

(Switch from the scrolling slides to the worship slides)

(Slide 1 = Workshop Name and our names)

Hello and welcome. My name is Anya Sammler-Michael, I serve the Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Sterling. I am joined by the Reverend Nancy McDonald Ladd, who serves the River Road Unitarian Universalist Congregation the Rev. Scott Sammler-Michael who serves the Accotink Unitarian Universalist Church and lives graciously into the moniker - “my better half,” and Paul Roche, who is a longstanding member and the current Board President of our congregation in Sterling.

We bring greetings from our Washington D.C. area congregations - A place where Unitarian Universalism thrives, thanks in part to the powerful evangelical ministry of the Rev. A. Powell Davies and in part to the culture of our region - a culture that refuses to be stymied by seemingly intractable obstacles.

I'd like to read a few statements. I welcome you to stand or raise your hand if the statement resounds with what you are feeling, with what you are experiencing.

(Slide 2 = Statements below)

Talking about politics makes me uneasy.

I am concerned that this workshop is going to turn ugly.

Oh shoot, I'm in the wrong room!

I've had seven cups of coffee and I am still tired!

I really struggle to talk with people who belong to a different political party than mine.

If my congregation became a place where people across the political spectrum were welcome, I would no longer feel welcome.

Thank you. We are blessed by your testimony. We are held by your honesty. May we be worthy of your witness.

...Welcome to our workshop: Beyond Partisan Division - Reaching Out and In. This is the second in a series. We presented the first two years ago in Phoenix - "Crossing Political Borders - Breaking Down Barriers." Why? Why do we continue? I'll start with my story.

(Slide 3 = Photo Unitarian Universalist Society of New Haven)

My story:

RI - CT

Parents found Unitarian Universalism through Theatre ...

Needed to create rocks and clouds and smoke!

Deepened in their engagement.

Aged into Youth Group - parents stopped going.

Sensed it was no longer their home.

Parents are republican.

Their story is not solitary.

Their story informs my ministry.

(Slide 4 = Beyond Labels Image)

We bring you this workshop not to place blame, and most pressingly - not to dwell on the tedious and tenuous issues, but to announce our wholehearted belief that Unitarian Universalism can carve a space sturdy enough to hold difference. We bring you this worship because the ideology that demonizes the partisan other has stolen us, body and soul, one from another. We bring you this workshop because the authority that lays claim on the whole of our identity, the authority that crams the whole of our beauty into the confines of a label - is an unholy authority.

We bring you this workshop because we love you and we love Unitarian Universalism.

(Slide 5 = Covenant)

To guide our time together we've prepared a covenant.

I'll read it through

Be quick to hear and slow to speak

Respect the privacy of those who confide

Speak your truth in love

Absolutely no analogies that rely on Nazis, Fascists, or Stalinist Russia!

:)

Call others, and be willing to be called, back into covenant.

Can we agree to gather within the boundaries of this covenant?

...

We come into this room with strong feelings. We come into this room, brave - ready to wrestle with difficult material. We come into this room

because seven cups of coffee was not enough and we made a wrong turn!

No matter the reason, know you are welcome to bring your full selves here. If you are struck by strong emotions or nagging thoughts. If there is something you want us, the presenters to know, please write it down. We have passed out 3x5 cards.

Use these. Use them to gather your thoughts, to spill your emotions, to catalog your own experience. Use them as prayer cards. We will collect them at the end of our workshop and will tend each with care.

(Slide 6 = Facebook Group Screen Shot)

We are also passing around a clip board.

If you wish to stay in touch - to continue to explore these issues, and to engage the vision of a Unitarian Universalism that challenges the restraints of partisan division, please add your name, your email address, and your facebook name. We have created a facebook group to serve this conversation.

(Slide 7 = “Two Monologues, Anonymous Unitarian Universalists.

With Gratitude to our Actors - Rev. David Keys, Rev. Lynn Strauss)

We begin with an exploration through monologue. Two dear colleagues, the Rev. David Keys and the Rev. Lynn Strauss will portray two anonymous Unitarian Universalists. I'll let them tell you their stories.

Monologue 1 - Rev. David Keys

Monologue 2 - Rev. Lynn Strauss

(Slide # 8 - A Litany of Restoration)

Liturgical Piece - Rev. Anya Sammler-Michael

#576, A Litany of Restoration by Marjorie Bowens-Wheatley (Shared Responsively)

If, recognizing the interdependence of all life, we strive to build community, the strength we gather will be our salvation. If you are black and I am white,

It will not matter.

If you are female and I am male,

It will not matter.

If you are older and I am younger,

It will not matter.

If you are progressive and I am conservative,

It will not matter.

If you are straight and I am gay,

It will not matter.

If you are Christian and I am Jewish,

It will not matter.

If we join spirits as brothers and sisters, the pain of our aloneness will be lessened, and that does matter.

(Together) In this spirit, we build community and move toward restoration.

(Slide #9 - Title and Speaker)

Reflection - Rev. Scott Sammler-Michael

(Slide #10 - Title and Speaker)

Reflection - Paul Roche

(Slide #11 - Title and Speaker)

Reflection - Rev. Nancy McDonald Ladd

(Slide 12 - Prayer Image)

Liturgical Piece - Rev. Anya Sammler-Michael

Questions and Answers

(Slide 13 - Gratitude Image)

Closing - Rev. Anya Sammler-Michael