

Enriching Online Worship webinar transcript

This transcript accompanies [the webinar video on WorshipLab](#).

Marcia McFee 00:26

Let's try out something that I want to use at one point in this webinar. I'm going to share my screen and you're going to see—let me just put it on here and we'll get it. This requires you to go to a different window on your device or use your phone. But this is a pretty cool little thing, where we get to share and see each other's responses. “So glad to be together. How are you doing friends?”

So you go to menti.com and put in—there's a little gonna be a little box just to put in that code. You don't have to sign up for anything or enter your information. You just enter that number. And then you can see there are three slots, you can put three different words in, or one or whatever. And you just put that in and it's going to, in real time, begin to populate this in a word cloud so we can see how we're doing. So let's see how this works. So go ahead if you can, as you're coming on and give this a try. It's a way for us to feel virtually our presence in the cloud in a little more tangible way, so—

Oh, yeah, here it comes. Grateful connected. joyful, zoomed out. Yeah, that's for sure. Thanks. Tired indeed. Oh, excited. Fantastic.

Yeah, and so lots of "grateful" because that's—as you know, in a word cloud whatever gets the most is the biggest. So we can know that a lot of people are putting in that word grateful and love that.

Ah, stressed and busy and unsure. exhausted. Yes. All the things, all the things. Connected. That's awesome.

Erika Hewitt 02:24

In more ways than one. If you have just arrived, we're so glad you're here and—this is Erika Hewitt speaking—what you're seeing is an invitation, if you have another device or another window open, to tell us right now, in the moment, to build this word cloud and tell us how you are. You are not signing up for anything. So anyone can go to menti.com and enter these numbers. You don't need to make a password or anything like that. We're just doing this in real time. And some of you are just using the chat to do this and that's fine too. Welcome again.

Marcia McFee 03:17

That's great. We'll come back to this. That's great. Thank you so much. Oh, I see a question about using Menti yourselves. Yeah, you just go to mentimeter.com and get a free account. It's so cool. Super easy. Okay. All right. I'll put it back on your screen once more. Yeah, yeah, sure.

Erika Hewitt 03:56

Welcome those of you who are just rolling in: we're so glad you're here. We're just in sort of like the little gathering space and over the next minute or so, we're inviting you to go to menti.com. There's nothing you else you need to do; you'll have the chance to enter three words

Marcia McFee 04:20

Enter that code—75 58 70—and it pops up little place for you to enter words and tell us how you're doing.

Erika Hewitt 04:28

Paul, you are right. We are sharing our whole screen right now. So you might have to do this on another device or if you hit escape, you will be able to shrink the fullscreen that we are presenting to you. I know it's frustrating, but Mm hmm. Wonderful.

Marcia McFee 04:58

Yeah, all the feels. It's all good. It's all okay. Yeah. Yeah. It is true that we can be grateful and overwhelmed at the same time. Absolutely.

Erika Hewitt 05:19

We can be hopeful and worried at the same time.

Marcia McFee 05:25

Mm hmm. exhausted and energized at the same time. Wow.

Erika Hewitt 05:39

Look at that build. So, one last reminder about the chat. Because this is set up as a webinar, your chat may be defaulting to all panelists. So some of you are saying hello, but instead of everyone seeing it, unfortunately, it's going just to the panelists, so make sure that the drop down menu gets clicked over to everyone in meeting.

Good morning. We're going to begin to—we're going to move away from the word cloud just at this moment, and we're going to just have an arriving time. People are still

rolling in. We're going to sort of move into a prelude. And so we do see your wonderful chats coming in. We do see some questions, but we're going to invite you and just give people a couple minutes more to get here and we're gonna have a—just a gathering time here.

(singing) 07:03

We traveled, we traveled to be right here where we are; reach out a hand. No need to fear 'cause all we need is right here is right here. The night was dark but the day is bright...All we need; all we need is right here...

Marcia McFee 10:18

Well, greetings, friends. I'm Marcia McFee. And I'm just so grateful to be with you.

As people are coming on, we had had a little question about how we all are. And one of the things that is so true is that we all are many things right now. And so here's a look at what people have put in as we gathered. And it is true that we can be grateful and overwhelmed at the same time. And that we can have all the feels; and so we're going to honor that and bless that here in this moment as we begin.

I'm actually going to give you another question that you can do on menti.com. And that is we're gonna bless each other. So It's a different code. And if you already did this, there's a place where you can just say, you know, refresh and do another question. And so it's really super easy. You don't have to sign up for anything. You don't have to enter your information. Just go to menti.com on your phone or another window and, and then use the code 53 22 04 and you can add words or phrases of blessing. What words or phrases of blessing would you extend to each other? and then we'll continue with the with the introductions and the welcomes. Thank you. Thank you so much. Beautiful.

May you be well; may you be safe. There's a love holding you. Compassion and patience, love and peace and hope and resilience. Ah, good sleep, yes, to be grounded.

So many blessings across the miles in the virtual cloud that signify to us right here in a tangible way in a visible way. hopefulness and community and stillness.

You are enough. May you be safe. Company comfort and grounding and you are not alone. Calmness and gratitude.

I can hear the virtual words coming from all of you, even as I see them. It's beautiful. We are connected across this country and across this world. Sending out this love to

each other and to all that we meet all that we come in "contact" with. put quotes around that contact. In these days it's a little different. Beautiful.

Blessed be; courage, kindness and comfort. Yes, thank you friends, you can keep putting words in. We will come back to this at the end and see all of our blessings after we've spent this blessed time together and so

I hold and lift up all these things, all the ways that we are feeling and all of the things that we are communicating to each other. Blessed be.

Erika Hewitt 14:14

This is a great time if you have your chalice. Welcome everyone. If you have a chalice, would you please light it? If you have the WorshipWeb app, you have a virtual chalice. Your words of blessing, your words of arriving and gathering, are so good to see; so good to take in. May this time remind us of our strong beautiful connections, one to the other; one to the other.

Welcome, everyone. Let's just take a breath together. It is so joyful to see your names; to see your greetings. Many of you have been using the chat box to—make sure that it's on panelists and attendees—you're saying hello to us. You're saying hello to each other.

I'm Reverend Erika Hewitt and I'm the Minister of Worship Arts for our Unitarian Universalist Association. And before we dive in, I want to just do a just a few remarks to frame this time and to let you know how we plan to spend this time that you have taken out of your day to be with us. As you can tell there—you may have gotten my email last night—we're not going to be seeing your faces or hearing your voices. So that chat is oh so important. Whether you are sending a message to just us or, as you're flipping down through that menu drop box, to panelists and attendees, to everyone. This is being recorded. So if you wish that someone in your community or congregation got to learn with us today, this opportunity will be published on WorshipWeb.

I'm reminded, as we are moving through these days, and our attention can easily be pulled in so many directions, including to the firings in our reptile brains, I'm aware that sometimes we read the headline and we don't really have the capacity or bandwidth to read the story. So I just want to remind you what we're doing here today, and what we will probably not be doing. And yet we are finding ways to connect to each other; a next step might be to do what you might want to do.

What we're doing today is, simply, Marcia and I will be having a conversation and Marcia will be presenting more tools and ideas and framing as our worship lives are

being transformed. How we can best attend to those emerging needs, with new tools. We know that what you need is not to feel like you're not doing enough or not smart enough or don't have the the tricks that you need. So we really want this to be a time of togetherness. This is, however, not going to focus much on some of the very technical questions that people have. So you're free to ask them and we may sort of reflect back to you ways to, to pursue that.

But I will be periodically be putting some links in the chat. And before I introduce Marcia more fully I just want to name that Reverend Sarah Gibb Millspaugh is our startup tech host. So if anything is happening in the chat, or you need help, Sarah is monitoring the chat. She's looking for your questions and feedback. She will be sorting through those and sort of triage them to us, and we're really grateful to Sarah for doing that.

For those of you who don't know Dr. Marcia McFee, many of us in the UU fold have been learning from her. I myself, almost everything I've learned about worship was from Marcia at one point. Marcia first entered really the UU universe and interacting and teaching us back at the contemporary worship conference in San Diego. well over a decade ago. Most recently, she led a teaching segment for clergy two years ago at the Clergy Institute. I have spent many, many hours with her *Worship Workshop* book as well as her new *Think Like a Filmmaker*. And so I'm going to let Marcia say a little bit more about her but what I want you to know is that it is a gift and a privilege that she's with us that she knows Unitarian Universalism, and Unitarian Universalists, and—
Marcia I would love to have you say anything more you'd like to say before we dive in.

Marcia McFee 19:12

Sure. Well, not only do I know, I love knowing love Unitarian Universalism and Unitarian Universalists. It has been such a pleasure to get to know so many of you. And I continue to get to know new folks through my seminary teaching because I always get Unitarians in my seminary class. And so I'm just really glad to be with you. I've been on several webinars in the last three weeks. And what I want you to know right away, is that, I mean, we already you've seen it, you heard a song about it: You are enough, and what you're doing is enough. And I want to be here to help excite you about possibilities that you might not have thought of, and no one size fits all. And what people really want is just to have their community connect. And so whether that's over the phone in a good way—phone tree or good old fashioned phone conference—or whether that's as complex as the most fancy digital kind of thing. It really, really doesn't matter. What matters is that we connect. And I have seen over the last two weeks, I have seen people giving so much, and making the effort and doing things that they've never thought that they would do or learn about. And it's all just a really

amazing things that people are doing. And so that's my main message today. So I want you to just, if you can breathe out the any anxiety you might be feeling about, “Oh my gosh, she's gonna, you know, put all these ideas and I won't be able to do them all.” And that's true. And I want you to breathe out that anxiety because you don't want to do it all and nobody can or should. So I'm just so glad to be invited. Thank you, Erika.

Erika Hewitt 21:12

I'm hearing; I'm seeing some questions. So those of you who are wondering about more information, just know that the information that I put in the chat, and these links, we'll try to repeat that. I know the chat is going by very, very quickly. So Sarah and I are making sure that this doesn't just zoom by. We're going to keep putting that in the chat.

And I'll say more about WorshipWeb. We're going to take almost like a—not a seventh inning stretch, but a little intermission in about half an hour where I'll be doing a tiny little tour so that so that you know how not to get lost when you go looking on WorshipWeb.

So what I'd like to do is start by asking, in this conversation with Marcia, I would like to have some talk first about how this pandemic—and all of the restrictions and limitations that it presents—how this is changing our needs and what our communities most need, regardless of faith, regardless of denomination. What is it that our faith communities most need as we start to shift our worship life online?

Marcia McFee 22:36

So I want to invite people to be—I'm not the only voice of wisdom here, I have been paying a lot of attention, maybe more attention than you all had bandwidth for, to what a lot of people are doing across the country and across the world in terms of their worship, but we're also resources for each other. So let me say that the chat could also, instead of being primarily a place for questions for us, it could also be a place for you to resource each other. That's one of the wonderful things about being on with 253 people at the moment. Add the three of us—256 people at the moment—is that we can brainstorm each other. I did a webinar yesterday and we invited people to brainstorm with each other ideas to answer the very questions that we might be putting out there. So it's not just coming from me, it's coming from you. And then we say to the chat, and we were able to make that available. So this could be a really amazing experience of crowdsourcing. So, I want to encourage that so that it's not just questions, but it's also, you know, resourcing each other. So I think, what we can assume, and what I have seen, is that the same thing that we're needing in this moment, and that is to, to see each other to connect with each other in some sort of format. In this virtual format,

it's—you know, creating sacred space or delineating ritual space is one of the things that we humans have in our DNA.

You know, I'm a neuroscience geek part of my ritual studies—PhD—was around neuroscience and kinesiology in the ways that our bodies are just—what do we actually, what do we need? And I think we can assume that the need is the same need that drives us to come together in actual worship spaces on a specific time.

24:31 So I've been encouraging people, and I think it's borne out in anecdotal evidence, that continuing to have a particular time when people will get together—even if you're pre-recording—to livestream at a particular time: to have that as close to the rhythm that people are used to. So your time of worship—if you are just going to be together anyway, physically as we normally would do—to keep that rhythm, because one of the things we can offer, and that ritual offers is that regularity, that sense of rhythm. And the sense of rhythm of our week can really be aided by keeping that very similar to the ways that we, in our lives—not much about our lives is the same right now, but we can offer that. And so delineating time and space and offering that rhythm, I think, is one of the things that people are needing, and that we can provide through what we do.

Erika Hewitt 25:32:

Could I provide a testimonial about that? My testimonial is from a completely different arena in life, which is that one of my, one of my joys, because of the way my body works, is time at the gym. And of course, that's not been possible. And I realized this week that I could be doing my regular physical activity with amazing high-profile professionals anywhere in the world. And what I'm doing instead is getting on a really “awfully-managed, everyone's unmuted, you can't hear the music class” with my instructor and my community. Because it turns out, I actually don't want the fancy-schmancy “go anywhere in the world to the celebrity.” What I want is just the—even if it's not super high quality, there is something very powerful about being, knowing that we're all doing it together.

Marcia McFee 26:33:

That's right. Absolutely. And that is the perfect example. So that that ritual time you know, keeping a regularity of that? It doesn't mean you can't add stuff—you know, a lot of people are adding daily sort of meditations, that kind of thing but—to you know, if it's Sunday, when you usually meet together to keep that time, but also ritual space. And so we're, you know, every day is different. The last two weeks, a lot of people have been in their worship space, and live streaming, Facebook Live, whatever, from their ritual space. Now, in California here, we've been—you know, it's a stay at home kind of

thing. And so, there are some churches who are still going to go in with a very, like, basic camera person and other person to continue to do that in the space. But gathering the whole worship team, or you know, all the worship associates or whatever, is not as advisable anymore. And so, there's many people who are actually just going to do it from home.

One of the things that I've been suggesting is that if you can take your chalice—if it's not like, you know, nailed to the floor, or it's just so huge that you can't—one of the things is to bring some of the pieces that you can transport into your home space, so that you can create a scenario where there are some familiar objects.

One of the wonderful things about the brain is that we can access memories which actually give us the same feel of being in a particular space just having seen either a picture or an object that is of that space. And so our brains can really help us in this time, and help to recreate that that same feel of what it means or looks like or feels like to be together physically, just simply by allowing us to access the memories through these objects or colors or pieces of fabric, or whatever it is that that people are used to seeing in their space.

Erika Hewitt 28:37

I love what what De has said, De Vandiver, who serves in Louisiana, because it replicates something that Reverend Karen Johnston, who serves in New Jersey has done which is that things that—well, first of all, what De is saying is that they've filmed, they've made a video of a lighting of the chalice and extinguishing so that if it can't be brought home; and I know that what Karen Johnston has done is—there are beautiful banners that that hang on the chancel and she actually brought those home—they're not huge, they're like, like you know half of a shower curtain size—and is setting those up. These touchstones, the visual touchstones are so so powerful and I know Marcia in your work, you frequently teach about not just the visual signals, but the visceral things that kinesthetically bring us back into our bodies.

Marcia McFee 29:33

Three V's: the verbal, the visual, the visuals: it's everything we hear, everything we see, and everything we do. So it's the three V's; easy to remember. But yeah, if we can bring, I'm going to call them artifacts, but they're not like museum artifacts, but those pieces that will remind us, even if we're in a different space, we can set up; we can stage a little area around us even if, like you said, a banner right behind us that feels familiar; or use photographs or prerecorded videos, that kind of thing.

I'm about to go help a friend of mine; in a couple of days, they're making that switch from sanctuary to leading or doing a prerecorded and leading from home this week because of the stay at home order; and so we're going to do what's called B roll, right? And "B roll" is just to get a lot of...static shots but of actual candles flickering you know it's it is video... but also some movement shots so even walking into the into the sanctuary right so we get that visceral sense of being there, or a shot where some people may go up to the chancel and even a shot of the app in the chancel area looking out at the empty pews so you can show that as you pray for people. "We're not gathered together right now but I can I can see your faces. I can"—of course we know where people sit, right? <laughter> But you know, just being real about it. Not pretending to do just, you know, just what we had planned to do in worship, but just in a different space, but actually being real about the situation and using our creativity, to set up the scenario to say, you know, to acknowledge what's happening.

Erika Hewitt 31:33

So I want to come back to that I want to come back to the real and the genuine. I know there's even more to say about that. But in talking about the visceral, let's just go back for a moment because it's not just these objects. I love what Chris, some of this is going by very quickly. Chris Rothbauer said that they begin worship with the ringing of a bell and they've recorded the sound of the ringing of the bell and even shot some footage of the coffee urns. You know, these things are so familiar. We don't even think about, you know, what is it that makes it feel like oh, this is our church home? Well, it could be a sound, it could be something that doesn't necessarily live on the chancel or the altar, and Amy Carol Webb is saying, we took a video coming through the front door looking at the name tags, looking at the hymnals. And we forget that that's so comforting.

Marcia McFee 32:30

Yeah, absolutely comforting. It takes us right there; we can be right there in our minds, in our brains. You know, another thing about this sort of brain function is that when we attach our lived experience and our memories of being in that space with this moment and those videos of seeing those name tags and seeing the hymnal rack and coming in, the next time we come in? Guess what? This sense of the moment that we felt connected virtually, will now be connected to seeing those nametags, and...we're creating this layer of gratefulness, I think an appreciation for actually, you know, something that just getting our name tag has been just "mindless," so to speak, right? We stop paying attention to it. It's functional. It's just, you know what we do. But now when we get back, and we do that, it's going to add this layer of meaning and appreciation that was not there before. And so it's both ways, right? It's creating these layers of meaning. And that's why it's so important to offer these images. So that we make these connections between the past the present, and the future.

Erika Hewitt 33:59

A couple of a couple of things I want to highlight and as we start to pivot a little bit: one is don't forget that in about 15 minutes, we're going to take a brief pause so I can tell you what's on tap from your Unitarian Universalist Association and some resources that we might be able to provide. Because I'm seeing some questions. I also want to acknowledge we're seeing a lot in the chat about music. And what I'm going to suggest is that after our little break, in the second half of our conversation, we talk about all of the ways that we're struggling and learning with music and song.

What I'd like to do right now is come back to what Marcia said just a few minutes ago about being real, about being authentic, and how important it is to—when we are creating online gatherings—not just to tap into the ritual comforts and to find the time when we're all together, but to be just really vulnerable enough to be real and genuine and authentic to the situation, as opposed to thinking we need to do it the way we always have. Marcia, do you want to talk a little bit about that and what you've seen in all of your attending online worship recently?

Marcia McFee 35:25

Yeah. Let me show you some pictures. I spent the first week that people really were mostly online, or getting there there—there were still some churches that were meeting unadvisedly. But anyway, I spent six hours on Facebook Live, like surfing from East Coast to West Coast. You know, all of these different scenarios. So let me just... we'll talk about this "being real" kind of thing.

Okay, so I visited many, many things. And one of the things I want to say...I think that people want to see their pastors, their musicians, their, whenever possible. And that that was a big question early on. I think that probably most of us are not asking this question anymore. But there were some people saying, Why don't we consolidate our efforts, and those people already set up for live stream? I think people were just kind of freaking out. Like, "I don't know anything about live streaming." So they were thinking, maybe we should just send our people to somebody who does it well, and I just, I really believe that the people who are making the effort, no matter how basic, it's really important, because people—as Erika was saying—we want to be connected to our communities. And that is so very important.

I want to just say that, this past Sunday I happened upon a woman who was a mentor of mine, in my youth, she was one of the youth leaders and then she later in later life became a pastor and she's pastoring little country churches. I think she has like what we call a Methodism 3-point charge. And she was just set up with her phone, you could

tell she just had her phone propped up on something. She put herself in front of a wall that had, you know, some of her beloved objects on it. And, and she just, she was just like, in the chat, she was recognizing people. She was praying for them by name. She was just talking to them and—you know, she's been through some difficulty. Recently, she had chemo and just as she got through chemo, her daughter and grandchild were killed in an auto accident. So she's now got her surviving grandson with her. So the grandson was there and doing some of the liturgical responses and, and she was talking to these folks like there was nothing left to lose. And knowing her story, you know, that's what I noticed and I think that's what people want: is just that personal connection.

38:18 I think it's a connection combination of being right in the moment: speaking to people who are there, perhaps by name if you're in a smaller community, but no, you're not going to get to everybody's name. I had a pastor say to me, "Well, I was trying to pray prayers from the chat and I missed one and I got an email that said, You missed my—" <laughter> Okay, well, we're all dealing with anxiety in different ways, but it's a combination of that really personal thing but also having some of those ritual components that feel familiar.

You know, FreeConferencePro.com, just on the phone for those of you who have aging congregations and it's just too much for them to figure it out. Although I have churches who are sending out—in safe ways—youth tech teams, from their church to people to get people set up to be able to watch online. You know, there's everything from shooting from the back of the sanctuary. This was in that first week when, you know, there were still some people in the pews, this was a highly unsuccessful thing because the camera never moved. And you couldn't hear what they were saying. So better to just err on the side of, we don't need to see the whole sanctuary AND test and make sure that you're being—and what I mean by successful is just Can you be heard, can you can you communicate?

Then there were people who were putting in the shot, you know, the screens, so that they could use the words because they didn't have the fancy technology to do a screen and a screen, frame and a frame, kind of thing. But then they would zoom in when there was time for the sermon and that was really effective.

Let's see, oh, there's—you'll recognize Reverend Karen, at Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Northern Nevada. Hi, Karen. I watched some of theirs. But what was really effective was when the preachers, especially in the preaching moment, or the meditation moment, whatever you want to call it, was looking right into the camera. And one of the funky things that I saw was that people thought they were if they were

using their phones, sometimes people watch themselves right here, instead of looking into the camera, which is on the end of the phone, and so you got I'm going to do this <looks away from camera.. So you got people talking like this, and so you're not really looking at people and it's really funky. It's kind of weird.

Erika Hewitt 40:49

I can't see you, Marcia. So do that when—

Marcia McFee 40:50

You're right. Anyway, okay. You get what I'm saying? Look right into the know where the camera is. You should be able to see my slides and have a little window, but I don't know maybe you don't.

So there were some people who were just doing "write it from home," and very basic and that was that was great. But you do want to think about things like: Is the light you know, sitting on the top of my head? Check out your scene beforehand. Some people had the camera so far back, the laptop so far back, that they were getting the top of their head and the ceiling rather than their full—So, you know, I saw many, many different things: the fireside chat kind of thing, right, that worked. It was very comforting for her congregation. So discerning, making sure that, you know, if you're on Facebook Live... on the left is what was actually showing on Facebook Live *<image on screen is sideways>* and I just I twisted it so that we can see them.

And this was a group of people just around their computer because they were they were getting the same kind of energy they do in the in their sanctuary, which is the verbal and the amens and the Yes—you know, to each other—and so it's also about, How can you keep the sort of energy that you have in your worship? Now these people, probably unless they're all sequestered together, they won't be doing this anymore. But, you know, it's also important to think about: What's the kind of energy that, particularly this church, needed to sustain?

And then some people were just doing a buddy bench: saying "I'm here," and this was a campus pastor, so somebody who's just in campus ministry, and so they don't have a regular time. And so what she was doing was just buddy chat, and from the same bench every time.

As you can see, it's just a lot of different things that were happening and what's most real is what's going to be most authentic for your congregation. There was a congregation that did a processional of their light—their usual processional—through an empty sanctuary but for their community that was important. That's something they

do every day. Sunday and it was something they wanted to use that as a reassurance, but they didn't pretend them that you know that they were talking to a roomful of people.

Erika Hewitt 43:25

Let me follow up on a few things you've said; again, I'm sort of winnowing some of some great stuff from the chat. So I'm going to bounce back and forth here between different layers of what we're talking about. From a purely functional standpoint, I love Susan Sherman's note: it's very hard sometimes to remember to look here in the camera and not here at yourself. So Susan's talking about putting googly eyes next to the camera, so that you remember where to look.

I also just want to let you know that pastor Sarah Skochko in Oregon has—I'm going to put this in the chat—made a wonderful video about how to use Zoom. Right? So because some of our folks don't realize that we're, as Sarah says, we're all learning how much nose hair our pastor has. <laughter> It's a hilarious video and it's wonderful.

But a couple of other things: We do have some concerns rippling through about what it means for privacy, when there might be tension between a religious professional who says, "We really want this to be available to everyone. We want this to go far and wide"... and yet there may be joys and sorrows being lifted up where people's privacy is on the verge of being shredded, or who are losing their privacy.

And then let me just say the other thing that we're seeing is conversation about congregations who are collaborating: either taking turns or shifting the burden. And when that happens, what some of you are reading in the chat is how important it is for each congregation, to have those sort of touchstones; those important symbols that belong to them that are uniquely theirs. And it can be a little bit—it can take some adjustment to be online with two or more congregations and not know everyone, and there is a little bit of loss of intimacy. And I think what I'm seeing is some comments that we would rather have the intimacy of this being, in this frightening time, of it being our congregational family; the people we know; the people we need to be with, as opposed to making it fancier and more sophisticated. So your thoughts about that?

Marcia McFee 46:14

Well, that's exactly what I what I said at the top of that last segment and I think that's, that is absolutely true, but people want to be connected with their folks. And that's important.

Now, in terms of privacy, I think that's a really, really good point. And what I have seen churches do is—I'm a both/and person; I'm a multiple choice person. So there are some people who will want to have that connection and, and they don't, it's fine with them if their prayer concerns are on there for all to see. Frankly, there's so many livestreams happening, Facebook Lives happening, that I think people are not really watching other churches. Honestly, I'm like, How many can you?—except for me, you know, I'm dipping on everybody. But there are churches who are using both; They're saying, "Put your concern in the chat or you can send us an email privately and we will pray for you" or, like we have in zoom right here, "You can just send a panelist or you can send a panelists and attendees [a message]." And so to make sure people know how to do that, before you start if you're using Zoom, that's a great way to do it. But you know, to give multiple ways for people to share so that they can gauge whether what they feel okay with.

Erika Hewitt 47:44

Wow, so much really great stuff and tips that are rolling in, and talking about also beyond Sunday morning. Here's what I'm going to suggest. Folks, I am going to invoke that little intermission for right now. And I'm going to—Marcia if it's okay, I'm going to spotlight the video on me and I just want to take some of you through, doo doo doo doo. See, we don't have to be perfect.

Well, that's okay. Let's, I think you can all see me. So what I'd like to do is pause to sort of go back with the things that some of you fear might be lost, and remind you of what's available on the UUA website. Remind you let you know about some things that are coming that may be very helpful to you. And also give a tremendous shout out to Phyllis who just created a tinyURL for that video, the video about how to use how to use Zoom.

Meanwhile, I'm going to trust that Sarah and Marcia are looking through the chat and the questions and they're going to be sort of sifting out what is important. So what might be really important to look at. So what I'd like to do first—and this will only be a couple of minutes—but here is the carrot at the at the end of this. The reward is I just received permission from a cantor to publish her song on WorshipWeb. It's a brand new song; she just created it. It's also brand new to WorshipWeb. So in just a few minutes after my little virtual tour, I'm going to invite us to take in the song to listen to it. It's very short, and then unmuted for us to all just maybe try singing it.

But here's what we're going to do first. Right now, WorshipWeb is growing its collection of material related to this pandemic. <music> That's my phone telling me

that it's time to take our break. And what I've been doing is putting things on our What's New? page.

What I want to show you here is that our What's New? page is right now, this page gets updated almost every day. This is at uaa.org/worship and then you go to over on the left. The Words for Worship page, which usually looks like this. Let me just show it to you. Some of you are here all the time. Some of you might even be saying, "What's WorshipWeb?" And so this is normally what the menu search page looks like. There are 2,520 separate resources on WorshipWeb, and I've got a link here to what's new.

What's here right now is a small collection of chalice lightings, poetry, and opening words. Right below here is the link to that app. And what I want you to know is that if you don't have a smartphone or a tablet, the chalice lighting function on the app works as a web-based app. So I'm going to put that web-based app—which means you can just do it on your browser—so let me put that in here. Yeah, and the things that are coming for WorshipWeb have to do with WorshipLab. WorshipLab is where I put some materials that help you be more effective worship leaders and worship creators. So what you can see here is an empty slot. This is UUA.org/worship/lab.

What I'm telling you is unfortunately, this does not exist yet. But what I'm doing is building a library of videos that you can put into your online worship services. So I'm going to stop sharing for a moment. What I mean by that is videos of the message for all ages. Some of our educators are recording wonderful videos to play for the children or youth. And I've gotten permission to post those and I just need to make sure they're captioned. I have a few brief videos of chalices being lit and that joys and sorrows table that you saw if you arrived in this webinar early, so there will be a video library.

But the thing that we know so many of you are asking for is clarity and lists about permissions and copyright copyrighted hymns. So I want you to know that our goal is in the next week to have a separate list on WorshipWeb of every hymn in our three hymnals—*Singing the Living Tradition*, *Singing the Journey*, and *Las voces del camino*—that can be used without seeking any additional permission. We know that you need that. We know that. Matthew Johnson has done a great service in getting us halfway to that list. So we just we know we know we know that you need this and we're trying our best. Let me before I take you to Linda Hirshhorn song. I'm going to give you some links. Again, I've gotten a request that I emailed these links out to you. I will email these links to you later, but I want you to have them right now. So just a second Yes, go ahead.

Sarah Gibb Millspough 54:17

If I might add as you do that, I could just quickly point folks to—we have some technical guidance on streaming. And I'll share the screen real quick here; show you the link. My name is Sarah Gibb Millspaugh, your tech host, but I'm on our congregational life staff. And I've been working on building up resources for Covid-19, as well.

So let me just show you real quick, our technical guide here. It's in our leadership library, which is kind of like WorshipWeb except for leaders. And let me get to the top here. It's a guide to streaming Sunday services, meetings and classes. And this is just uua.org/leadership/library/streaming. And every time we add a resource, it gets added to this guide. So there's lots of content here, like streaming Sunday services, technical tips, worship planning. We're definitely gonna have some links to WorshipWeb and this video when it's done. Guidance, some streaming to Facebook, live YouTube, live, zoom, etc. Our IT staff and web team have been hard at work getting this all updated as well as a number of other staff and people in the fields so that we can have the best technical guidance. Thanks, folks.

Erika Hewitt 55:44

Thank you, Sarah. Just a second. Let me just say a word about WorshipWeb before I take you to the song. In order for something to be published on WorshipWeb, the author, the composer, the creator, has to agree that it can be used by any UU community in any setting including livestream. This greatly reduces the list of what we can reasonably publish. Understandably, there are people who don't want their material to be used in that way or altered in that way or live streamed in that way. So there are less formal collections of material being curated—for lack of a better word—for which those permissions have not necessarily been pursued. And I can see Wendy Bartel asking if Wendy should post that link. I'm going to suggest that Wendy should. So, Wendy, go ahead. There's like a Google Doc that's being used to do that.

What I'd like to do right now is, as we prepare to shift back into conversation, and as we prepare to talk about music, a lot of you have questions. So I'd like to just share this audio with you. Let me let me put this sheet music up; I'm going to share my screen. I'm going to let you look at Linda Hirschhorn's sheet music. I'm going to play her singing this on four different tracks, and then—stay unmuted—I'm going to invite you if you want to just play around with singing it because I found that when I started singing the song, my heart grew much lighter. So just give me one second to tell this to go away.

Here we go. I'm gonna play the audio and then I'm going to come back to this.

(singing) 58:18

In these hard times, there will always be singing...we'll always be saying always be seeing in these times in these times, there will always be saying, always be singing in these hard times....

Erika Hewitt 59:40

If you will bear with me, I will play that one more time. And again if you're muted you are welcome to sing along.

(singing) 59:58

In these times there will always be singing.....

Erika Hewitt 1:01:25

So we are so grateful to Linda Hirshhorn and I am so grateful to my colleague Lisa Kynvi, who sent me that song and connected me to Linda. The chat is reminding me that the Association for Unitarian Universalist Music Ministries, or AUUMM, has also been doing wonderful work at contacting some of our kindred composers and musicians who are giving their permission to use their music in livestream worship.

I also just want to let you know that Skinner House and I, together with we hope AUUMM are in the process of consulting copyright lawyers to seek greater clarity, greater emerging wisdom about music and livestream worship. So all the time, your Unitarian Universalist Association is on top of your needs and we are moving as quickly and as efficiently as we can—which is not always as quickly as I think some of you would hope. <laughter> So let's come back to the conversation. We have ample time, Marcia, for you to lift up any of the things that you're reading, seeing, to keep talking about this. Would you please help us do that?

Marcia McFee 1:02:58

Yeah, I've been going—the chat is just like a goldmine: sourcing each other and fantastic, fantastic things. So I just want to say to Erika and Sarah, do not stop this meeting before we hit "Save chat," because that is just everybody will want to have, you know, some of these resources that are coming from the fabulous people on here. I'm just going to kind of move in, maybe in not an organized way with some things that I saw.

So first off, thank you for playing that music. Some of you who could see who have are able to still see Erika and I, while that music was on, Erika started doing the swing thing. <referring to Erika swaying to the music> And so I came on and I just, actually I synced up with her. And part of part of this is because of that kinesiology thing—that

that visceral thing—that that I know about our brains. Many of you know what mirror neurons are, of course: these are things in our brains that help us to connect with others through movement.

There's a great study where they had people walking down the street with a big stack of boxes. And the study was, they weren't watching the person with the boxes, they were watching the people watching the person with the boxes. And the person with the boxes going down the street and all of a sudden they started to like, almost tipped over. And what they were recording was people watching it and they were all going <sways her body> they were all trying to help, you know. <laughter> And that's what our brains are just wired to do.

And so some of the things that we can do is— You know that rocking motion is a very ancient, from the womb, kind of comforting thing. That can be helpful. You know, you don't want too much of it because... it can also you know; just a little bit of it; "a little dab will do ya," you know, is a really good thing to think about with any kind of ritual, or any kind of, of kinesthetic connection.

But actually, it raises our frequency, our endorphins, or whatever you want to call it. We really need that in this time: the chemical kinds of processes that can help us feel better. And so just that simple rocking could be something that you invite people to do for just a brief time. And just know that whatever you're doing in terms of your energy is actually—people are experiencing it the exact same way through the camera as they would in person. It's the same. And our mirror neurons are acting the same, because it's a visual cue, whether it's live or Memorex, you know, to date myself again. <laughter> So, that was one thing that came up.

1:05:53 Another thing I saw, just to go back briefly to the question of congregations collaborating, and some people had some very good reasons having to do with livestream licenses and the funds to do that and that kind of thing. And so you could do a both/and, right? You have some worship and ritual that's a collaboration, but then finding other ways to do the connecting personally. So I think it's always a both/and, right? Just find the things that will meet needs in various ways.

Somebody asked about preaching: a really excellent question. And I've done a ton of web—I've been doing webinars for over a decade, and so this is a really great question. That is, how do you—if you have pre prepared notes, but you want to look into the camera—how do you do that without looking like you're reading? What I do is I make sure that my margin, at the top of my document—Word, or I use Pages, but—at the very top, is very skinny. Wherever I start the words, the words are as close to the

camera on my laptop as possible. And then I just keep scrolling it. I practice it enough so that—same thing you would do when you're in front of your congregation—you're not just going to read it, you're going to have it lined out on the page. So that you can look up, go back to it, it's actually much easier than looking all the way from the congregation down to, to a pulpit or a lectern. And so just scrolling that.

As usual, whenever I teach preaching, if you're a manuscript person, I always say, if there's a story, just pick one or two places in your manuscript, and it's a story: don't write it out. Because as soon as you write it out, you fall in love with the words; you fall in love with the way that you just wrote it. And you want to say it exactly that way. I've seen preachers tell personal stories, like reading it. And it's like, "No, just don't." Resist the urge to write it out. Make yourself a couple of notes: Make sure I remember to tell that part of the story in that part of the story and then just talk to us, right? So same thing applies to the preaching, online or preaching in front of folks. And I do a combination of that. I did that yesterday.

1:08:10 I was doing a webinar all by myself, and I really wanted to say particular things at the beginning of that webinar. And so I wrote out some things and then, you know, and just scrolled it. And the good thing is people are only seeing—they're not seeing your screen, of course. Don't share your screen. Then it's like, follow the bouncing ball. But they're only seeing the camera so they can't see your notes. And it's actually even easier than when you're at the pulpit.

Practicing: somebody talked about practicing, and then the word "perfection" or "performance came up." I really think that practicing is not about perfecting; it's not about performance (and I don't think "performance" is a bad word anyway; it just means giving form to something we want to give the best form possible). And so the practicing—especially if you're going to be doing live stuff, not prerecorded—is simply so that you have set up; you know what you're doing, and what order it's going to come in. It's okay to if you go "Okay, wait a second, I need to do this" and you haven't, you know, the transition is not perfect, that's fine. But at least you know where you're going; you know the steps: "When I am going to share my screen, I need to share it; I need to choose the keynote option; I'm going to go to that, and then I'm going to have to hit play." The point is for your energy not to get frenetic. That's what the practice is about, right? So, yes, practicing.

1:09:40 Three weeks ago I did a little 10-minute Facebook Live about—when we were just realizing, "Oh my gosh, we're going to have to do this without people in the church"—I did a short little thing: I went into the sanctuary...One of the things that is really helpful if you're still in your—some of you said in chat, that you're still in your

sanctuary with minimal amount of people—is to choose three different shots. And so make a shot that is maybe at the chalice; you're going to do some things there. Make a shot that's at a musician, piano or whatever; and make a shot that is your preaching spot. And so the person who's going to move the camera from one to the next knows—has a script—and knows when to do that. And so that's the kind of practicing you might want to do: is just choose three angles, and when you need to switch from one to the next. That is a really good thing to practice.

Let me say one thing about kids, children at home and then we'll and then we'll dive into the music—because once we get into music stuff, we're probably going to spend a lot of time there. So it's okay, I'm just going to share my screen and just show you a couple of things that people have found really helpful with children.

1:11:07 That is not the right one. See <laughter> didn't practice that. Okay, here we go. Tell me if you can see my screen. There should be a dog in it. Yes. Okay, awesome. <laughter>

So these are some pictures that were sent in from people who are watching livestream worship. I love this. The dogs are, you know, everybody's gathered around, including the animals. You know, it's just such a wonderful visual, remembering and actually having people take these kinds of shots and send them to each other. Oh my gosh, it's so heartwarming to be able to visualize people where they are! So you know, having people share those photos in whatever way is best for your community is really a fun thing to do.

Here's another one, you know, worshiping in pajamas. It's a thing. <laughter> Wondering if we're going to have to change a dress code when we come back! But with coffee and pajamas, I could get used to that, right?

And here's worship and waffles. Hey! <laughter> We could also get very used to that.

One of the things that I am I am creating right now and Easter season series. That's called the heart of the matter. It's going to be around a meal, like let's just make it around a meal. And so having people gathered at the table and sharing food while we're sharing thoughts and prayers and discussion.

I said this earlier—maybe at the very beginning or before—somebody posted this: "I know I'm showing my age, but I was so tempted to be Miss Sally and look into the camera and say, I see you Karen or I see there's John that looks like Romper Room." I think it's not a bad idea.

So the chat kind of thing. One of the things that I've been seeing about interactivity is that we have to encourage people who are not used to chat. We're used to being really silent in worship, right? Encourage interaction: invite hellos, have someone assigned in the chat who can welcome people by name. If they're there by name, add pertinent information or links to, say, a worship guide, or you might call it a bulletin if, you know, they want to open that up. Ask some people to model some interactivity because it takes a little bit of prompting; maybe not for UUs—I don't know, that may be, you know, people may be ready to do that but I know in some more formal worship traditions, people were having a hard time getting folks to do things in the chat because they're just so used to silent watching. Invite people to stay after for a kind of a chat/coffee hour. So don't cut it right off, but then spend some time in the chat interacting

1:13:55 Symbols and story! Making it more interactive could be—this was a friend of mine who was preaching the first Sunday that we people were online, and she was talking about how her partner had taken her to a paint your own pottery place at a time when her father was getting chemo and she was really anxious and so she her partner knew that going to paint pottery would calm her. And so this was an object that had a story with it that really meant something to her. And so one of the things that she could have done was to say right then and there: "Go—you might have something that has a story attached to it, or has some special significance added to it. So I invite you to just take a minute right now—I'm going to pause—and just go find something in your house." I mean, people are in their houses, so they actually have access to more things than they would in the worship space. And so personalizing stories and symbols, and that kind of thing, can be a wonderful way of interacting.

Have the kids bring friends, right? *<photo of child with stuffed animals>* Bring all their toys set up in front of—you know, like they're bringing them to church? Help to create that sacred space and time. This was a little girl who wanted to wear her...oh gosh, I don't have kids, so those of you with kids will know exactly what this costume is—Elsa! Elsa. Anyway, she wanted to wear her Elsa outfit to worship and they put the yoga mat down so it created a little space that would help it feel different from just watching TV, you know. And then giving suggestions of things to draw or paint or doodle or pray in color or whatever it is. So these are some of the suggestions that have been thrown out about how you can keep multiple generations engaged.

In my Easter season series, I am going to have a—one of those sections is a dance party. And so it raises our endorphins. It's kind of that kinesthetic thing, and I'm creating a YouTube link that everybody can click on for a song that has to do with the message,

but I'm inviting people to click on that link at home and listen to it at home because it's— the first one of them is Cat Stevens' "Peace Train"—and so to get around the permission stuff, because I don't have permission to livestream that in a public way, but I can give them the link and I can mute mine. And I can have my dance party because I'm listening to mine. And I'm going to dance around, which is modeling permission for people who need it. And for people who live alone, I'm having my dance party with them. But people can listen to it at home on their own. They're still listening to the same music, but it's not something we have to deal with permissions on. So interactivity, I think is really important.

Erika Hewitt 1:16:51

That's such a good idea and I know—ah, I want to go in three different directions at once. One is providing people with the link or even what some other [people] in other fields are doing is provide—creating a Spotify playlist, right? It's a great way to get around things.

I do know that maybe the quality wasn't great when I played that song for you? By the way, there's doubt as to whether that song is usable in worship: you absolutely can. Marcia, speaking of interaction, there's been a request or two to revisit, just very briefly, menti.com. Could you please go back there one more time for people who missed it?

Marcia McFee 1:17:37

Absolutely. I think it's a—I mean, I'm just so thrilled with the way that it helps us feel real time interaction. So let's go here. So here's our words of blessing. I am going to go back home... It's Mentimeter.com. It's free. I mean, they have different levels, of course, but free is absolutely fine, I have found.

You just create a new presentation and then you figure out a question. It asks you if you want a graph form, if you want a pie form, if you want a word cloud: there's several different ways. I'm going to go back to "How are you?" that we did at the very beginning. And see, I just click on "Present" here, and—so you're seeing—if you go to menti.com, what I love about this is that it doesn't make you sign in or sign up or anything...it just gives you right away, that little code box, you put that code in, and then you get to put in some words. I got to set that. You know, I could set one, two or three words or however many words as possible. And then as people put it in, it just populates in real time. So if some of you who haven't done that want to do that, we can see how that does.

But a word cloud of course, will make—grateful was our biggest one; grateful and overwhelmed and tired seem to be the biggest ones—but we get to sort of take the temperature of people and we get to see each other's words and contribute. And I just think it's a—I used it yesterday in a webinar with 900 people, and it was fantastic to sort of—you can feel kind of alone, even though there's like 900 people or 300 people as in are on now, but this actually gives you a sense of being together. So a great interactive tool.

Erika Hewitt 1:19:42

Thank you. Thank you so much for that. I want to...this is kind of a wondering, but Alissa has made a comment that was really interesting to me. And it taps into all of this uncertainty, and I don't think there's really an answer.

We don't know anything about what the next two months looks like. We don't really know what the next six months look like. What we know is that we're adapting in our congregational life and worship life. And many of the clergy on this call and other religious professionals are shifting into their homes and creating ways to hold this space virtually in their homes.

Alissa asked, "Will we get too good at this? Will people ever want to—Will people want to go back to their spaces?" And I have to say there is something very convenient about not having to take off the pajamas and take the shower and get in the car and go. So it's really hard to know how this might, in the short term or long term, really transform our worship life. We just don't know the answers to that yet. All we can do is keep noticing what people respond to; where the hunger is; where the longing is... and this could really profoundly affect the way that we do church.

Marcia McFee 1:21:12

Yeah, I think you're right. And I think there's gonna be various—as everything is—there's going to be various ways that it affects; some of us we'll label it, you know, in a negative way or a positive way, whatever. I think it will, it absolutely is affecting.

Now, here's something that I saw in the first week: multiple choice churches, sent me emails or texts or whatever and said, "I have been trying to get our worship online for years and met with so much resistance from the very people who are now saying to me, Oh, my gosh, thank you so much." <laughter> Right? So it is opening folks to understand more about what online is: it's not just this big, scary thing, but it's actually access for people who can't come to the space. And so that could be a really helpful response. And yeah, certain people are going to get used to the pajamas and—but it

might actually invite us to take some of these things that we are learning about being more personable, being more interactive, being more sensory-rich, and help us to push ourselves to do that in our in-person worship when, you know, when we get back to that, and to create connections that we were not doing before because we were holding on to some sort of image of what worship is and, you know, the formality, in some ways—and there's nothing wrong with formality. But if that's all you're doing, we're missing out on some of the other spiritual development that comes with a more personable, more sensory-rich, more interactive kind of thing. So I think this is a perfect opportunity to be actually asking ourselves these questions about what we do in our spaces when we do gather.

Erika Hewitt 1:23:06

Let me say: yes, there is something to that being able to—you know, Robert Fulghum, who was a UU minister, has a call to worship about we need to be here. We need to see each other hear each other touch each other. We need to smell each other. Right? And yet and Amy Carol Webb is saying she envisions a day when we're finally allowed out where we come to church in our pajamas, you know? Yeah. (Sara, I didn't mean necessarily perfume I just meant, you know? <laughter> I know, I know what different people smell like. And yet one of the beautiful; one of the beautiful, surprising things that has emerged that we've seen over and over just in this webinar is people saying, well, this family moved away. This family has been homebound for months. And we're together in a way that we actually hadn't been together before.

Marcia McFee 1:24:12

So, both/and, right? We'll perhaps continue to offer different ways to include people online as well as be together. And I mean, really, that we're drawn as humans to be together. I think it's actually going to have the effect of making us much more appreciative of getting to be together, physically. So we can't know. And we, but I think what we're doing is the right thing.

Erika Hewitt 1:24:39

I want to, if I could ask you about one idea, I have to address sort of a proposed solution to some of the music problems that we've heard. But I don't want to spend too long there because I do want to come back to an important thing that I've been holding regarding the emotional tenor of what we do.

So regarding the music, there's questions about live music, there's questions about music quality. There is on Zoom, a little thing you can fiddle with called "original sound" that really improves musical quality. However, let me just ask you tell me if this is crazy because we have not rehearsed this. <laughter> If if there is live music to be

shared, isn't it the case that the solution might not be to do it in real time, but to have the live music be recorded? So that the recording... Okay, yes, you're already nodding.

Marcia McFee 1:25:41

Here's what I need to say about Zoom. I absolutely think that's true. If you're doing Facebook Live, actually, you can, if you're in the original camera source is in the room with the musicians, it's not bad. I mean, there are all kinds of— I watched Indigo Girls, hour concert on Facebook Live the other day it was fabulous. Mary Chapin Carpenter has been posting songs from her kitchen. Really fantastic. And I'm assuming that if Mary Chapin Carpenter put it out there for everybody to see maybe it's okay to share it. I don't know, who knows?, talking about another music permission question. <laughter> But Zoom does—even with the, you know, trying to make the sound better, it's not as great.

Now here's what I want to say is that I have been in these webinars in Zoom for the last three weeks. I use Keynote, could be PowerPoint, could be whatever, but I have been putting audio files in my presentation. So I don't have to have separate things like you had Erika, I put the sound file right in the presentation and I play it right there so I don't have to go away from my presentation. And actually, the quality is—at least it's reported to me—is pretty good. I mean, so the music, as we're playing the recording in so if you are on Zoom live and you've prerecorded, just putting that right into the presentation, can work.

Erika Hewitt 1:27:09

This is this is not the first time and it won't be the last that I'm the example of what not to do! <laughter> And I am happy to be that; anyone who knows me knows that

Marcia McFee 1:27:20

No worries. <laughter>

Erika Hewitt 1:27:23

I would like to transition to something much more sobering. And this is; because there is so much technical stuff to go over but I know that, to me, this must be said or we're failing ourselves as worship leaders. One of the things that has helped me be a much more meaningful—this isn't about good, bad. Effective—Gil Rendle, from the Alban Institute, always talks about being “effective.” One of the things that makes me a more effective worship leader is to be true to what's happening in the moment. In the sanctuary, to feel the energy and to respond in real time in an honest way. And I just want to remind everyone that we are riding this forceful wave, and time. We don't quite know where it's going. But I don't want to scare anyone. But it's fairly easy to see

that desperation and fear and fury are going to become much, much, much, much, much bigger and stronger and scarier in the next couple of weeks.

And so as much as we can, taking our—colleague Cecilia Kingman has been reminding us to take tender care of ourselves, because it will be our task to respond honestly and pastorally and prophetically to what's happening in the moment; and to be willing to let go of that worship service or homily that we thought we were going to do. And just realize that the despair is so overwhelming that we have to scrap what we thought we were going to do, and be imperfect and create spaces of vulnerable, connected love. Right?

Marcia McFee 1:29:22

Yeah. Yeah, absolutely. And here's a lot of people ask me this. Well, people ask me this all the time because I, as many of you know, who have studied with me, I believe that doing a thematic series is a really good thing for many, many reasons. I won't go into all of that. But the question that comes all the time is: What if something happens in the middle of it, that needs to be addressed? And that's always going to happen, whether it's a pandemic or something local or whatever. And so what I say is that there are times when something so cataclysmic happens that we must change horses in midstream, to use a phrase, right? Because it's just ridiculous not to.

On the other hand, this this is not a one off; this is not a one Sunday thing. This is ongoing, as you said, and it's going to ramp up, and people are going to be like this: right up and down. And I myself am, and we can be really honest about our own—we can be vulnerable with that and—there's a very fine line in pastors between vulnerability that makes people feel like they need to pastor to you, and being vulnerable enough just to acknowledge our, you know, or our collective “I am like you,” you know. So, that's, you know, that's always something to navigate for yourself.

I got teary-eyed yesterday in my webinar, and it was okay, because, you know, that's real. And so the other thing is that our brains are actually very, very facile at taking two seemingly disparate things and finding a connection. So let's just use that— I know that UU; not all of you celebrate Easter, I know some of you do celebrate Easter or, or at least in this time of year, the idea that new life is happening, right? So we have new life happening, whatever you connect that with. And at the same time we have death happening, and illness and scariness and all of that stuff. And so the idea is that whatever it is that are part of our normal rhythms of what we talk about spring; there's also a way to connect that to what's happening.

1:31:56 So how can we find those connections rather than throw the baby out with the bathwater completely? And that's going to be—you're going to have to discern that on your own, based on what you had planned, and whether or not you can make those connections, and find a way to talk about: We are people that believes in hope: spring and hope and whatever, that's also coupled with... the reality of things that are not great is true at the same time. So, yeah. It's really part of our job to discern that. And that's part of what we do as those who create worship. We are always saying: Here's the symbol that we're dealing with, this metaphor, right? I talk about "metaphorizing." And we "metaphorize" it, we say, Can we connect this? If we can't find any connection, then it's time to throw it out and do something different. But don't throw it out before asking that question: "Can we find a way to have some continuity in the themes that we had and connected?" That's what I would say.

Erika Hewitt 1:33:05

This has been such a full time and it has been a sacred time. I've got my chalice here. Those of you who are willing to spend a couple more minutes, I'd like to ask you to hold your chalice. And I'm going to share my screen once more after two things.

The first is to remind you that this webinar, and WorshipWeb, and everything we do is a service of your Unitarian Universalist Association. Thanks to our donor congregations and individual donors, and also to offer deep gratitude to Marcia for agreeing on short notice to do this: to be here with us.

If you have your chalice... One of our most recent additions to WorshipWeb is by the Reverend Margaret Weis and I'd love to have all of you read this with me, if you can, or just listen to us read it. I am going to read it and you can just read it where you are. We'll use the word church. If you need to use a different word use a different word. And when I'm done reading this, you reading it with me, I'll come back and we'll extinguish the chalice together.

The church is not a place; It is a people. The church is not only a steeple above the treeline, streets and cars, rather is a people proclaiming to the world that we are here for the work of healing and of justice. The church is not walls built stone upon stone held together by mortar, but rather person linked with person linked with person, all ages and genders and abilities. A community built on the foundation of reason, faith and love.

The church is not just a set of doors open on Sunday morning. But the commitment day after day and moment after moment of our hearts creaking open the doors of Welcome to the possibility of new experience and radical welcome. The church

isn't not simply a building a steeple, a Pew the church is the gathering together of all the people and experiences and fear and love and hope in our resilient hearts. Gathering however we can to say to the world, welcome, come in, lay down your heartache and pick up hope and love for the church is us, each and every one of us together a beacon of hope to this world that so sorely needs it.

So, we extinguish this challenge, but not the power within us, the power among us, the power beyond us. Thank you so much, Marcia. And Thank you Sarah, for your and thank you everyone. I will follow up with an email. Blessings upon your week. We love you and we're here for you. Take good care, all of you.

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