



# **ASSOCIATION SUNDAY 2009**

## **GROWING OUR DIVERSITY**

### **~ WORSHIP RESOURCES ~**

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## CHECKLIST FOR ORGANIZING YOUR SERVICE

- Put up the Association Sunday Posters.
- Consider doing a pulpit exchange with neighboring congregations.
- Organize the service to include lay participation.
- Publicize the service and special collection in your newsletter and on your website.
- In your newsletter, ask those who will be unable to attend to mail in their contributions (envelopes provided).
- Enclose envelopes in your newsletter a week before the service, or provide the <http://www.uua.org/giving> link in your electronic newsletter.
- Contact members of the congregation about making lead gifts.
- Consider making a lead gift yourself, perhaps by donating one wedding fee.
- Put information about Association Sunday funds in your order of service (publicity materials are [available online](#)).
- Enclose envelopes in your order of service.
- As we trust people will be inspired by it, schedule the offering for after the sermon.
- At the service, announce your gift, and ask that each member consider a gift of \$50 or more. Remind them that this Sunday's collection is a special opportunity to connect and combine our resources for the future of our faith; ask them to give generously to help us reach our goal of raising \$1 million.
- Indicate that all checks should be made out to the UUA.
- Have a check made out for all cash collected; send all donation envelopes directly to the UUA within one week using the flat rate, Priority Mail envelope provided.
- Send sermons, pictures and other materials you used to us for sharing with others.

**For further information email us at [AssociationSunday@uua.org](mailto:AssociationSunday@uua.org), or call Devin Letzer at 617-948-6544, or Stephan Papa at 610-902-3090.**



## **HYMNS IN SINGING THE LIVING TRADITION & SINGING THE JOURNEY**

### **Singing the Living Tradition**

- 67 We sing now together
- 113 Where is our holy church?
- 121 We'll build a land
- 127 Can I see another's woe
- 131 Love will guide us
- 145 As tranquil streams that meet and merge
- 147 When all the peoples on this earth
- 149 Lift every voice and sing
- 170 We are a gentle, angry people
- 188 Come, come, whoever you are
- 295 Sing out praises for the journey
- 302 Children of the human race
- 305 De colores
- 312 Here on the path of every day
- 315 This old world
- 317 We are not our own
- 318 We would be one
- 323 Break not the circle
- 325 Love makes a bridge
- 346 Come, sing a song with me
- 347 Gather the spirit
- 360 Here we have gathered
- 374 Since what we choose is what we are
- 379 Ours be the poems of all tongues
- 380 Rejoice in love we know and share
- 389 Gathered here in the mystery
- 414 As we leave this friendly place

### **Singing the Journey**

- 1003 Where do we come from?
- 1004 Busca el amor
- 1014 Standing on the side of love
- 1019 Everything possible
- 1020 Woyaya
- 1021 Lean on Me
- 1023 Building bridges
- 1026 If every woman in the world
- 1028 The Fire of Commitment
- 1029 Love knocks and waits for us to hear
- 1037 We begin again in love
- 1051 We are . . .

## OPENING WORDS/CALL TO WORSHIP

We gather here as individual people:  
young and old;  
male and female;  
temporarily able and disabled;  
gay, lesbian, bisexual and straight people,  
all the colors of the human race;  
theist, atheist, agnostic;  
Christian, Buddhist, feminist, humanist.

We gather here as a community of people who are more than categories.

We gather here—each ministering to the other, meeting one another's strength, encouraging wholeness.

We give thanks for this extraordinary blessing—the gathering together of separate, unique individuals as one whole, one body, our church.

Here may our minds stretch, our hearts open, our spirits deepen.

Here may we acknowledge our brokenness and be ever stirred by love's infinite possibilities.

Come, let us worship.

~ *Barbara Hamilton-Holway*

We unite in our differences in background and belief;  
We unite—with gratitude and hope:  
Hope for a world of differences;  
Hope for a world that honors difference;  
We unite in community  
With gratitude for difference.

~ *David Breeden*

As we enter this sacred, silent space,  
Let us renew both our commitment and our covenant:

There are those among us who have endured a loss in the past week;  
*May their hope be uplifted again in this community of faith.*

There are those among us who have struggled with hardship in the past week;  
*May they find renewed strength in this community of faith.*

There are those among us who have wrestled with questions that seem to have no answer in the past week;

*May they find sanctuary during their search in this community of faith.*

There are those among us who have cherished an unexpected joy in the past week;

*May their rejoicing be celebrated in this community of faith.*

As we commit to continue our free and responsible search for Truth, may we covenant to honor the many paths that have led us to this community of faith.

*So may it be.*

~ *Martha Kirby Capo*

We come together this morning because within us there is something that knows we need more than we can find in our aloneness. We know – instinctively, in the depths of ourselves – that we need others for this journey of life even though we also guard our independence and individuality quite jealously.

And just as we come together as individuals to make this congregation, so our Unitarian Universalist congregations come together to form an Association – the Unitarian Universalist Association of Congregations – because we need more than we can find in our aloneness. We, too, guard our independence and our individuality, yet in our togetherness we are so much more than we can ever be on our own.

So on this Association Sunday, let us celebrate all that makes us unique yet also all that makes us one, and let us dream dreams of all that we can do . . . together.

~ *Erik Walker Wikstrom*

This church does not demand all people to think alike, but to think uprightly, and get as near as possible to truth; it does not ask all people to live alike, but to live holy, and get as near as possible to a life perfectly divine.

~ *Adapted from Theodore Parker,  
The Transient and Permanent in Christianity (1841)*

In this hour may we be open  
To a rededication of treasured friendships, a renewal of spirit;  
May we relinquish the worries and anxieties of the past week,  
If just for this hour, and regain our strength  
Through this community of faith.

~ *Martha Kirby Capo*

Come into this circle of love and justice,  
Come into this community where we can dream and  
    Believe in those dreams—  
Come into this holy space where we remember who we are  
    And how we want to live.  
Come now, and let us worship together!

~ Marilyn Sewell

We who are here assembled  
Have made a conscious choice:  
We live intentionally.  
May we keenly attend to the silent, pulsing needs  
Here present at this altar,  
Made sacred by the power of our communion.

~ Martha Kirby Capo

## CHALICE LIGHTING

May this flame burn and remind us that each of us can offer goodness and love, and that each of us can be a blessing to the world.

~ Petr Samojsky, Religious Society of Czech Unitarians

For some, the chalice cup is a communion cup, freely offered to all who would seek the greater Truth. Others see the circle of fellowship in its embracing sides. The sacred hoop of its rim, the ambient energy cradled in its basin, the abiding, grounded strength of its pedestal: may all be lit by the fire of spiritual integrity; so too may we each be bathed in the glow of our shared Truth, multifaceted and radiant.

~ Martha Kirby Capo

Is it a fruit-bowl, a salad-bowl, or a chalice with blended juices or fine wine that holds us together in our religious community?  
Is it our humanism, our progressivism, or our mysticism we have in common?  
Is it a denominational label, a liberal spirit, or a noble history that connects us?  
Is it our values, or our principles and purposes, which bind us?  
Is it our way of being religious, our devotion to social justice, or our love of discussion that unites us?  
Is it our free will, evolution, or is it God that holds us together as a spiritual community?  
It is all of these and more that connect us in our Association of Congregations.  
Our faith grows stronger as we come together to light our chalice with over one thousand Unitarian Universalist congregations on this Association Sunday.

~ Stephan Papa

We light this chalice for all who are here, and all who are not;  
For all who have ever walked through our doors, for those who may yet find this spiritual home, and for those we can't even yet imagine. For each of us and for us all, may this flame burn warm and bright.

~ Erik Walker Wikstrom

With humility and courage born of our history, we are called as Unitarian Universalists to build the Beloved Community where all souls are welcome as blessings, and the human family lives whole and reconciled. With this vision in our hearts and minds, we light our chalice.

~ “*A vision for Unitarian Universalism in a multicultural world*”  
*by the UUA Leadership Council, adopted October 1, 2008*

Through the week this chalice has abided, cupped and silent,  
Softly gleaming in a dimly lit room, complete unto itself.  
Today, we come together as a community of faith, joyful and free,  
Our individual energies combine to spark the flame of Truth.  
May we each draw strength for the other, and, like the chalice,  
May we be bathed in the fire of commitment  
To social justice, equity, and peace.

~ Martha Kirby Capo

Each of the stars in the heavens is unique, an individual, yet together they form the night sky;  
Each of us here is unique, an individual, yet together we are a congregation;  
Each of our congregations is unique, an individual, yet together we are an Association.

For stars in the sky, for people in the pews, for members of our Association, in gratitude, we light this chalice.

~ Erik Walker Wikstrom

Let this purest of flames kindle in each of our hearts  
A pledge to justice, a commitment to freedom,  
And a reverent awe for the crystalline glories  
That sparkle along our footpaths.

~ Martha Kirby Capo

## READINGS

### Testifying – a reading for five voices

#### *Frances, an African American woman*

To be African-American in this country is to face racism throughout life, however subtle. The love of one's family is paramount in reducing the damage of racism on one's wholeness. Unitarian-Universalism is splendid as an affirming church family. Its primary commitment to justice seeking, its deep belief that every soul has irreducible value, and its belief that there is the spark of the divine in every one of us are powerful antidotes to the insistent racist voices among us. I find Unitarian-Universalism not only soothing, but healing. It is a perfect medicine for the soul made sick by racism.

#### *Claire, a White woman*

Race was something to be spoken about only in hushed tones in the nearly all white town where I grew up. What a different experience my own kids have had! Thanks to the intentional work of the Unitarian Universalist youth movement, they have engaged with issues of race, class, and privilege. I treasure the conversations about how those issues impact their lives and mine. One of my greatest joys and challenges was to serve with my then teenage daughter on a district anti-racism team. We grew side by side in understanding and commitment. For a parent, it doesn't get any better than that.

#### *Cathy, an African American woman*

After the September 11 terrorist attacks on the United States, the Muslim students at my daughter's very diverse high school began to segregate themselves because of their sense of fear and isolation. My daughter, who has spent her whole life attending a Unitarian Universalist congregation, reached out to these students. She actually made the long walk across the high school cafeteria to sit with the Muslim students and talk to them about how they were feeling. When I asked her why she had done this, my daughter told me that her faith called her to do this. As a parent, I was so proud that my daughter had learned the lessons of non-discrimination and respect for all peoples within our Unitarian Universalist community. As an African American parent, I was equally proud that my daughter understood the connection between her struggles as a young black woman in America and the struggles of other often marginalized groups. This affirmed for me that Unitarian Universalism has helped me raise a wonderful young woman.

#### *Peter, a White male*

Here and now, I don't feel affirmed living out issues of race. This is a dirty business willed to *us* by people who looked like *me*. However, what doesn't kill me makes me stronger, and I can do nothing without doing some harm. I am moving from being an etherized white man ignorant of race to being a European American man discomfited everywhere; from living in the world as oyster to a world without many places to belong. My participation at a self-consciously diverse Unitarian Universalist church dismantling racism in fits and starts has offered consolation. Despite my being and my action, my brothers and sisters remain authentically engaged with me in things that I get

right and things that I get wrong. Like an unreformed drunk (since my culture will not yet allow me to live one hour, much less one day at a time, privilege-free), I must lean on the good will of my fellow travelers in this religious community I have chosen to join. It's *their* good will and its reflection of their perception of my good will that offers affirmation.

*Esha, an Arab woman*

I grew up in a family that had all the answers about God; in a fundamentalist Egyptian Muslim home in New Jersey. We followed the very letter of Islamic law. I grew up with many unanswered questions about God and life. Much to my mother's chagrin, I never blindly accepted a fundamentalist faith. I eventually married a Jewish man. When I became a parent, I thought I could avoid raising my children any religion. I realized when my daughter was four and asking for Jesus, I could not get away with nothing. That is how I officially became a Unitarian Universalist. The most affirming aspect of being UU for me is the full acceptance of myself and my family. I continually feel affirmed as a religious educator of color when I interact with colleagues and discuss my views based on my life experiences. I am respected and seen as being able to contribute to my profession. It is truly the first time in my life that I have felt positive about being part of a faith community. Unitarian Universalists encourage the difficult discussions about racism, oppression and class. The answers aren't always to my liking and I am at times frustrated, however, there are enough people in this faith who don't turn a blind eye to racism, classism and oppression. It is by continuing the discussion and affirming the journey that we will grow and bring change to the world at large.

~ adapted from Building the World We Dream About by Mark Hicks

## Mattering

My father asked if I am gay  
I asked Does it matter?  
He said, No not really  
I said, Yes.  
He said get out of my life.  
I guess it mattered.

My friend asked why I talk about race so much?  
I asked, Does it matter?  
He said, No not really  
I told him, Yes.  
He said, You need to get that chip off your shoulder.  
I guess it mattered.

My neighbor asked why I put that ramp up to my front door.  
I said, Does it matter?  
He said, No not really

I told him because it made my life easier.  
He said, Is there a way to make it less obvious"?  
I guess it mattered.

A member of my church asked why I like gospel music.  
I asked, Does it matter?  
She said, No, not really.  
I told her that it connects me to my southern, Christian childhood.  
She said, I think you're in denial about your oppression.  
I guess it mattered.

My God asked me, Do you love yourself?  
I said, Does it matter?  
She said, YES!  
I said, How can I love myself? I am gay, Latino, disabled, and a Christian in a hostile climate.  
She said that is the way I made you.  
Nothing will ever matter again.

*~from Building the World We Dream About by Mark Hicks [Note: originally written anonymously by a gay, high school student and adopted for the curriculum.]*

### **A Knock At The Door**

A knock at the door, late morning.  
The dog makes a racket, but the two stand their ground.  
They are on God's business.

I know before I open the door what  
they have to say—that God is the answer.  
I pull the door open, try to be pleasant,  
(but, please, don't talk too long).  
Two women, earnest, polite, sincere.  
(There is a message simply in their manner.)

They ask if I am worried about where  
the world is headed.  
I answer, yes, I am.  
They ask me if I read the Bible.  
I answer, no, I don't.  
They ask if I believe in God.  
I answer, yes, I do.

And then I become infused with  
the same spirit that brought them to my door.

I say that I believe there is only one God,  
worshipped in many ways,  
called by many names.

I say that the God they worship  
and the god I worship  
are they same God.  
They doubt that might be true.

They say if I am worried about  
the future of the world,  
there are answers in the Bible.

I say there are answers in the Koran,  
the Bagava Gita, the poems of Whitman.  
God, I say, is the god of all  
and the word of God, therefore,  
is found in many places.

There is no language  
that God does not speak.

They say people should turn to God  
to solve the problems of the world  
instead of turning to "man."

I say that God works through man,  
that the problems of the world  
can be solved only by "man," BUT  
only if God wants them solved.

They read me something from the Bible.

Then it dawns on me: I am doing  
what they came to do;  
we are saying different things  
but the same things;  
God called them to my door,  
just as God called me to speak  
instead of ushering them  
on their way.

After the door is shut, I reflect:  
There are people in the world  
who bring their beliefs to other people's doors  
with guns and machetes in their hands.

Wouldn't the world be Eden itself  
if we  
Christians and Muslims,  
Jews and Pentecostals,

Catholics and Orthodox,  
all went door to door from time to time  
and had conversations like this?

“Blessed are the peace makers,  
for they shall inherit the Kingdom of God.”  
Oh, that we realize the door  
to God’s kingdom is the one upon which  
visitors knock.

~*from Searching for the Spring: poetic reflections of Maine © 2005  
by Ken Nye, published by TJMF Publishing*

Why should we intentionally work for diversity? The responses to this question vary widely. Of course, hard demographic realities suggest much. But for me, beyond any demographic or sociological justification, there is a theological imperative. Affirming the inherent worth and dignity of every human being, for me, means working to create places of worship where all who subscribe to a liberal approach to religion can not only feel welcome, but enter into worship settings that reflect the diverse cultural realities of “*we the people*”. Congregations that reflect the pluralism of our society are one step in beginning to transcend the social boundaries that divide us from each other and from all that is, which some of us call God.

The task ahead is an arduous one. Indeed, diversity is one of the most challenging tasks we will ever undertake as a religious movement. What we are dealing with is not simply racial and ethnic diversity, but a paradigm shift that is rooted in a commitment to growth in a pluralistic community as well as readiness for and acceptance of cultural change within our congregations....

~ Marjorie Bowens-Wheatley

Frequently I am asked, ‘Why should the UUA spend money, time, and resources on racial and cultural diversity?’ I sometimes feel burdened with the expectation that I should have an answer because I am a psychologist by profession and because I happen to be an African American.

Often the person asking the question goes on to point out that not many African Americans would be interested in Unitarian Universalism, that African Americans and other minorities have a theology that is too different from UUism or that we will never get a large number of them to come. Once, someone even invited me to leave and go back to whatever church I came from if it was so bad at the UUA.

The reason I want racial and cultural diversity in the UUA extends beyond issues of numbers, theology, or money. It has to do with the fact that this is the right thing to do.

The religious challenge of our time moves us to open our doors to all and to promote wholeness in the midst of diversity.

Many people seem to want racial and cultural diversity up to a point. I believe that true inclusivity removes that point.

Learning how to develop, value, and appreciate cross-cultural relationships is to everyone's benefit. To embrace a world where there is racial and cultural diversity, Euro-Americans, Native Americans, African Americans, Hispanics, Mexican Americans, Asian Americans, people of all sexual orientations and all ages, people dealing with physical and emotional limitations, women and men must be willing to examine themselves and reach out to the community.

When everyone comes to the table for discussion, there will be differences of opinion, and yet we can ignore no one. All bring gifts to be shared. All can be honored and enriched. To build a racially and culturally diverse community is to build a world of beauty and power. It is the right thing to do. Being able to honestly and lovingly share gifts, pains, and appreciations with each other is what religion is truly about. A blessing awaits us all, and it will come when we experience the richness of racial and cultural diversity.

~ Dr. Leon Spencer

"[We are]...A place where new conversations about money, race, and God in America can commence. With this new beginning, loyalties need no longer be skin-deep. Here God's broken humanity can be healed. Difference will be affirmed as the grace of human engagement. The term *person of color* will now refer to every human being. Dare we dream of such a day? Yes. Let the church say Amen."

~ Excerpt from Learning to Be White: Money, Race, and God in America,  
by Thandeka, copyright © 2001. Reprinted by permission of  
The Continuum International Publishing Group.

For religion to be significant, it has to provide more than the comforts of community. It also had to provide opportunities for deepening, for what I call spiritual growth, and for the casting down of false images of stereotypes, which hurts us all. A good religion has to open us to the real diversity of our modern world. For our work as liberal religious people is not to be competitive with others, and to find ways to supersede others, but rather to find ways to supersede ourselves, to grow beyond our limitations and our constrictive boundaries, each and every one of us. Diversity, you see, must not end up being some sort of feel good slogan, a word we keep in our back pocket to make us feel like we're broad minded. Diversity is a gift. But it cannot be a gift...unless it is received. It is only received when there are hands and hearts open enough to receive it. And the opening of fists into welcoming hands and welcoming hearts is our spiritual work...."

~ Mark Belletini

I am a man and I am a woman; I am a boy and I am a girl.  
AND I AM A UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST

I am young and I am old and I am middle-aged.  
AND I AM A UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST

I am black and white and I am yellow, red and brown.  
AND I AM A UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST

I am married and I am single and I am divorced. I am heterosexual and I am lesbian and I am gay.  
AND I AM A UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST

I am a college graduate and I am a high school drop-out. I am a white-collar worker and a blue collar worker. I am retired and I am unemployed.  
AND I AM A UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST

I am an atheist and I am a Christian and a humanist and a Jew and a mystic.  
AND I AM A UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST

I am healthy and I am ailing. I am an autistic child and I am a palsied octogenarian.  
AND I AM A UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST

I am a law-abiding citizen who has never received anything more than a parking ticket, and I am a murderer waiting on death row.  
AND I AM A UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST

I vote Republican and Democrat and Socialist Labor Party. I have voted for George McGovern and Barry Goldwater and I have voted for John Anderson and Gus Hall, too.  
AND I AM A UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST

I am a Marine and I am a pacifist; I am a conscientious objector and I support a strong defense policy.  
AND I AM A UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST

I smoke and I am a non-smoker. I drink socially and I am an alcoholic. I am a vegetarian and I love a good steak.  
AND I AM A UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST

I am many other things, some by choice and some by chance. And I am part of a common human destiny. I am part of humanity's family.  
AND I AM A UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST

~ *John Corrado*

For all its popularity, the idea that everyone is naturally frightened by difference is a cultural myth that, more than anything, justifies keeping outsiders on the outside and treating them badly if they happen to get in. The mere fact that something is new or strange isn't enough to make us afraid of it. When Europeans first came to North America, for example, they weren't terribly afraid of the people they encountered, and the typical Native American response was to welcome these astonishingly 'different' people with open arms (much to their later regret). Scientists, psychotherapists, inventors, novelists (and their fans), explorers, philosophers, spiritualists, anthropologists, and the just plain curious are all drawn toward the mystery of what they don't know. Even children—probably the most vulnerable form that people come in—seem to love the

unknown, which is why parents are always worrying about what their toddler has gotten into now.

There is nothing inherently frightening about what we don't know. If we feel afraid, it isn't what we don't know that frightens us, it's what we think we do know. The problem is our ideas about what we don't know—what might happen next or what's lurking behind that unopened door or in the mind of the 'strange' looking guy sitting across from us on the nearly empty train. And how we think about such things isn't something we are born with. We learn to do it as we learn to tie our shoes, talk, and do just about everything else. If we take difference and diversity as reasons for fear and occasions for trouble, it's because we've learned to think about them in ways that make for fear and trouble.

~ Allan Johnston in Privilege, Power, and Difference

### We Are All More Human Than Otherwise

The human race is a vast rainbow bursting into view.

Of white and black, red, yellow and brown. Yet for all blood is red, the sky is blue, the earth brown, the night dark.

In size and shape we are a varied pattern  
of tall and short, slim and stout, elegant and plain.

Yet for all there are fingers to touch, hearts to break, eyes to cry, ears to hear, mouths to speak.

In tongue we are a tower of babel, a great jumble of voices grasping for words, groping for ways to say love, peace, pity, and hope.

Faiths compete, claiming the one way;  
Saviours abound, pointing to salvation.

Not all can be right, not one.

We are united only by our urge to search.

Boundaries divide us, lines drawn to mark our diversity,  
maps charted to separate the human race from itself.

Yet a mother's grief, a father's love, a child's happy cry,  
a musician's sound, an artist's stroke, batter the boundaries and shatter the walls.

Strength and weakness, arrogance and humility, confidence and fear, live together in each one, reminding us that we share a our common humanity.

We are all more human than otherwise.

~ from In The Holy Quiet of This Hour, by Richard Gilbert © 1995.  
Skinner House Books

“...There is no turning back from integration, for it pervades our history, courses through our veins, and is embodied in our culture. Moreover, America's interracial drama is no longer enacted primarily between Afro- and Euro-Americans. Native Americans remind us that it never was, and given America's evolving racial demographic, the black/white

divide is becoming increasingly irrelevant as the beige-ing of America accelerates. This blending, as the descendants of the oppressor and the oppressed become one and the same, blurs the color line. New immigrants, with no connection to slavery or Jim Crow, do not even experience it as their past; therefore, the future must head in a different direction. A generation or two from now, Euro-Americans will be stripped of their majority status as interracial marriages increase and the size and influence of the Latino and Asian communities continue to expand. This transformation should not surprise us, for integration has been going on for four hundred years, and the cultural amalgam that is America has proven anything but static. Today it presses forward, as it always has, in unforeseeable directions; uniting and combining and making use of every people and culture available to it. The question we, as a nation, must face is whether to resist or celebrate the inevitable.” (pp. 254-255)

“As a child, I imagined such a blended world when I came to believe that God—some mixture we couldn’t imagine—looked the way all people would look someday..... I believe that our childhood intuitions are correct. Children think concretely and would naturally be drawn to color as the answer—it was the best we could do to describe the mysterious, divine unity behind our differences that binds us all together in this experience we share. We call that oneness God—a God who, as a blend of our distinct identities, is capable of giving...all embracing love....” (p. 255)

~ *From In Between: Memoir of an Integration Baby by Mark Morrison-Reed*

“I think that one of our most important tasks is to convince others that there’s nothing to fear in difference; that difference, in fact, is one of the healthiest and most invigorating of human characteristics without which life would become meaningless. Here lies the power of the liberal way: not in making the whole world Unitarian, but in helping ourselves and others to see some of the possibilities inherent in view-points other than one’s own; in encouraging the free inter-change of ideas; in welcoming fresh approaches to the problems of life; in urging the fullest, most vigorous use of critical self-examination.”

~ *Adlai Stevenson, Unitarian layperson*  
[quoted from *A Chosen Faith* by John Buehrens and Forrester Church]

...In conversations about the initiative for greater diversity, our Unitarian Universalist Association-wide commitment to become more inclusive, one of the questions that inevitably arose was, ‘What do we want diversity for? What is our motivation?’ ...

Perhaps it is guilt. Guilt over the injustices of racism, heterosexism, classism. A commitment to diversity would ‘make me feel better,’ that is, less guilty. Perhaps it is a sense of responsibility. A sense of responsibility to deal with my prejudices and somehow participate in bringing greater justice. A commitment to diversity would hold us responsible, make us do the right thing. Perhaps it is that nagging call to seek wholeness. Given the partiality of all points of view; given the diversity of truth; given our calling to

live our lives religiously...given these a commitment to diversity is nothing more or less than honoring the call to seek wholeness—in my life and in our collective life. African-American feminist author/teacher bell hooks asks the question this way—what is all this clamoring after difference?

“... all the clamoring is about seeking wholeness. Guilt leads to angry denial and inaction. Responsibility leads to grudging good works. The call to seek wholeness has room for acknowledging feelings of guilt (and anger, frustration,) room for accepting appropriate responsibility and plenty of room for moving toward personal and communal transformation.

“...all the clamoring is for each person, each perspective, each truth to be granted sufficient respect so that we truly listen to those ideas and allow ourselves to be truly challenged by them.

“...all the clamoring is for us to recognize that our lives are intertwined, so intertwined, that each is accountable to the other. Each particular story/truth calls us to accountability, calls me to accountability for my life, my limits, my individual and our collective transformation...

“...all the clamoring is for truth—I need you—I need you, who you are, the experiences and perspective you bring, so that I may know truth beyond my partial truth.

“...all the clamoring is for justice—We need each other, and what we can all do together for justice.”

~ *From a sermon by Tracey Robinson-Harris (“Truth, Wholeness and the Time to Seek Them” delivered at the Community Church of NYC on May 9, 1993)*

## PRAYERS & MEDITATIONS

Some came here looking for solace.  
Some came here and gave it to them.

Some came here seeking music.  
Some came here and gave it, joyfully.

Some came here seeking laughter.  
Some came here and created it.

Some came here seeking learning, growth.  
Some came here and provided it.

Some came here looking for a sense of security, a safe haven.  
Some came here and provided it.

Some came here seeking an escape from hectic lives.  
Some came here and enabled them to have it.

Some came here seeking the joy of community.  
Some came here and created that.

Some came here wanting to serve.  
Some came here and made it possible for them.

We thank them all.

~ Mel Harkrader-Pine

Spirit of Life, known by many names yet by no name fully known – we gather today with hopes and dreams and also with fears and wounds . . . *[briefly name some of the things lifted up during the candles of joy and sorrow]*. May we be reminded that all things come and go; that today's joys and today's sorrows will in time give way to those of tomorrow and that those of us who have strength to share today ought do so while we can, and that those who are in need ought allow ourselves to receive for tomorrow those roles might well be reversed. Spirit of Life, mother and father of us all, help us to remember those who are not here with us today, those who need what we have found here and those who have what we here need. May we always be open to growth and change, to movement, to grace. In the name of all that is holy, and in all the holy names that have ever been uttered (and those that have not even yet been imagined), let us say Blessed be, Shalom, and Amen.

~ Erik Walker Wikstrom

Let there be a quiet time among us.

Spirit of life, in us and around us, here is our chance -- once again -- to live like we wish the world would live. May we find within ourselves the courage to be who we are. May we know when it is time to listen and when it is time to speak. May we trust ourselves to be the ones to find the words that need to be said or to do what needs to be done. May we trust one another and know there are many ways to go through life. May we know that though we cannot change some of what life gives to us, we can choose how we deal with what we are given.

We are coming into our power, and together we can make possible justice and love. We are all connected; we depend upon one another more than we know. We are one body. So be it. Blessed be. Amen.

~ Barbara Hamilton-Holway

## A Call to Meditation

As we enter this sacred silence  
May our truest selves transcend  
The dissonance of daily distractions  
As we join the spiraling, infinite dance  
Pulsing unseen throughout all creation.  
So may it be.

*~ Martha Kirby Capo*

## Meditation for an Intergenerational Service

Let us join in the spirit of prayer and meditation.

We are each different. Some of us are bigger and others are smaller. Some of us are taller and others are shorter. Our hair is different colors and our eyes are different shapes.

Some of us like to spend our time playing with dinosaurs, others like playing with cards. Some of us like running, others like reading. Some of us like eating cookies, others like drinking coffee.

We are different, but we're also alike, because each of us is good at some things and not so good at others.

Each of us has days when we are kind and help others, and we each have days when we are grumpy and gruff.

We are alike because we each try to do what seems right to us. We each do the best we can.

We each like it when we're happy and with good friends. But each of us has times when we were angry or sad.

Let us remember that even though we may sometimes think life would be easier if everyone liked just what we like, and everyone thought just what we think -- our differences are what make each one of us unique and special.

*~ Axel H. Gehrman*

Let us pray to the God who holds us in the hollow of his hands -- to the God who holds us in the curve of her arms -- to the God whose flesh is the flesh of hills and hummingbirds and angleworms -- whose skin is the color of an old black woman and a young white man, and the color of the leopard and the grizzly bear and the green grass snake -- whose hair is like the aurora borealis, rainbows, nebulae, waterfalls, and a

spider's web -- whose eyes sometime shine like the evening star, and then like fireflies, and then again like an open wound -- whose touch is both the touch of life and the touch of death -- and whose name is everyone's, but mostly mine.

And what shall we pray? Let us say, "Thank you."

~ Max A. Coots [Note: originally published in *Rejoice Together: Prayers, Meditations, and Other Readings for Family, Individual, and Small-Group Worship*, ed. by Helen R. Pickett, Boston: Skinner House Books, 1995, 50.]

O God, as you have created the same eyes for human beings to see with,  
The same ears to hear,  
The same nose to smell, the same tongue to speak,  
The same mouths to eat, the same blood to circulate in the human body,  
We pray that you will grant your blessing to all human minds and hearts,  
So that minds may think and hearts beat for love, unity and peace.

~ Samina Tufail Gill, Pakistan

Father, Mother God, here we are together—rich and poor; educated and not so well educated; gay and straight; democrats and republicans; some of us with light skin, some of us with darker; some of us walking, some of us unable to walk: none of us as whole as we would like to be—help us to know that we are all your children and we are all holy stuff. May we be a blessing to the life of anyone who enters this sanctuary—and may this church be a true sanctuary--and may those who come as strangers in turn help us grow in wisdom, in compassion, and in joy of living. Amen.

~ Marilyn Sewell

## STORIES FOR ALL AGES

### A Day at the Lawn

By Erik Walker Wikstrom

Once upon a time there was a girl named Wendy. She loved grass. What can I say? She loved grass – she loved the feel of it between her toes; she loved the smell of it when it was freshly mown; she loved its bright green color. Wendy loved grass more than just about anything.

One day her family decided to go to the beach. Wendy wasn't too sure about it. "Come on," said her older brother, "we can go swimming." "And we can collect rocks and shells

together," said her mom." "And you can bury me in the sand," said her dad. It sounded like fun, so they all piled into the car, and off they went.

When they got to the beach it sure looked great. Like nothing Wendy had ever seen. But when she first touched the sand it was way, way, way too hot. "This isn't cool like grass," she said. "I wish this sand was grass," she cried!

Now, Wendy had a good luck fairy who followed her around, and he heard her wish and decided to grant it. With a flash, all of the sand, turned into grass. Now it was her family's turn to be "not too sure." (Wendy, of course, was delighted.) "I guess I won't get buried today," said dad." "That's okay," said mom. "Let's collect some shells."

Everyone went down to where the water lapped the edge of the grass. There were polished rocks and beautiful shells lying all about. They all set to work looking for the shiniest or the biggest or the most colorful. Everyone except Wendy. "Ouch," she said. "Oooch." "Eeech." The rocks and shells hurt her feet. "I wish these rocks were soft like grass," she thought to herself, and as soon as she did her good luck fairy – who could hear her thoughts as well as her words – made it so. The rocks and shells turned to grass too!

The family looked at one another. "Well," they said, "at least there's swimming." Everybody laid their beach towels on the grass and changed into their bathing suits. "Last one in is a rotten egg," Wendy's older brother cried, and he ran into the waves followed closely by Wendy's sister, their delighted squeals trailing behind. Wendy followed tentatively. But when her toe touched the water she said, "Yuck! Too wet and cold."

This time she didn't even have to think it—the fairy changed the water into grass without her even having to ask for it! Everyone turned to her and said, "Wendy!" but what was she to do? But her family was very understanding – they were, after all, Unitarian Universalists – so they decided to try to make the best of it. "Let's have lunch," said mom and dad. So they got out their picnic basket, found a nice spot on the now wide lawn, spread out the checkered cloth, and they all set to it.

Wendy was in heaven. After all, didn't she love grass more than just about anything? But she had to admit, she was beginning to feel a bit bored and something just didn't feel right. After all, every where she looked there was nothing but grass. And all of the sounds of the beach – the waves, the seagulls, all of it – they'd gone too. Grass was nice, but maybe not so much when that's all that there was.

"Well," said her mom, "we went to the beach and we're at a lawn. This isn't the way it's supposed to be." "What do you mean?" Wendy asked.

Her dad said, "You made it all the same – the sand, the rocks, the water. Each was different, and you made them the same because their differences made you feel uncomfortable. But those differences also made them special and beautiful and without

them there's a whole lot missing. In fact, everything that makes this place what it is is missing. And that means that *you* are missing out on everything you really came here for."

Wendy thought about this for a while. She did want to collect rocks and shells; she'd seen some really beautiful ones. And the water was cold, but her brother and sister looked like they were having a lot of fun, too. And the idea of burying her father in sand was too good to pass up. "I wish it was all back the way it was," she thought, and the good luck fairy made her wish come true.

Wendy and her family had the best time that day. She still loves grass more than just about anything, but she's learned to love other things too. And she's come across some things that she doesn't like much, and that's okay too. But she's never, ever wanted everything to be the same again. Because she knows that things are supposed to be different, each thing as it is, and that exploring new things makes life so much more fun!

### **What Can We Learn from a Box of Crayons?**

By Trudi Pinnick Wolfe, counselor

Central Elementary School, Beech Grove, IN

(A diversity lesson for K-3. from Teaching Tolerance ([tolerance.org](http://tolerance.org)))

Central elementary, a school in transition with an increasingly diverse student body, decided to focus this school year on diversity. I wanted to help the 2nd- and 3rd-graders understand the concept of diversity and why they should celebrate it. Inspired by *The Crayon Box that Talked* (Random House, ISBN# 0679886117, \$12.95), a story by Shane Derolf and Michael Letzig, I used a drawing exercise to help students discover the value of diversity.

I provided each student with two sheets of drawing paper, then allowed each student to pick out one crayon from a box I provided. I then asked them to draw a picture with *only* the single crayon. After about five minutes, I asked the students to take out their own boxes of crayons and draw another picture on the second sheet of paper; they could use as many different colors as they wished. When they finished coloring, I asked them the following questions:

Which picture do you like best? Why? Which picture would you like to display in your classroom, the hallway, at home?

Invariably, the students preferred the pictures drawn with the whole box of crayons. I said, "What a boring world it would be if we were all alike — like the picture drawn with only one crayon. The diversity in the world makes it like a wonderful box of crayons with endless colors."

Next, I read them *The Crayon Box that Talked*. To continue the discussion, I asked, "Wasn't it silly for the crayons not to like each other just because of their color? Each crayon had something special to offer to the picture — green for the grass, blue for the sky, yellow for the sun." The children agreed, and I asked them to brainstorm the reasons it is important to accept people who are different from us, recording their responses on the board.

In conclusion, I read a passage from an unknown author: "We could learn a lot from crayons. ... (They) all are different colors, but they all exist very nicely in the same box."

## BOOKS FOR STORIES FOR ALL AGES

*People* by Peter Spier  
Doubleday Books for Young Readers

*The Crayon Box that Talked* by Shane Derolf  
Random House

*The Sneetches* by Dr. Suess  
Random House

**Picture Books** (*Librarian Joa LaVille shares her Mix It Up reading list for grades preK-8 from the Teaching Tolerance website: tolerance.org*)

*Bread, Bread, Bread* by Ann Morris (William Morrow and Company, 1989, \$15.99.) Also see *Loving and Hats, Hats, Hats* by Ann Morris. Excellent short read-alouds illustrated with photographs of children and families all over the world.

*The Colors of Us* by Karen Katz. (Henry Holt and company, 1999, \$17.00) A sweet book illustrated with Katz's signature style shows reality of skin color as it truly is... not black, white, brown... but a huge spectrum of colors, which she describes in beautiful ways, like "Kathy is tawny tan like coconut and coffee toffee." Also available in Spanish.

*Horace, Morris, but Mostly Dolores* by James Howe. (Atheneum Books for Young Readers, 1999, \$16.00). Horace, Morris, and Dolores are great friends who enjoy playing together, until they come up against the expectation that girls should play with girls and boys with boys. Ultimately, they decide that friendship should be based on common interests and caring, rather than bound by gender.

*Madlenka* by Peter Sis. (Farrar Straus Giroux, 2000, \$17.00) A little girl shares the exciting news of losing a tooth, with all the caring adults who live in her

multicultural neighborhood block. As the jacket states, "For Madlenka a trip around the block is like a trip around the world." Also, see the newer *Madlenka's Dog*.

*Margaret and Margarita/Margarita Y Margaret* by Lynn Reiser. (Mulberry, 1996, paperback, \$5.99) A bilingual picture book featuring a dialogue between two young girls illustrates that friendship transcends language barriers.

*A Pig is Moving In* by Claudia Fries (Orchard Books, 2000) When news gets out that a pig is moving into their building, the animal residents become upset about stereotypical perceptions they have of their new neighbor. After they are faced with the fact that they have misconstrued circumstances to fit with their assumptions, they are able to overcome their initial prejudices.

*Somos Un Arco Iris = We Are a Rainbow* by Nancy Maria Grande Tabor (Charlesbridge Publishing, 1995, paperback, \$6.95). This brief bilingual picture book illustrated with paper cut-outs/collage emphasizes the "sameness" of people as they learn to live with others who come from different countries.

*Yoko* by Rosemary Wells (Hyperion Books, 1998, \$14.95) At first, Yoko has trouble fitting in when her lunchbox contains sushi, but a teacher's idea for an international food fair celebrates the students' cultural differences. See also the newer *Yoko's Paper Cranes*, a great way to introduce the paper crane tradition to kids too young for Sadako.

*We All Sing With the Same Voice* by Phillip Miller (HarperCollins, 2001, \$15.95) This Illustrated version of the well known Sesame Street song celebrating our likenesses over our differences comes with its own CD.

*Weslandia* by Paul Fleischman. (Candlewick, 1999, \$15.99) This tribute to non-conformity tells the story of Wesley, who spends his summer creating his own "civilization," Weslandia, which motivates other kids to appreciate his creativity and independent thinking.

*Whoever You Are* by Mem Fox. (Harcourt, 1997, \$16.00) This picture book with vibrant colors celebrates the commonality in humankind in a poetic way. Also available in Spanish.

## SERMONS

### An Association Sunday Sermon Template

by Rev. Erik Walker Wikstrom

Worship and Music Resources Director *for the*

Unitarian Universalist Association of Congregations

Today is “Association Sunday,” the day the UUA has declared that we should focus not on our own congregation but on the wider Unitarian Universalism. Now as soon as I say that there will be some people who’ll no doubt think, “who are they to tell us what to do? Just who do they think they are telling us to celebrate Association Sunday?”

And, actually, that’s a good question. But let’s put it another way—who do *we* think they are?

When most people think of the UUA they think of the people who work at 25 Beacon Street in Boston, or the people around the country who work with them. But those people are more properly called “the staff of the Association.” They’re the people who work *for* the UUA. The UUA itself is better known by its full name: The Unitarian Universalist Association of Congregations. The UUA is really the UUA *of C*. The UUA is, in a very real way, not a thing in and of itself but is instead a coming together of each and every one of the free and independent Unitarian Universalist congregations across the country. And that means that when the UUA declares this or that, it is really the association of congregations that is declaring it. Today is Association Sunday because we are celebrating it, and so are *[name four or five other congregations in the District and throughout the country that are celebrating Association Sunday]*, not the other way around.

So today is Association Sunday because we’ve said it is, and because, if you want to know the truth, there ought to be at least one day out of all the other days of the year that we set aside – like Mothers’ Day and Fathers’ Day – to remember something that we ought to be thinking about all the other days as well. Our Association literally would not exist without its member congregations, but we all would be infinitely less without it. We all, each of us, *this congregation* need the UUA (*of C*) because by coming together in Association with other Unitarian Universalists we are capable of things that would be unthinkable if we were left on our own.

Now is not the time to rattle off a list of ways we benefit by being a part of the UUA. Things like *[here you could name a few things like ministerial settlement services, district services, lifespan faith development curricula, worship resources, our two hymnals, public witness on issues of national importance, etc. and, of course, if there are ways your congregation has specifically benefited recently, these should be highlighted]* shouldn’t even need to be mentioned. It should be obvious that together we are more than any of us alone.

And so the purpose of our Association Sunday is not to convince anyone of the importance of our association but to encourage us to deepen and grow our association so that our movement might flourish. And of the need for that, too, there should be no doubt. Just take a look at the world we live in. Read the headlines; listen to the news. *[You could insert a couple of examples here if you like.]* Is there any doubt that a faith such as ours, that religious communities such as this one, have a place in our world today? That the world needs what we have?

So the first Association Sunday, in 2007, looked at the need to grow our movement's numbers, the need for us to find ways to increase the number of Unitarian Universalists in the world. It was once estimated that on average a Unitarian Universalist invites someone to her or his congregation once every seventy five years! Obviously that has got to change, and it is changing. The staff who work for the Association have been doing work on national media campaigns, and many of our congregations have been doing the same on the local level – getting the word out, without proselytizing, that there's something going on here worth checking out. *[If you've been doing something, or if a congregation near you has, this would be a place to raise it up.]* About half of the money raised during the 2007 Association Sunday – over \$700,000 – went to supporting the national media campaign (those ads in *Time* magazine that created quite a buzz); an additional \$300,000 plus went back to the Districts to support local efforts to grow the movement; and an additional \$300,000 plus went into a national initiative to increase the racial and ethnic diversity in our ordained ministry.

The second Association Sunday, in 2008, focused on growth in spirit, and the funds raised – considerably less than the first but still nearly half a million dollars – were split between supporting lay theological education and efforts to support excellence in our professional ministries.

This year Association Sunday is focusing on growth in diversity, and the monies we raise will help our movement to develop spiritual communities that are more welcoming to ALL people by:

- Expanding the *Building the World We Dream About* curriculum and associated resources. (This is a *Welcoming Congregation*-style program that looks at racism instead of homophobia.)
- Supporting congregations who are working to create a Unitarian Universalism that is racially, culturally, and economically diverse.
- Enabling Unitarian Universalist congregations and districts to minister effectively to youth and young adults who identify as people of color or multiracial, and to their families, in the areas of spiritual development, racial/cultural identity development, and leadership development.
- *[Note: you can flesh this out if you like with information found elsewhere in the Association packet.]*

You see, it doesn't really matter all that much if we grow the size of our congregations and our movement, and deepen the spiritual maturity of our congregations, if at the end of the day we still look, sound, and act pretty much like we do right now. If the only people we attract are carbon copies of the people who are already here . . . well . . . we're already here!

And it's true that there are other folk out there like us who need what we have. But it's also true that there are other folk – folk who in very real ways are not like us – and they need it too. And what's more, they have things that we need. Their very difference is needed, because too much sameness is stultifying.

No one likes change. People may say they do, but deep down people really only like change when it's other people who are doing the changing. Yet we Unitarian Universalists are spiritually mature enough to know that whether we like it or not we *need* change. That's why we believe that even our beliefs—even our most cherished beliefs—should be held lightly, open to revision, because we know the importance of evolution in every facet of life. Growth, movement, change, evolution, transformation—in the long run the only alternative is extinction. Death.

And so this year's Association Sunday is not just about "growth in diversity" but also about "growth *through* diversity." Now in many ways Unitarian Universalism is a pretty diverse religious tradition. We certainly are theologically. And we are around issues of sexuality and sexual identity. And our *understanding* about issues of race is pretty good, even though the actual experience in the majority of our congregations is still pretty white. And if we're honest with ourselves we have miles to go on issues of class. So for all the diversity we have to celebrate there is still much work to do.

Yet as a movement we recognize that this is important work to do. It's important for the world, because we are too small a planet for us not to find ways to turn these divisions and distinctions from barriers and barricades into beautifying parts of the landscape, from reasons for us to be suspicious of one another into reasons for us to want to get to know one another, from causes of hostility into causes of celebration. It's important for us as individuals, too, because the more we expand our contact with people who are different from ourselves, the wider and deeper we can grow, the richer our own lives can be. It's not always easy. Heck, it's hardly ever easy. But we know it's right.

Here, we . . . [*and this is a good place to talk about how it is in your congregation. What are the realities—the successes and the challenges of your congregation—viz a viz diversity? What are the realities of your wider community? Are there any initiatives underway? Any plans in the works you could announce? Anything to celebrate? Here's a good place to do it. Perhaps you might consider looking into offering the Building the World We Dream About curriculum in the coming year, as one example.*]

Our congregation is a voluntary association of individuals who have come together to create [*Name of your church*]. Similarly, our congregation and over one thousand others have voluntarily joined together to create an association known as the Unitarian

Universalist Association of Congregations. It is us; we are they. And the world needs the UUA, just as our community needs us. Today we have the opportunity to help strengthen our movement for generations to come by deepening our efforts to grow in and through diversity so that we don't just talk the talk but actually walk the walk.

*[It is suggested that the offering come after this sermon.]*

## **Building the Beloved Community**

A sermon by Rev. Fred Small

First Parish in Cambridge

October 5, 2008

When I was in third grade at Evergreen School in Plainfield, New Jersey, my best friend was John Carvana.

At 8 years old, I was awkward physically and socially, and I was drawn to John's intelligence and easy grace. The friendships of young boys are less about whispered secrets than about hanging out and kicking around. I don't know how deeply John and I saw into each other's souls. I just liked being around him.

In 1962, after fourth grade, my parents sent me to private school. One morning that July, John rang our doorbell, but we were packing for our family vacation, and I told John I couldn't play that day.

I never saw him again.

Over the years, I wondered what became of John. He was young and black and male in a dangerous time to be young and black and male. On his last visit, he'd come to our back door. Looking back, as I learned about racism, I wondered if he'd felt he *had* to come to the back door of a white family in a white neighborhood in 1962.

Passing through Plainfield in the 1980s, I tried to locate John but found no record of him.

Two days ago, I found John Carvana online. He's a career coach in California. I dialed the phone number on his website.

A voice answered, "This is John"—and the years fell away.

He remembered me after only a moment's hesitation, remembered my house on the corner of Kensington and Thornton. A conservative Republican, John acknowledges racism but refuses to be limited by it. We talked about his spiritual journey and mine.

I asked him if he could remember why he came to the back door nearly half a century ago. “Oh,” he said, “that was just the direction I was walking from. I didn’t think of you as my white friend. You were just my friend.”

Our relationships across race are laden with doubt and uncertainty, with symbolism and misunderstanding, with inferences accurate and inaccurate. Often, despite our best intentions and efforts, our friendships fail under the weight of so much painful history.

I look forward to renewing my friendship with John Carvana.

I look forward to a society in which these friendships are natural and commonplace. There’s a name for that society: the Beloved Community.

If you heard Thomas Mikelson preach here, you know about Beloved Community.

Martin Luther King Jr. envisioned a Beloved Community of love and justice, where the races would be reconciled, and the deep and terrible wounds of racism finally healed. “Our ultimate goal,” King said, “is genuine intergroup and interpersonal living—*integration*.” Physical desegregation is not enough, King insisted, for it leaves us “spiritually segregated, where elbows are together and hearts apart.”

In 1966, after the March to Montgomery, King was among several thousand people delayed at the airport. “As I stood with them,” he marveled, “and saw white and Negro, nuns and priests, ministers and rabbis, labor organizers, lawyers, doctors, housemaids, and shopworkers brimming with vitality and enjoying a rare comradeship, I knew I was seeing a microcosm of the mankind of the future in this moment of luminous and genuine brotherhood.”

And today he’d say sisterhood, too.

Many of us here this morning remember Martin Luther King Jr. Still more of us have heard his voice and been uplifted by his dream—a dream deferred.

But you and I need wait no longer. We can build the Beloved Community right here in this church.

I invite you to join me in a vision of First Parish in Cambridge as a multiracial, multicultural, justice-making congregation.

All we have to do is look around us at the faces in the pews and the pulpit to know we’ve got work to do.

But it can be done. ¡Sí se puede!

A multiracial congregation is usually defined as one in which no more than 80% of worshippers are of the majority race. By that measure, between 5 and 7% of Christian

congregations in the United States are multiracial. But of more than a thousand Unitarian Universalist congregations, you know how many are multiracial?

Five.

Not five percent. Five churches.

For all our vaunted liberalism, all our proclamations of justice and equity, less than *point five* percent of our congregations are racially diverse.

Five multiracial UU congregations in the entire country.

We can be the sixth.

You know, I almost didn't apply for the position of Senior Minister here.

I thought, this is Cambridge. This is 2008. They've had an unbroken line of white, straight men as senior or sole minister stretching back 372 years. They're not gonna call another white, straight guy! They're gonna call a minister of color, or a lesbian or gay, or at least a woman. Why waste my time—or yours?

But an astute colleague told me, "Fred, they're gonna call a white guy. It might as well be you."

I was heartened to discover the chair of the search committee was of color—the extraordinary Alan Price. At least it wasn't an all-white jury!

I told the search committee the single most effective thing you could do to diversify your congregation was to call a senior minister of color, and if I were you, that's what I'd do.

But if you called me, diversity would be a high priority in my ministry.

And right away someone said, "Well, we've got this associate minister position coming open. We can call an associate of color."

And so we can.

But will we?

Everything is connected to everything else. "We are caught in an inescapable *network of mutuality*," said Dr. King, "tied in a single garment of destiny."

Before you voted to call me last April I said the single highest priority for this congregation should be a crackerjack religious education program for our children and youth. I also said that excellence in religious education depends on the faithful and consistent support of clergy and congregation alike. It does not depend on the program's

being run by an ordained minister. Credentialed religious educators are often better skilled, trained, and motivated than clergy to manage the RE program.

You know how many ministers of religious education of color there are in the Unitarian Universalist universe?

One—Latina, currently serving another church.

So we face a clear practical choice. We can call a minister of religious education, or we can call a minister of color. We can't do both.

An associate of color can be passionately devoted to and responsible for religious education. But if we want a minister of color, we're going have to hire a director of religious education, as well.

That'll cost money, though not as much as you might imagine.

And if we call a minister of color, we have work to do: our own work of preparation, conversation, and transformation.

Ministers of color have struggled in our overwhelmingly white congregations—not just in the bad old days, when they were actively discouraged, but even today.

Unitarian Universalists like to think we've done the work, we welcome everybody, we affirm everyone's inherent worth and dignity. But the stereotypes reverberate in whispered questions actually heard in our churches. Will a minister of color really be smart enough to preach to our highly educated congregation? Won't she be too Christian for us?

And when a young minister of color hits bumps in the road—as every young minister does—the whispers grow louder. Skepticism and criticism take hold where faith and patience might otherwise prevail.

The average length of service of Unitarian Universalist clergy to a congregation is seven years. But for UU clergy of color, it's only three years.

As President Sinkford points out, in just a few decades we've moved from a handful of women clergy in our pulpits to a majority. For ministers of color, “we've moved from a handful to a handful.”

It would be unfair and irresponsible for us to call a minister of color without intentional preparation on our part. It would be a set-up for struggle and maybe failure.

We can't just call a minister of color and ask him or her to carry the burden of diversifying and transforming our congregation. It's our work to do.

At the reception after my installation last Sunday, one of our congregants approached Winnifred Peart-Harding and demanded to know what she's doing about the potholes in the streets of Cambridge. Somehow Winni resisted the temptation to quip, "We all look alike." But when a longtime member of our congregation is mistaken for the mayor because they're both African-American women, we have work to do.

Of course, the vision of a multiracial, multicultural, justice-making congregation isn't my vision. It's yours.

The mission statement of this congregation proclaims your commitment "to be a force for social justice" as you "work . . . to create Beloved Community."

Time after time when you've been asked your values, your goals, your aspirations, you have answered: we want to be more diverse.

When you gathered in "Finding Our Future" house meetings in 2007, two of the four themes that emerged were more diversity and social justice/outreach.

The report from your "Renewing Our Calling" cottage parties in 2005 called for diversity and "a fearless attitude of pluralism."

And at your Annual Meeting May 21, 2000, the congregation voted to "add a third full-time minister with a strong commitment to issues of racial inclusiveness"—at some future time.

A dream deferred.

It's no mystery how to grow a multiracial, multicultural congregation. We now have solid empirical data on racially diverse churches, from which seven principles emerge.

First comes intentionality. Diversity happens not by accident but by decision—conscious and explicit.

There are many people of color hungry for what we offer—spiritual freedom without shame or dogma, affirmation of the inherent worth and dignity of every person, including gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender sisters and brothers, commitment to social justice—but we must let them know they are welcome here.

Second is diversity of leadership, both lay and ordained. People need to see themselves reflected in faces of authority.

Third is inclusive worship embodying a variety of styles and traditions. The more upbeat and demonstrative the music and worship style, the more diverse the congregation.

Fourth, location matters. One third of the population of Cambridge is of color. One third of Somerville is of color. And you know what? Most multiracial congregations are *more* diverse than their surrounding communities, not less.

Fifth is consistent outreach to these communities with meaningful ministries.

Sixth is adaptability. We have to be willing to examine our old ways of doing things and see if they still serve us and the diverse congregation we seek.

We have to be willing to change—not our values, not our principles, not our spirituality—but our habits and prejudices. To be open to new people, we have to be willing to learn from them.

Seventh, racial diversity cannot be itself the ultimate goal. It must be part of a larger mission. Our mission is love and justice. Love and justice are incompatible with de facto segregation.

We are entering a new era. By 2042, white Americans will no longer be a majority. Today, three out of four Americans age 70 and older are Caucasian. Of Americans age 10 and younger, only one out of four is Caucasian. Young people are far more comfortable than their elders with relationships across race. A biracial man is poised to be elected president of the United States.

If First Parish in Cambridge remains overwhelmingly white, we will lose our relevance and forfeit our standing in this changing world.

When we build the Beloved Community, our every passion and program will be deepened and strengthened. Religious Education, Green Sanctuary, Covenant Groups, the choir, Women's Sacred Circle, the Cambridge Forum, activism for immigrant rights and gay rights and prison reform—everything we do will be more powerful, more stimulating, more vital, more rewarding, and more effective when it is multiracial and multicultural.

In the weeks and months ahead, I invite your ideas about strategies and steps toward the Beloved Community. Some we'll hear about this afternoon at our Semi-Annual Meeting.

When she was in her twenties, Ginger Ryan lived with friends on an old farm in the Hudson River valley. None of them knew anything about vegetable gardening. They spent a lot of time turning over the soil, forming rows, and planning what and where to plant, but they really didn't know what to do next.

One day when they were standing around the garden, the previous owner, an old Sicilian named Mr. Solari, dropped by. Ginger's friend Erika was playing the violin to encourage the soil.

Mr. Solari laughed.

“When are you gonna plant? What are you waiting for?”

He grabbed a package of corn seeds, dug his hands in the dirt, and planted the whole row, three seeds to each hole.

When are we going to plant? What are we waiting for?

A dream deferred awaits our hands and hearts.

Let’s dig our fingers into this fertile soil and grow the Beloved Community.

Amen.

## **Radical Hospitality**

Marilyn Sewell

Radical hospitality. Radical means “out of the ordinary,” “revolutionary,” even. So what would it mean to receive someone—a stranger—with a presence that was not just polite, but to receive them with revolutionary generosity?

Activist Rosemarie Harding remembers her growing-up days, in the South—she especially remembers the hospitality of her mother, Ella Lee, and her great-grandmother Moriah, or “Mama Rye.” Mama Rye was born in Africa, was a slave in Virginia, and died in 1930 at the age of 107. Both these women cultivated a deep hospitality, Harding says, as well as a profound mystic spirituality. In the years that Harding was growing up, her house was a regular stop for neighbors and relatives and friends.

Her mother and father made the house welcoming—sometimes too welcoming, it seemed, for all kinds of people came through, not just neighbors and friends, but peddlers, professional gamblers, petty thieves, prostitutes, and people we would probably call homeless today. Her mother would set out beautiful china dishes and slices of her homemade pound cake for all of them—especially for the ones just passing through. It was as if she knew that they needed special attention, and besides, she genuinely enjoyed hearing their stories and learning from them. She knew that wisdom came from many sources.

An itinerant bookseller would come now and then for a visit. He would sit down with Mom there in the dining room and talk for hours about the events of the day and about books. The man was not always very clean, and sometimes, Harding says, “we children could smell the mustiness of his ragged clothes and the sweat of his body. His speech was strange, too, and we children were tempted to laugh, she says, but if we so much as let out a snicker, Mom would cut her eyes at us and set us straight.”

Harding goes on to say, “The efforts my parents made to be neighborly and to reserve judgment against those who society viewed as outcasts served as important examples for their children and grandchildren as we grew into adulthood. Hospitality was the foundation of my family’s spirituality.”

Hospitality is a word with a spiritual history, as a matter of fact. Monasteries grew up around the 5<sup>th</sup> century. Strangers in need could come there for care. The first primitive hospitals, in fact, began there. Hospital, hospice, hospitable, hospitality—all from the same root word, meaning *generous, caring, sustaining*. The most famous of these monasteries was that of St. Benedict. Benedict created a book of rules to live by, called The Rule of Benedict, which is used still today by many monasteries. The foundation of the rule is listening. “Listen with the ear of your heart,” Benedict writes.

And yet the kind of warm-hearted generosity described by Rosemarie Harding is more difficult in our day and age, more difficult in the city than in the small town. More of us live in places distant from our relatives, places where neighbors come and go, and there is not that continuity of place that gives us the confidence to allow the stranger in.

When I grew up in that little Louisiana town of 5,000, we never locked our door. After all, not a single neighbor ever moved, the whole time I lived there—not only did I know all of our neighbors, I knew all their dogs, and I was in and out of the homes of most of these folks, some more than others. It’s different now. I’m a single woman in the city. I’m vulnerable. My door stays locked. I don’t want to move back to that little town, move away from the stimulation and progressive values of the city—but I have to ask, what have I lost?

Robert Putnam, the Harvard political scientist best known for his book *Bowling Alone*, in which he writes of the growing isolation of Americans, Robert Putnam has done some new research—and his conclusions have been surprising.<sup>1</sup> He wanted to find out what happens when diverse groups of people live in the same area, as opposed to a homogeneous group of people living in an area. He found that when people are near people unlike themselves, they tend to “hunker down.” Not only do they not interact as much with people who are different from themselves, but they don’t interact with their own group as much: they watch more TV, they have fewer friends, they are less likely to work on community projects. The level of trust and interaction is greatest when people are with others who are most like themselves. When these results came back, Putnam distrusted what he saw, and so did his colleagues. So he spent years more checking out his data (30,000 people were interviewed)—and yes, he found he was right. Putnam, a dyed-in-the-wool progressive and very pro-diversity, nevertheless concludes, “In the face of diversity, most of us retreat.”

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<sup>1</sup>Robert Putnam, “E Pluribus unum: Diversity and Community in the Twenty-first Century. *Scandinavian Political Studies*, Summer, 2007. In the summer and fall of 2000, Putnam and his team interviewed 30,000 individuals in very different communities, both large and small, all over the United States. He was surprised by his initial conclusions, and tried controlling the data for a host of other factors, but came to the same conclusions. Putnam is very much “pro-diversity” and does not see his work as a negative—he says, “The sooner we recognize it, the sooner we can deal with it.”

Another study shows that churches that try to bridge social divisions have a tough job. Paul Lichtenman, in his book *Elusive Togetherness*, says that churches that attempt to bridge strong social differences mean well, but are most often not successful. He says when churches in his study tried to do outreach<sup>2</sup>, differences in social customs and in styles of relating made it nearly impossible for faith-based efforts to close the gaps. He said that the single group in his study that did succeed constantly evaluated and reevaluated what they were doing and why they were doing it, in order to understand their own cultural underpinnings and those of others. In other words, they paid close attention to how they were talking, interacting, and engaging on a daily level. They learned to approach others as partners rather than as people they were helping. Success, in other words, lies not so much in ideology or in organizational structure, but *in the detailed content of our conversations.*<sup>3</sup>

So what does this mean for us as a church? We are committed to being a welcoming community. We say we believe in the “inherent worth and dignity of all.” And yet we are human beings, and we have the same challenges that all human beings have. We feel more comfortable when we’re with people we know. We come to church, we gravitate to people we know. We feel less comfortable when we are with people who have different ideas and interests, different cultural assumptions. Tribalism is strong, and we need look no further than our church.

Let’s talk about some people who might actually visit our church, and imagine to what extent they might feel welcomed. (And the examples I’m giving are not unlike people who actually have visited our church.)

- a young woman, with an infant in her arms. When the baby starts to whimper during the service, she begins breastfeeding--
- a Native American with long dark hair comes in
- a man from a Pentacostal background waves his hands in the air during the singing of “Spirit of Life”
- a beautifully bedecked woman in a flowered print dress, with matching high heels and purse—she is 6’4” tall, and clearly transgender
- a person who speaks out of turn and can’t follow the hymns—he seems to be mentally ill
- a well-dressed couple—the man has an American flag in the lapel of his suit—and they have their Bibles with them
- a homeless man who hasn’t bathed in a week

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<sup>2</sup>Outreach in this context means volunteer work with disadvantaged groups.

<sup>3</sup>Paul Lichtenman, *Elusive Togetherness: Church Groups Trying to Bridge America’s Social Divisions*. Princeton University Press, 2005. Lichtenman’s study was done through fieldwork with eight volunteer groups or projects affiliated with a mainline Protestant church, one program affiliated with an evangelical Protestant church, and fieldwork with several related county organizations and groups. The single group that was successful took on projects that broke them out of several norms of “volunteering” or “helping” and put them in a position of partnership.” Nonetheless, the relationships and ties that developed remained “fraught and tenuous.” (p. 174) Lichtenman concludes that it is very difficult to cultivate the kinds of social customs and setting which would be conducive for people to move beyond their limits without threatening the group’s own togetherness. (p. 18)

- a woman with a guide dog
- a service man back from Iraq, in uniform, visiting with his aunt and uncle
- a 21-year-old who just graduated from a college back East and moved here to find his first job—he knows no one in town—he is African American

Let me ask you--have you ever been in a situation in which you felt utterly alone? In a new town or city, where you knew no one? I've experienced this more than once, and it doesn't feel good. One time was during the late 1960's when I taught summer school in one of LBJ's programs for disadvantaged children in New Orleans. It turns out that I was the only white person in the school, students or teachers. I remember that nobody wanted to park their car next to mine in the staff parking lot. I learned a lot about how it feels to be different that summer. And alone.

There are those who come to this city every year, and many who come to this church, who are coming to start a new life—they move here because of some kind of major transition, a new job, the loss of a spouse, or simply the desire to start over in a great city.

But even in gorgeous, livable Portland, starting over isn't easy. We miss the friends we left behind, our old familiar restaurants, our hairdresser. It takes a long time to rebuild a community of comfort and belonging. But there is the church—a church—our church, we hope, might be a place where a wayfaring stranger can find respite, acceptance, a new beginning. People don't dress up and come downtown to church on Sunday morning on a whim—people are here because they need to be here.

I hope we would be called a friendly church, a hospitable church, and I think that we are. But do we practice radical hospitality--and if we did, what would that look like?

Churches typically offer personal support to their members, but often stop there. A congregation committed to radical hospitality would go beyond seeking out others like themselves, for mutual support—such a congregation would recognize the humanity of anyone who walks into that church. And such a congregation would concern themselves with people who feel beyond the reach of organized religion. The public theology of such a church would not be limited to charity—which after all, puts the receiver one-down—but would also be committed to justice. Surely this is part of our mission at this church, and our new Buchan Building will allow us to be more open and receptive than ever before, to many different people and different groups who will come here and share this building with us.

Right now in this country and here in Portland a strong church sanctuary movement is growing, in response to new pressures on illegal immigrants. I haven't been around this summer while this movement was building, but I want to challenge the church to evaluate in what way we might want to be a part of this movement, which is surely a huge issue of hospitality for this whole country at the moment. We call them "guest workers," don't we?

So "radical hospitality" is a term that rolls easily off the tongue--to actually carry it out is a demanding undertaking. But we are not a department store, not a government agency,

not an HMO—in all these places, one would expect to be received politely, as it were--served, as is our due. No, we are a church, and it is appropriate that we ask ourselves, what is the moral dimension of our hospitality, the moral dimension of our reception of others, of our solidarity with others, who may not look like us or move from the same assumptions or values? I'm not talking about being politically correct, or legalistic—I'm talking about hospitality as spiritual practice. I'm not talking about just opening the doors—I'm talking about opening the heart.

Yes, bringing diverse people together is difficult—I think we have established that. This is not because people are bad, it's because human beings have a built-in tribalism that needs to be challenged consciously, intentionally. What, then, opens the heart and brings people who are different, together? It is not ideology or theology, nor is it form that brings people together. It's content and it's conversation—it's the universals that all people care about—their children, this good earth, an end to mindless violence, a yearning for peace.

Let me give you some examples. A couple of years ago a professor at Multnomah Bible College invited me to speak at a conference. Many of you know how I struggled with that speech, how I woke up in the night writing speech after angry speech, and how I finally came down to what we had in common—Jesus. My talk was entitled, “Will the Real Jesus Please Stand Up?” I said some things that may have been hard for them to hear—especially how hurtful their stance on homosexuality has been to my people-- but as one who was raised a Southern Baptist, and who does love Jesus, I stood on their ground, as one of them. And then when our General Assembly came to Portland this past June, I invited that same professor, Dr. Paul Metzger, to speak about environmental issues at an outdoor rally. He came, and he was enthusiastically received. He is one of the evangelical leaders who is speaking out on climate change. He wants his children and grandchildren to have a viable life on this earth and so do I. And as a Christian, he cares about what the failure of the eco-system will do to the poorest of the poor. And so do I, care. There is a lot that draws us together.

And then Mark Slegers, our Minister of Music, and some of our choir members participated yesterday in PROPER (People Reaching Oppressed People Expecting Restoration), a festival for diverse groups involved in social justice activities. One of the organizers was Pastor Elbert Mondaine, who was here with his Gospel choir on July 15 and will be back on Sept. 22—mark your calendar! Mondaine has led his gospel musicians into some pretty amazing places recently. He took them to Pennsylvania, to the Amish town where the girls were killed, and his musicians sang for these people in their grief. And most recently, he took a group to Utah, to the site where 6 miners lie buried thousands of feet under the ground, and where 3 others died trying to rescue them. How different are his African American gospel singers from the Amish farmers and from these white miners from the strongly conservative state of Utah. And yet grief is the common cause of all of us—we all love, and we all lose, and music can be that bridge connecting the one to the other.

I speak of radical hospitality today because there is a world out there that needs home, that needs community, and I want us to stretch spiritually, to stretch ourselves open. I know that when we take the risk—yes, of course, we'll blunder, we'll make mistakes—believe me, I have blundered more than once—but when we take the risk, our lives will grow so much richer and deeper because we have extended ourselves. Our creativity will blossom, for we will not be stuck with our old assumptions, our narrow ways of perceiving reality. Our world will grow wider and softer and more trusting.

In closing, let me share a note that I received just this last week. This note was from a grandmother who had mentioned to me in passing a concern about her granddaughter—the little girl was to start her first day of school this last Friday, and she was the only white child in her class. How would her granddaughter respond? Would she feel “other”? Would she feel left out? Then I got this note on Saturday, which I will read in part: “I wanted you to know that my granddaughter loved her first day at school. Being the only white child never affected her—she made a new friend, loved the free chocolate milk, and gave up her home-made lunch to join the others for a free lunch. I’ve concluded that it is often our fears as adults that can muddy the waters for these young people, who already know how to love.” Now we have to pause and ask some questions here. Would it be the same if her grandchild were the only child of color in the class? And will it be the same when her granddaughter begins to see class differences and begins to understand all that “free lunch” implies? These are open questions.

Nevertheless, the essential rightness of this final statement of the note remains: “It’s adults who muddy the water—young people already know how to love.” I have seen attitudes shift hugely in my lifetime. And that shift comes from the young people. It comes from our children. We who are perhaps less malleable need to notice, and to learn. So be it. Amen.

## **WORDS FOR THE OFFERING**

### **Offering Call For A Community Seeking Change**

We know there is great abundance in our world: a great abundance of suffering – of people homeless, hungry, frightened, lonely, in danger, sick, exhausted, and wondering when this abundant suffering shall cease.

We know there is great abundance in our world: a great abundance of love – of people caring, building homes for those who need them, feeding folks who hunger, comforting folks who are frightened, inviting folks who are lonely into company, creating peace and safety zones, healing and being with the sick, and welcoming the weary to a place of rest. We are the people of abundance, people who have known suffering and will know suffering. We are the people of abundance, people who have known love and offer our love as a blessing to our world.

As we receive disappointment, anguish, and anger, we transform those curses into the blessings of hope, joy, and love.

As we offer those blessings to this world, so our blessings increase:

- the smile of gratitude eases our hearts,
- the dance of joy sweeps us into the circle,
- and the light of this chalice changes our world.

We are the change we wish to see through what we give. What change will you bless this world with today?

~ Naomi King

### **Offering Call For Growing Our Diversity**

Somos una gente del arco iris. We are a rainbow people. The rainbow is an arc of light brilliantly displaying all the colors of the visible spectrum, all the colors that combine to make the astounding beauty of our world, all the colors that combine to reflect the astounding diversity of human expression.

Nous sommes de peuples des d'arc-en-ciel. We are Red people who Respect others. We are Orange people who offer faith and kind treatment. We are Yellow people yearning for learning.

Somos una gente del arco iris. We are Green people who grow in our search for truth and meaning. We are Blue people who believe in what we are achieving. We are Indigo people insisting on freedom, love, and peace. We are Violet people, valuing the web that does not cease and we did not create.

Nous sommes de peuples des d'arc-en-ciel. Unitarian Universalism shows up refracted through thousands of different human expressions and experiences, through individuals living our promises, through covenanted communities, through our associations and our actions.

We are a rainbow people. Together, what we give heals and transforms our world. This is our covenant, our bridge of heaven, our dream and our reality. The flame of the chalice, lit around our world, is the source of light and the pot of gold at the end of that rainbow. The flame of that chalice is filled with the light we bring, and nurtured by our hopes and dreams. We know the rainbow begins with you and with me.

For, somos una gente del arco iris. Nous sommes de peuples des d'arc-en-ciel. We are a rainbow people. Let us grow the rainbow again today.

~ Naomi King

*Before:* It is said, “The Lord loves a cheerful giver,” yet we’ll accept from a grouch as well. As the ushers prepare to take this morning’s offering, may each of us look into not just our wallets or our checkbooks to see how much we have with us. Let us look into our hearts, as well, and see what is available there – how much love, how much generosity, how much faith, how much gratitude, how much hope – and let us take our offering from that account.

*After:* For the gifts which we have received—and the gifts which we, ourselves, are—may we be truly grateful. Yet more than that, may we be committed to using these gifts to make a difference in the world: to increase love and justice; to decrease hatred and oppression; to expand beloved community; to share, and to keep sharing, as long as ever we can. Amen.

~ Erik Walker Wikstrom

## CLOSING WORDS / BENEDICTIONS

We receive fragments of holiness, glimpses of eternity, brief moments of insight. Let us gather them up for the precious gifts that they are and, renewed by their grace, move boldly into the unknown.

~ Sara Moores Campbell

Into our world we commend our spirits:  
May the strength we have gained in this communal hour  
Sustain us as we resume the work that is at hand.

~ Martha Kirby Capo

We have a calling in this world:  
We are called to honor diversity,  
To respect differences with dignity,  
And to challenge those who would forbid it.  
We are people of a wide path.  
Let us be wide in affection  
And go our way in peace. Amen.

~ Jean M. Rickard

If you are who you were,  
and if the person next to you is who he or she was,  
if none of us has changed  
since the day we came in here –  
we have failed.

The purpose of this community –  
of any church, temple, zendo, mosque –  
is to help its people grow.

We do this through encounters with the unknown – in ourselves,  
in one another,  
in “The Other” – whoever that might be for us.  
however hard that might be –  
because these encounters have many gifts to offer.  
So may you go forth from here this morning  
not who you were,  
but who you could be.  
So may we all.

*~ Erik Walker Wikstrom*

Our time together is finished, but our work is not yet done:  
May our spirits be renewed and our purpose resolved  
As we meet the challenges of the week to come.  
The chalice flame is extinguished  
Until once again ignited by the strength of our communion.  
Go now in peace.

*~ Martha Kirby Capo*

We shall overcome.

When we can truly celebrate the diversity of contributions and talents offered by all people, we shall overcome hatred and prejudice and oppression.

When we can truly extend our hands to one another in loving acceptance, we shall overcome the past that haunts us now.

Living in peace and freedom, we shall overcome the wrongs that have happened and the debts left unpaid.

Let us join together in that commitment to overcome.

Let us say together, "Amen."

*~ Jonalu Johnstone*

We have a calling in this world:  
we are called to honour diversity,  
to respect differences with dignity,  
and to challenge those who would forbid it.  
We are the people of a wide path.  
Let us be wide in affection  
and go our way in peace.

*~ Jean M Rickard Rowe, USA*

One snowflake is a marvel, a miracle;  
Four snowflakes, five, and the kids begin to run around in the yard;  
One hundred and the cars start slowing down;  
One thousand, two . . . you can see where this is going.  
We are strengthened in coming together, joining with others, blending our efforts with  
those of the Unitarian Universalist congregation in the next town or the next state.  
Together we are more than we could ever be alone. One congregation, one UU is a  
miracle, a marvel. As an Association we can help to create a wonderland – a world  
blanketed with love and justice, understanding and hope.

*~ Erik Walker Wikstrom*

### **~ ORIGINAL MUSIC BY UU COMPOSERS ~**

The music on the following pages, while not specifically written for Association Sunday, was composed by Unitarian Universalist musicians for use in their congregations and was contributed to this collection with a desire that it be used to help expand the repertoire of Unitarian Universalist music.

*to Ruth Lewis and the UU Fellowship of Gainesville, Florida*

## We're Family

*a hymn*

Moderate ( $\text{♩} = \text{c. } 108$ )

Words and music:  
Wally Kleucker

All

To be black or white or in between Is per -  
To be gay or straight is not a choice. On - ly  
Whe- ther gay, straight, black, white, rich or poor, we are  
Bm A D Bm

Piano

*mf*

*3*

haps the way that we are seen. We are all part of the  
we can hear our in ner voice. We are all part of the  
all u - nique and fur - ther-more We are all part of the  
E m F # B m B m7 G A

*3*

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6

hu man race Ev'-ry - one is born with a - maz-ing grace. Whe-ther  
hu-man race. Ev'-ry - one is born with a maz-ing grace. Whe-ther  
hu-man race. Ev'-ry - one is born with a maz-ing grace. So re -  
Bm D Em F# Bm Bm7

9

black or white we're fam-i - ly. Let us cel - e - brate our hu - man-i - ty. Whe ther  
gay or straight we're fam-i - ly. Let us cel - e - brate our hu - man-i - ty. Whe ther  
mem - ber we are fam-i - ly. Let us cel - e - brate our hu - man-i - ty. So re -  
G A D Bm Em7 A Bm Bm7

13

black or white we're fam i ly! Let us cel - e - brate our hu - man-i - ty —  
gay or straight we're fam i ly! Let us cel - e - brate our hu - man-i - ty —  
mem - ber we are fam i ly! Let us cel - e - brate our hu - man-i - ty —  
G A D Bm Em A D

# Our Family Is Humankind

a hymn  
(optional oboe or flute and drum)

With energy (M.M.  $\frac{4}{4}$  - c. 120)

Words & music: Wally Kleucker

The musical score consists of four staves. The top staff is for the Oboe or Flute, showing a rhythmic pattern of eighth and sixteenth notes. The second staff is for the Piano, with chords labeled F, F7, B♭, cm7, B♭, F, and B♭. The third staff is for All voices, with lyrics starting with "Let us talk or dis-agree". The fourth staff is for the Piano, with chords labeled B♭, cm, E♭, B♭, B♭, and cm. The fifth staff is for All voices, continuing the lyrics with "with an open world in". The sixth staff is for the Piano, with chords labeled F, E♭, B♭, cm, B♭, and B♭. The seventh staff is for All voices, continuing the lyrics with "scorn. In such an atmosphere". The eighth staff is for the Oboe / Flute, playing a melodic line. The ninth staff is for the Piano, with chords labeled B♭, cm, B♭, cm, B♭, and B♭. The tenth staff is for All voices, continuing the lyrics with "mind our love and empathy". The eleventh staff is for the Piano, with chords labeled F, E♭, B♭, cm, B♭, and B♭.

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Our Family Is Humankind

**2**

All: life - long friends are born.  
 will leave hate be hind.  
 feuds and wars would cease.  
 long of ter we part.

Oboe / flute:

Pno. em F F<sup>7</sup> B<sup>b</sup> f F F<sup>7</sup>

**14**

All: ver - sa - lists have o - pen hearts and minds, We  
 ver - sa - lists have o - pen hearts and minds, We  
 ver - sa - lists have o - pen hearts and minds, We  
 ver - sa - lists have o - pen hearts and minds, we

Oboe / flute:

Pno. B<sup>b</sup> B<sup>b</sup> B<sup>b</sup> F<sup>7</sup> B<sup>b</sup> F<sup>7</sup>

**17**

All: all are linked by com - mon threads. Our fa - mi - ly is hu - man -  
 all are linked by com - mon threads. Our fa - mi - ly is hu - man -  
 all are linked by com - mon threads. Our fa - mi - ly is hu - man -  
 all are linked by com - mon threads. Our fa - mi - ly is hu - man -

Oboe / flute:

Pno. F B<sup>b</sup> B<sup>b</sup> E<sup>b</sup> B<sup>b</sup> F

# We Light This Chalice

for chalice lightings

Chalice Lighting words from the  
Unitarian Universalist Church of Charlotte

Wally Kleucker

Flowing  $\text{♩} = 120$

*mf*

All

We light this cha - lice to ce - le - brate Un - i -

C E<sub>m</sub> F G C E<sub>m</sub> F G

Piano

ta - ri - an Un-i - ver - sa - li - sm. Ours is the church of the o - pen mind.

C G F C D<sub>m</sub> G C E<sub>m</sub>

*p*

Ours is the church of the help-ing hands. Ours is the church of the lo-v ing heart.

D<sub>m</sub> G C G D<sub>m</sub> G C F C

Pno.

*mf*

*f*

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# Seven Principles

(last edit 5/18/08)

DAVID M. GLASGOW

## 1

The inherent worth and dignity of every person

Resolved ♩ = 84

Musical score for Principle 1. The music is in common time (♩ = 84). The vocal line consists of eighth-note chords. The lyrics are:

Ev - 'ry soul has dig - ni-ty, and e - ven our en - e-my has worth.

The piano accompaniment features eighth-note chords in a steady pattern.

## 2

Justice, equity, and compassion in human relations

Prayerful ♩ = 88

Musical score for Principle 2. The music is in common time (♩ = 88). The vocal line consists of eighth-note chords. The lyrics are:

May ev - 'ry choice we make be led by jus - tice, and ev - 'ry

word we speak be fla - vored with the sweet - ness of com - pas - sion. (un)

The piano accompaniment features eighth-note chords in a steady pattern.

# 3

## Acceptance of one another and encouragement to spiritual growth in our congregations

Warmly  $\text{♩} = 108$

We em - brace the gifts of this mo - ment \_\_\_\_\_ as we plant\_\_\_\_ the

seeds that will grow\_\_\_\_\_ in - - to to - - - mor - - - row. (oo)

# 4

## A free and responsible search for truth and meaning

Simply  $\text{♩} = 80$

I ask the world, "where is mean - ing?" The world re - plies, "Love your neigh - bor, and seek."

# 5

## The right of conscience and the use of the democratic process within our congregations and in society at large

Confidently  $\text{♩} = 76$

One voice a-mong man-y has the pow'r to change the world!

One voice a-mong man-y \_\_\_\_ has the pow'r to change the world!

One voice a-mong man-y \_\_\_\_ has the pow'r to change the world!

One voice a-mong man-y \_\_\_\_ the pow'r to change the world!

# 6

## The goal of world community with peace, liberty, and justice for all

Gently  $\text{♩} = 72$

May the sun - rise that cir-cles the earth bring peace, jus-tice, and  
to all, \_\_\_\_\_ to all as one. (uu)  
free-dom to all, to all, as one. (uu)  
to all \_\_\_\_\_ as one. (uu)

# 7

## Respect for the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part

Insistent  $\text{♩} = 88$

each strand \_\_\_\_\_  
Each voice in the chord, \_\_\_\_\_ each strand of the each strand of the each strand \_\_\_\_\_  
is im - por - tant. Ooo \_\_\_\_\_  
web web is \_\_\_\_\_ is im - por - tant. Ooo \_\_\_\_\_  
is \_\_\_\_\_ is im - por - tant. Ooo \_\_\_\_\_

# The Light We See

(last edit 3/12/08)

DAVID M. GLASGOW

Molto rubato, with hope ♩ = 72



air. The peace we feel in-dwells us as we go from this place, touch-ing

lives, shar-ing hope, mak-ing peace, show-ing care, un til we meet a - gain.

## Our Family Is Humankind

3

Musical score for "Our Family Is Humankind". The score consists of two systems of music.

**System 1 (Measures 26-27):**

- All:** Four staves of vocal parts. The first staff has lyrics: kind. kind. kind. kind. The second staff has lyrics: 1., 2., 3. The third staff has lyrics: 1., 2., 3. The fourth staff has lyrics: 4.
- Oboe / flute:** Playing eighth-note patterns.
- Pno.:** Playing eighth-note chords labeled B♭, E♭, F7, B♭, E♭, B♭, F7.

**System 2 (Measures 28-29):**

- All:** Four staves of vocal parts. The first staff has lyrics: 1., 2., 3. The second staff has lyrics: 4.
- Oboe / flute:** Playing eighth-note patterns.
- Pno.:** Playing eighth-note chords labeled B♭, B♭, B♭, B♭.

# Diversity makes us strong

Words by Guy Belleranti

Music by Agnes V. Paulsen © 1999

Voice

1. We are a church that ac - cepts all  
2. We search for truth and we search for  
3. We draw on wis - dom from man - y  
4. We are a fair and a demo - cratic  
5. We are a church that ac - cepts all

4. peo - ple. We are a church that ac - cepts all  
5. mean - ing. We search for truth and we search for  
3. teach - ings. We draw on wis - dom from man - y  
4. peo - ple. We are a fair and a democrat - ic  
5. peo - ple. We are a church that ac - cepts all

8. Chorus

1. peo - ple. We are a church that ac - cepts all peo - ple.  
2. mean - ing. We search for truth and we search for mean - ing.  
3. teach - ings. We draw on wis - dom from man - y teach - ings.  
4. peo - ple. We are a fair and a demo - cratic peo - ple.  
5. peo - ple. We are a church that ac - cepts all peo - ple.

13. Oh - - - Di - ver - si - ty makes us strong!

19. Oh - - - Di - ver - si - ty makes us strong!



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Agnes V Paulsen  
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Tucson, AZ 85716-3535

# There Are No Strangers Here

3

$\text{♩} = 60$  (misterioso) (unison) *mf*

The musical score consists of four staves of music. The top staff is for the voice, starting with a rest followed by eighth-note chords. The piano accompaniment begins with eighth-note chords. The lyrics "There are no stran-gers here All are wel-come" are written below the vocal line. The second staff continues with eighth-note chords, with the vocal part entering on the third measure. The lyrics "all are hon-ored friends Cast a-side your wor ry and your" are written below. The third staff features eighth-note chords, with the vocal part continuing from the previous staff. The lyrics "fear Grasp the hand of friend-ship that ex - tends" are written below. The fourth staff concludes the piece with eighth-note chords.

There are no stran-gers here All are wel-come

$\text{♩} = 60$  (misterioso)

all are hon-ored friends Cast a-side your wor ry and your

fear Grasp the hand of friend-ship that ex - tends

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Words by Martha Kirby Capo

# Will You Walk With Us

$\text{♩} = 92$

Will you walk with us this morn-ing walk in paths of har-mon -y—

$\text{♩} = 92$

We will walk this path to - geth - er Help-ing each in their en -

deav - or to be all they're meant to be

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Words by Martha Kirby Capo

Treat - ing all with dig - ni - ty

### We Are Called

*J=92*

We are called to serve the world, We are called to  
 (We are we are called to)

*J=92*

use our gifts so that peace may spread so that ev'-ry heart up-lifts

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## **LINKS TO OTHER RESOURCES**

Links (in two formats) to a video prepared by Rev. Bill Sinkford, President of the UUA, speaking on the importance of the work of “growing in diversity.”

[http://media.uua.org:8080/asxgen/misc2009/0903\\_Sinkford\\_Assn\\_Sunday.wmv](http://media.uua.org:8080/asxgen/misc2009/0903_Sinkford_Assn_Sunday.wmv)

[http://media.uua.org:8080/html/misc2009/0903\\_Sinkford\\_Assn\\_Sunday.mov](http://media.uua.org:8080/html/misc2009/0903_Sinkford_Assn_Sunday.mov)

Information from the UUA staff regarding efforts toward “truth, repair, and reconciliation” around issues of race can be found here:

<http://www.uua.org/leaders/leaderslibrary/araomc/104381.shtml>

The Southern Law Poverty Center (<http://www.splcenter.org/>) is a premier organization working to increase recognition of the importance of diversity and decrease hate and fear. Its Teaching Tolerance program (<http://www.tolerance.org>) is an incredible resource.