

WEBVTT

1
00:00:05.775 --> 00:00:07.475
One of the early invaluable lessons

2
00:00:07.545 --> 00:00:10.275
that I learned in my formation was in a conversation

3
00:00:10.275 --> 00:00:12.435
with my internship supervisor, Kendall Gibbons.

4
00:00:12.615 --> 00:00:15.835
We were talking about the power of worship

5
00:00:16.495 --> 00:00:20.675
and the intentionality that's required to hold it.

6
00:00:20.935 --> 00:00:24.595
And the metaphor that came was from the Sourcers Apprentice

7
00:00:24.745 --> 00:00:26.475
from Fantasia, the Disney movie.

8
00:00:26.815 --> 00:00:30.355
And I think about that metaphor with worship a lot, that

9
00:00:30.935 --> 00:00:34.115
we are invoking power, like saying, well,

10
00:00:34.155 --> 00:00:36.035
I don't believe in God or traditional God,

11
00:00:36.045 --> 00:00:38.835
there is no excuse because we have touched power.

12
00:00:39.695 --> 00:00:44.095
And it requires competence, thoughtfulness,

13
00:00:45.085 --> 00:00:49.535
inclusion, and in the literal sources pers way like how

14
00:00:49.535 --> 00:00:50.935
to bring it back home, right?

15
00:00:50.995 --> 00:00:53.535
How to end it and to hold that space.

16
00:00:53.885 --> 00:00:55.335
It's an incredible privilege.

17
00:00:55.795 --> 00:00:57.455
And one of the valuable lessons is

18
00:00:57.455 --> 00:01:00.335
that we take it really seriously that we now mail it in.

19
00:01:01.035 --> 00:01:02.335
We do not start the spell

20
00:01:02.335 --> 00:01:03.535
without knowing how to end the spell.

21
00:01:04.235 --> 00:01:07.935
The spaces where I experience ministry the most fulfilling

22
00:01:08.435 --> 00:01:10.775
are spaces where I feel like, yes, there's a time

23
00:01:11.755 --> 00:01:15.255
and there's also room to go where the spirit leads.

24
00:01:15.675 --> 00:01:17.855
And so, oh, we need to sing the song three more times.

25
00:01:17.965 --> 00:01:19.735
Okay, we're gonna sing the song three more times.

26
00:01:20.475 --> 00:01:22.455
I'm listening and I'm receiving all of this.

27

00:01:22.515 --> 00:01:24.615

And the thing that stands out most to me is

28

00:01:25.025 --> 00:01:27.135

where there is space for breath and spirit.

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00:01:28.245 --> 00:01:32.455

That to me is where the, the, the power comes in, where

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00:01:32.455 --> 00:01:33.575

that's able to, to flourish.

31

00:01:34.125 --> 00:01:36.815

It's a real lesson that I learned is, is it you don't know

32

00:01:36.815 --> 00:01:38.055

what people are bringing into the room.

33

00:01:38.695 --> 00:01:41.375

I, it took me a long time to learn what that really meant,

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00:01:41.675 --> 00:01:45.975

uh, and that the consistent elements to me that need

35

00:01:45.975 --> 00:01:47.895

to be in a worship service are, are that,

36

00:01:48.045 --> 00:01:52.255

that it is welcoming, that it is as authentic as possible

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00:01:52.255 --> 00:01:55.575

with, with all the various meanings of that word,

38

00:01:56.635 --> 00:01:58.495

and that it's, it's well done.

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00:01:59.395 --> 00:02:01.935

So we get feedback and it, it is like, it is a variety

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00:02:01.995 --> 00:02:05.055

of feedback and you can get in the same week.

41
00:02:05.655 --> 00:02:09.695
I loved that. I hated that, you know, from different people.

42
00:02:10.275 --> 00:02:11.695
So it's that like, um, knowing

43
00:02:11.695 --> 00:02:15.055
that there's just this huge diversity of people of all ages,

44
00:02:15.465 --> 00:02:17.135
identities and preferences

45
00:02:17.955 --> 00:02:21.815
and theologies that come to this space every Sunday

46
00:02:22.285 --> 00:02:27.115
that takes people on that arc just by a lot of intentional,

47
00:02:27.415 --> 00:02:29.435
really planning as a team

48
00:02:29.735 --> 00:02:31.755
and conversation of all the elements

49
00:02:32.495 --> 00:02:36.395
Are intention is to create a space where you are held

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00:02:37.135 --> 00:02:39.475
to have the experience you need to have.

51
00:02:40.135 --> 00:02:41.995
And what is the story that we're telling

52
00:02:42.865 --> 00:02:46.875
that keeps you engaged and honors your spirit?

53
00:02:47.855 --> 00:02:51.115
The spaces in Unitarian in my congregation

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00:02:51.115 --> 00:02:56.075

that I've noticed that transformation in worship for folks

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00:02:56.585 --> 00:02:59.885

have come out of those spaces of vulnerability

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00:03:00.195 --> 00:03:02.325

that comes out of personal stories,

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00:03:03.185 --> 00:03:06.605

and them being able to reflect on that, to chew on it,

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00:03:06.605 --> 00:03:07.645

to marinate on it,

59

00:03:08.025 --> 00:03:10.125

and then to come back to you at some point in time.

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00:03:10.225 --> 00:03:12.165

And, and to reflect on that with you,

61

00:03:13.035 --> 00:03:16.645

I've been really appreciating how in the 25 years

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00:03:16.675 --> 00:03:19.415

that I've been junior universalist, that,

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00:03:19.925 --> 00:03:22.815

that there's more space for not just, you know, sort

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00:03:22.815 --> 00:03:24.055

of sitting quietly and thinking,

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00:03:24.315 --> 00:03:26.215

but like having an, an emotional

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00:03:26.235 --> 00:03:30.255

and an embodied experience where, where there's,

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00:03:30.255 --> 00:03:32.615

there's room for that and, and, and for a movement.

68
00:03:32.675 --> 00:03:34.055
And, and for those of us

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00:03:34.055 --> 00:03:38.975
who didn't grow up in like a very waspy setting, that, that,

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00:03:39.005 --> 00:03:41.495
that, that it just feels like it, it's making more space

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00:03:41.515 --> 00:03:45.535
for more people instead of that very white, Protestant way

72
00:03:45.555 --> 00:03:46.655
of being religious.

73
00:03:46.725 --> 00:03:48.895
Because I think where my mind is going is like the

74
00:03:48.895 --> 00:03:50.215
embodied aspect of virtual

75
00:03:50.315 --> 00:03:52.295
and how important that feels to me.

76
00:03:52.645 --> 00:03:55.215
Worship is also, there's a wholeness to it,

77
00:03:55.315 --> 00:03:58.375
and if it's effective, it makes me feel more whole,

78
00:03:58.395 --> 00:04:00.215
you know, integrated mind, body, spirit,

79
00:04:00.955 --> 00:04:03.015
having a container for those emotions.

80
00:04:03.515 --> 00:04:06.735
Um, yeah, I feel like wholeness is a key word.

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00:04:07.475 --> 00:04:08.655

People, I stand outside

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00:04:08.655 --> 00:04:10.295

and greet people, uh, for the 15 minutes

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00:04:10.295 --> 00:04:11.335

before the service starts.

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00:04:12.035 --> 00:04:15.575

And seeing their faces as they come in reminds me

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00:04:16.005 --> 00:04:17.935

that this is actually about their lives.

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00:04:18.485 --> 00:04:21.215

They feel like their individuality is honored

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00:04:21.555 --> 00:04:24.575

and their connection is also honored.

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00:04:25.465 --> 00:04:28.395

Like, oh, I'm not the only one and,

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00:04:29.055 --> 00:04:30.995

and I'm not the same as everybody else.

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00:04:31.965 --> 00:04:33.595

We're there to serve the spirit

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00:04:33.595 --> 00:04:34.955

of liberating love with these people.

92

00:04:35.245 --> 00:04:37.875

We're also not there to make them happy, right?

93

00:04:38.045 --> 00:04:40.755

We're not there that the people in the pews are gonna feel

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00:04:41.305 --> 00:04:42.515

like they've been serviced.

95
00:04:43.335 --> 00:04:45.555
You know, what is the mission that we're trying to serve?

96
00:04:45.885 --> 00:04:47.995
We've been trained to be consumers,

97
00:04:48.615 --> 00:04:52.035
so we have our preferences and we want to be served.

98
00:04:52.455 --> 00:04:56.595
And, and I think part of our role as people

99
00:04:56.695 --> 00:05:00.955
who deeply care about and lead and curate and create

100
00:05:01.535 --> 00:05:05.035
and offer worship, how are we doing it in a way

101
00:05:05.065 --> 00:05:08.955
that helps people let go of that consumer mindset?

102
00:05:10.195 --> 00:05:13.435
I think the moments of power and transcendence

103
00:05:13.455 --> 00:05:17.475
and connection come when the whole, it really shimmers

104
00:05:17.905 --> 00:05:20.315
what erodes at the potential

105
00:05:20.315 --> 00:05:25.125
and possibility much more damaging than consumerism is that

106
00:05:25.275 --> 00:05:26.805
that hyper individualism.

107
00:05:28.305 --> 00:05:31.245
The one way that I feel like we, I we've been trying

108

00:05:31.245 --> 00:05:33.685

to do more of and has been some of the more meaningful parts

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00:05:33.685 --> 00:05:35.685

of service, is to provide more opportunities for people

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00:05:35.785 --> 00:05:37.485

to connect with each other too.

111

00:05:37.485 --> 00:05:40.565

And to have that, that conversation between each other.

112

00:05:40.565 --> 00:05:41.885

Both both sometimes spoken

113

00:05:41.905 --> 00:05:45.565

and sometimes through ritual or action. And let's

114

00:05:45.925 --> 00:05:49.205

Not lose the art of being together

115

00:05:49.385 --> 00:05:51.685

and being, uh, loving to each other.

116

00:05:51.915 --> 00:05:55.765

Worship at its best reveals the connections that bind us

117

00:05:55.765 --> 00:05:57.685

to one another and to that switch beyond

118

00:05:57.685 --> 00:05:58.685

Us. Sure. What is

119

00:05:58.685 --> 00:05:59.205

the purpose

120

00:05:59.225 --> 00:06:02.445

of me sharing this story about being a terrified immigrant?

121

00:06:02.445 --> 00:06:04.325

That I'm not asking you for anything,

122
00:06:04.345 --> 00:06:07.405
but so that you know, this vulnerability, it's so

123
00:06:07.405 --> 00:06:09.285
that you understand who you are

124
00:06:10.105 --> 00:06:12.445
and what is your responsibility of service in the world.

125
00:06:12.955 --> 00:06:14.245
There's something,

126
00:06:14.745 --> 00:06:18.405
and it's magic, it's incredible.

127
00:06:18.785 --> 00:06:21.685
And it takes all of this getting out of our own selves,

128
00:06:21.685 --> 00:06:24.005
getting a sense of community.

129
00:06:24.835 --> 00:06:27.245
What is our story? Where is our power?

130
00:06:28.645 --> 00:06:32.695
What is the container? Where's the wild space,

131
00:06:34.785 --> 00:06:38.365
The fleshiness of it, like we're the high priestess

132
00:06:38.385 --> 00:06:40.765
or the minister or the clergy person

133
00:06:42.525 --> 00:06:46.925
situates me in the, like the narrative of time, right?

134
00:06:47.545 --> 00:06:51.525
And uses our lives, our fleshiness to kind of crack open

135

00:06:52.115 --> 00:06:54.365
meaning out of our fleshiness.

136
00:06:54.665 --> 00:06:57.845
So our lives are used in conversations with the sacred text.

137
00:06:58.025 --> 00:07:00.965
Our lives are used in conversations with the myths.

138
00:07:01.465 --> 00:07:06.005
Um, there's a ritual that might be used to help us explicate

139
00:07:06.065 --> 00:07:08.045
and break open those things, right? This

140
00:07:08.045 --> 00:07:11.325
Whole conversation has really brought to mind for me, like

141
00:07:11.875 --> 00:07:15.725
just what a gift it is to be in worship as a worship leader

142
00:07:15.865 --> 00:07:20.485
and experience the, the big moments of human alchemy

143
00:07:20.485 --> 00:07:22.885
where you just feel that energy, uh,

144
00:07:22.945 --> 00:07:27.435
and that feeling of communal transformation that happens at,

145
00:07:27.435 --> 00:07:31.685
it's like when you know when God is in the room,

146
00:07:32.225 --> 00:07:35.205
is how I would describe it, and what a gift that is.