a river of identities can ebb and flow over the static, stubborn rocks in its course;

Abhi: That the margins hold the center.

Sermon “Faith in the Borderland” – Rev. Abhi Janamanchi

http://www.uua.org/documents/janamanchiabhi/090628_faith_borderland.pdf

Closing Music – “Stand”

(Allison Wilski, Amy Carol Webb, and Choir)

Allison:

I'm delighted to invite Amy Carol Webb to join us on the stage to lead us in her original song, “Stand.”
I'm sure you'll be able to pick up the refrain fairly quickly, so please sing along if you feel so moved.

I will stand with you! Will you stand with me?
And we will be the change that we hope to see,
in the name of love, in the name of peace,
Will you stand, will you stand with me?

When injustice raises up its fist,
and fights to stop us in our tracks.
We will rise, and as one resist.
No fear nor sorrow can turn us back!

I will stand with you! Will you stand with me?
And we will be the change that we hope to see,
in the name of love, in the name of peace,
Will you stand, will you stand with me?

When pain and hatred churn up angry noise
and fight to drown out our freedom song,

we will rise, in one joyful voice
loud and clear and ever strong.

I will stand with you! Will you stand with me?
And we will be the change that we hope to see,
in the name of love, in the name of peace,
Will you stand, will you stand with me?

When broken hearts come knocking on our doors,
lost and hungry, and so alone.
We will reach as we have reached before
for there is no stranger in this, our home.

I will stand with you! Will you stand with me?
And we will be the change that we hope to see,
in the name of love, in the name of peace,
Will you stand, will you stand with me?

I will stand with you! Will you stand with me?
And we will be the change that we hope to see,
in the name of love, in the name of peace,
Will you stand, will you stand with me?

During the song, religious professionals of color processed on to the stage to join Rev. Sinkford and Rev. Janamanchi in tribute to Rev. Sinkford's leadership).

Benediction and Extinguishing the Chalice

Bill Sinkford speaking:

(the choir will continue "ooing" for 30 seconds as background to this and then the music will resume with lyrics – *repeating the refrain ad infinitum*)

Stand.

Even when you are living suspended, in between, and firm ground seems hard to find.

Stand.

Know the deep wellspring of hope in your heart.

There is a love that has never broken faith with you, and never will.

Stand.

Stand on the side of love.