*Adapted by Theresa Pizzuto from A Lamp in Every Corner*

***Materials:*** Blue felt underlay; images of: little girl, trees, frog, Olympia as young woman, Antioch College, rolled up papers, bloomers, Theological School, church pulpit, Kansas, horse & buggy, voting ballot, older Olympia; basket with Heroes and Heroines symbol from Sources Lesson.

***Presentation:***

Watch where I go to get today’s story so that you will know where to find it if you wish to make it your work.

*Go and remove the basket with this story. Place it next to you.*

This is one of our sources stories about the roots of our beliefs. Our beliefs come from men and women of long ago and today whose lives teach us to be fair, respect others and that everyone has the right to share their voice.

*Look into basket and remove the underlay. Spread it out slowly and purposefully…*

This is a story about Olympia Brown who was born over 100 years ago, in 1835 in Kalamazoo, Michigan.

When Olympia Brown was little, girls weren't supposed to whistle. Girls weren't supposed to climb trees or run fast or catch frogs. But, Olympia did; she did all those things, all those things and more. "You can do whatever a boy can do," her mother and her father told her, and Olympia knew it was true. She climbed trees and ran fast and caught frogs, and when she was in school, she answered the teacher's questions loud and clear.

*Place little girl, tree & frogs on the underlay*

Little girls ought to be quiet," Said one lady in town. "Little girls ought not to make themselves heard." But Olympia did. She had a voice, and she was going to use it, every day.

When Olympia Brown was a teenager, young women weren't supposed to go to leave home, go to college and learn complicated things. But Olympia did; she did all those things and more. Olympia left home and went to Antioch College . She went to class and studied and learned all kinds of complicated things.

*Place Olympia Brown as young woman & Antioch College on underlay*

"Young women ought not to be in college, "said one professor at that school. "But since they are here, they must read their reports. Young women ought not to give speeches from memory, like the men." But Olympia did. When it was her turn to present her report, she rolled up the papers in her hand and said each and every word, loud and clear. Olympia Brown had a voice, and she was going to use it, every day.

*Place rolled up papers on underlay*

When Olympia Brown was in college, women weren't supposed to wear pants. Women weren't supposed to wear anything except very long dresses that came all the way down to their toes. But Olympia wore dresses that came down only past her knees, and under them, she dared to wear pants! "Bloomers" the pants were called, after Amelia Bloomer, the woman who had created them a few years before.

*Place bloomers on underlay*

"Women ought not to show their ankles in public!" exclaimed some of the men. "And women certainly ought not to wear pants!" But Olympia did. She wore her bloomers every day, no matter how much the men sneered.

When Olympia was finished with college, women weren't supposed to be ministers. Women never stood up in front of a congregation and talked about God. But Olympia did; she did all those things and more. Olympia graduated from the Theological School at St. Lawrence University in 1863, and she was ordained as a Universalist minister in June of that year, the second woman ever to be officially ordained by that church. She became the Reverend Olympia Brown.

*Place Theological School at St. Lawrence on underlay*

"Women ought not to speak in public," said a minister at that time. "Women ought not to take the pulpit or discuss the nature of God." But the Reverend Olympia Brown did. During the next thirty-five years, she was a minister in five different congregations, and she visited other congregations, too. She took the pulpit in every single one, and she spoke on the nature of God and love, and she did an excellent job. Olympia Brown had a voice, and she used it, every day.

*Place church pulpit on underlay*

When Olympia Brown was born, women weren't allowed to vote. Women weren't allowed to have any say in who was elected president or senator or mayor of the town. But Olympia had something to say about that. Olympia had a lot to say about that. “We cannot say that the United States is a democracy as long as women cannot vote,” said Olympia Brown.

She traveled all over the state of Kansas in a horse and buggy, giving speeches to convince people that women deserved the right to vote. She wrote hundreds of letters. She spoke to the representatives and senators in Congress. She marched in parades.

*Place Kansas, horse & buggy & letters on underlay*

Olympia and her friends worked hard to get women the right to vote. Olympia Brown had a voice, and she used it every day... every day for over fifty years.

And finally, when Olympia Brown was old, women were allowed to vote. In November

of 1920, when Olympia was eighty-five years old, she voted for the very first time.

Olympia had always had a voice, and she'd used it to make sure that she--and all the other women in the United States --had a vote as well.

*Place voting ballot & older Olympia Brown on underlay*

***Wondering Questions:***

*I wonder if you have seen or heard any of this before?*

*I wonder what part of this story you liked the best?*

*I wonder what part of this story is most important?*

*I wonder where you could be in the story?*

*I wonder what it was like not to be able to vote?*

*I wonder how you use your voice?*

*I wonder if you ever spoke up for something important?*

*I wonder if this lesson reminds you of any of our Unitarian Universalist Promises?*

*I wonder where the Spirit of Love and Mystery could be in this story?*

Now watch how I put this story away, so that if you make it your work, you will be able to get it ready for the next person.

*Place each object back into the basket in reverse order, naming them as you go, and then fold up the underlay and place on the basket before you take the basket to the shelf.*

Now watch where I go to put this basket away so that you will know where it is found in the classroom.

*Place basket on shelf.*

***Layout:***

