

4004 Service of the Living Tradition #2

Ministry Dept, UUA

Roll Call and Prayer

Rev. William G. Sinkford

Just as we celebrate the call to ministry and celebrate the beginnings of ministry; just as we give thanks and honor those who are retiring from full-time ministry among us; so also we bless the memory of those ministers who have died since we last gathered. Our ministry is a living tradition, which, in unbroken line, learns and builds from generation to generation. Those of us who continue to answer the call, stand on the shoulders of those who have gone before. As I say the names of those Unitarian Universalist ministers who have died in the past year, remember them; grieve their passing; and give boundless thanks for the gifts, too many to name, with which their ministry blessed us.

Pastoral Prayer

Let us enter the space of silence and honesty known by many names. Let us pray.

Gracious spirit of creation, Spirit of Life, dear God.

We stand with those here, who struggle and grieve. May the love of this gathered community support them, helping to heal their wounded hearts.

We rejoice with those here who celebrate today, marking the passages out of which we weave the fabric of our lives.

And we all give thanks for the gift of our coming together. The opportunity to raise our voices in song, thousands strong. The blessing of learning, more deeply, the power of this community in our lives. So often our lives seem small. Together we feel the potential power that is in us all.

We pray for our hurting world. A world at war with itself. A world seemingly unable to accept that we are all sisters and brothers, a world unable to accept that we are unalterably linked, a world unwilling to acknowledge that there is but one destiny on this tiny blue planet, and that our decisions shape that destiny. We pray for the women and men, Palestinian, Israeli, Afghani, Pakistani, Indian, American and others, who stand in harm's way today.

We pray for our hurting world, where the power of love, which we know in our own lives, seems so often overwhelmed.

There is so much healing to do. So many wrongs to right. So much justice deferred. So much violence to end.

But most, gracious spirit, we pray for ourselves.

We, most of us, live lives of relative privilege and comfort, while so many go hungry.

We, most of us, can make choices, while so many have no choice.

We, most of us, have the luxury of reflection, while for so many survival is a triumph.

Yet, we still long for security and certainty. Uncertainty is our too constant companion.

We still feel loneliness, hurt and fear.

We still hope for peace. Though we know that peace can only come through the door of justice.

We still search for the holy and for wholeness in our lives.

May we, in this gathered community, find a reason to hope and firm ground on which to stand.

May we, here, know love and in our turn be able to offer love to others.

May we, now, find strength to carry on.

May we, in this place, find the holy, the Spirit of Life, which is always waiting for our call.

May we, today, find a space in our hearts to know, know, that we need not walk alone.

So may it be.

Amen.