

Oct 7, 2018 NUUF Service Script

Sanctuary - The practice of finding sacred space within & ensuring welcoming space for all

Announcements & Welcome
greeting each other

Prelude Music

Opening Words

Chalice Lighting

Opening Hymn "Spirit of Life "

Candles of Joys and Sorrows

Pastoral Prayer

Hymn : "Lean on Me"

Reading

Meditation

Offertory

We give these gifts freely, We receive these gifts gratefully. We dedicate these gifts to the work of our fellowship: serving human wholeness, caring for our planet, upholding religious freedom, welcoming the stranger, loving one another

Interlude Music –

Homily, "Under my Umbrella" Rev.Lara Fuchs

Hymn : "Blue Boat Home"

Benediction

Extinguish the Chalice

Postlude Music

Opening Words

This Place Is Sanctuary

Rev. Kathleen McTigue, in Shine and Shadow

You who are broken-hearted,
who woke today with the winds of despair
whistling through your mind,
come in.

You who are brave but wounded,
limping through life and hurting with every step, come in.

You who are fearful, who live with shadows
hovering over your shoulders,
come in.

This place is sanctuary, and it is for you.

You who are filled with happiness,
whose abundance overflows,
come in.

You who walk through your world
with lightness and grace,
who awoke this morning with strength and hope,

you who have everything to give,

come in.

This place is your calling, a riverbank to channel

the sweet waters of your life, the place

where you are called by the world's need.

Here we offer in love.

Here we receive in gratitude.

Here we make a circle from the great gifts

of breath, attention and purpose.

Come in.

Chalice Lighting

- A Place for Our Whole Selves
The Soul Matters Team

May the flame we now rekindle

call us back to our center,

and guide us back to our breath.

May our chalice

remind us that we are held

and welcomed as we are.

In this sanctuary of acceptance,

may we remember

that there is a place for our whole selves,

a place where no piece of us has to hide.

Opening Hymn “Spirit of Life “

Candles of Joys and Sorrows

Pastoral Prayer

PASTORAL PRAYER FOR SEXUAL ABUSE SURVIVORS

By Lisa Bovee-Kemper

It has been a difficult couple of weeks in the news, I am thinking particularly of the U.S. Senate, hearings over the nomination of Judge Brett Kavanaugh, of the many intersections of trauma that these hearings have touched off and of how we ALL are diminished and sickened by the systems that devalue women, transwomen, and survivors across the gender spectrum.

I know we have different responses, different levels of engagement. and as always, we have silent personal struggles in the midst of everything else. And so I invite you into a spirit of prayer.

Holy one we call by many names, and sometimes by no name at all, there is a space between our breaths where we find the still small voice within. Let us seek together that place of calm.

For anyone who has experienced sexual assault or harassment, you are loved beyond measure. You are good, right, and beautiful. Your lives are more than the sum of the moment or moments that changed you. Whether the violation occurred yesterday or decades ago, may you find ears to listen, hearts to believe your story, and may gentle hands reach out to clasp yours in solidarity and support.

For female-identified people and others with female bodies, your agency is paramount, your health should never be compromised, and your body is not disposable.

For leaders and holders of power across the world, may your eyes be clear, may your hearts remain open, and may your resistance to the status quo be fierce.

For anyone who is wrestling silently with personal demons or challenging situations that are out of your control, may you be held in the embrace of the most holy. May you find ways to be empowered, and may you find comfort in the fullness of time.

May this community hold us, a calm place in the storm.

May we each strive to be the hands that gently reach out, and the fists that rise in solidarity: fierce and strong.

May it ever be so. Amen

[Hymn : "Lean on Me"](#)

Reading

Temple

by Steve Garnaas-Holmes

*You are built together spiritually
into a dwelling place for God.
—Ephesians 2.22*

*Tourists come to admire the temple,
to take pictures and buy mementos,
but it's not on their maps.*

*Pilgrims come seeking
their separate peace in it,
but they they can't find it.*

*Eventually the army arrives,
ordered to destroy the temple,
but it has vanished.*

*It isn't here, or there,
it isn't in a place,
it isn't a thing.*

*It is empty space.
It is the love between us.
It is not something that "is,"
but something that happens.
Like gravity that exists
only between objects in space,
the dwelling place of God
exists only in the love
we hold between us.
It is eternal.
When we enter that holy space
among us
which God creates
we enter God,
and nothing can remove us.*

*In the cool of the sanctuary
we listen to the music
and we breathe.*

Meditation

I know we have dreams
of saving the whole world
but let's try today for a smaller scale
Let's tend this hour
to this space
The in and out of our breath
Let's begin in our bodies,
in this moment
In this letting go, and taking in
In this silence
Let's find here again

The beating of our own hearts

Listen:

Let your spirit reach out to its sanctuary, that place or person or sound of music or smell of autumn leaves that holds you in love and safety. Feel the peace wash over you

Cup your hands together, as if you were gently holding this image, feel its warmth and energy in your fingers, feel your own soft embrace of this healing sanctuary. Feel yourself filled by the warmth of knowing you are loved, you are beloved, you are enough. Let the beating of your heart whisper your gratitude to the sanctuary that you are holding in your hands. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.

Breathing

and finding the beat

That calls to us even now

behind the noise of grief or fear or overwhelm:

Already we are beloved, already we are enough

And these bodies are gifts, this life is a gift, this earth is a gift

and we are here only To listen,

Letting it pull on our hearts with this

steady healing hope -

In, and out

Beloved, you are already enough

Offertory

We give these gifts freely, We receive these gifts gratefully. We dedicate these gifts to the work of our fellowship: serving human wholeness, caring for our planet, upholding religious freedom, welcoming the stranger, loving one another

Homily “Under my Umbrella”

Just saying the word “sanctuary” brings one a sense of peace and safety. It can bring back conflicted memories for some, but for most of us the idea of sanctuary conjures up feelings of being protected. Like its close cousin “refuge”, it speaks to the universal longing for a space to retreat from the dangers and depletions of the world. One thinks of the family ties and friendships that protect, restore and heal us.

Providing sanctuary for refugees and immigrants is a powerful example of offering life-giving safe space. As the well-loved Irish proverb puts it, “It is in the shelter of each other that the people live.” So, certainly, the hunger for protection and the call to protect each other is central to the idea of Sanctuary.

But as we dig deeper, we are reminded that the sanctuaries in our lives do more than simply protect us. They also send us. They don’t just help us heal from our journeys; they also strengthen us for the new journeys ahead. In their fullest, they are not escape houses as much as fueling stations. They don’t just whisper “**Come and rest,**” but also “**Be filled and go!**” The image of a toddler leaving and returning their parent’s leg comes to mind. That “home base” is not a tether but the very thing that allows us to venture out. Having been blessed with shelter, we are strengthened to offer that same gift of shelter to others. In other words, sanctuary always comes with a calling. And so the question for all of us

here is not just “Where do you find shelter?” but “Having been empowered by shelter, how can you share that same gift with others?”

There’s a beautiful UU children’s story called “The Umbrella Sanctuary.” Its message is for kids and adults alike.

In it, the umbrella represents the many ways others offer us sanctuary from the storms of life as well as the many ways we can pass on that shelter to others.

a little girl was caught outside in a sudden rainstorm. She ran inside to the nearest store to get shelter from the rain. As soon as she closed the door, a bright flash and a loud boom of thunder followed. The shopkeeper, a wise old woman, asked “can I help you with something?” The little girl pointed outside, too afraid to talk.

“Ahhh,” said the old shopkeeper, “Did you run in here to escape the rain?”

The little girl nodded slowly as another loud boom <hold hand to ear> of thunder shook the store.

“Well, you can wait here if you’d like in my little sanctuary. We’ve got a nice sturdy roof over our heads, and it will keep you safe and dry.”

The little girl appreciated the offer, but she really needed to get back outside and continue on her way. The shopkeeper could tell the little girl was hesitating.

“Or, You could head back outside with this.” The old shopkeeper went behind the counter and pulled out an umbrella.

“Take this umbrella,” said the old shopkeeper. “I don’t know why it’s raining. But I do know that you can stay safe and dry under this portable sanctuary.”

The little girl beamed, but then stopped in her tracks. “But I don’t have any money” said the little girl.

“No worries little girl. Just be sure to offer the umbrella to someone else when they need it.”

The little girl accepted the umbrella, headed back outside, opened up her umbrella and went on her way, happy and dry. She started skipping happily down the street when she saw a man wearing a suit, trying to keep dry with a newspaper over his head. She heard another loud boom and the newspaper began to fall apart under the heavy rain. She skipped over to the man and held the umbrella up as high as she could to cover both of them. “Thank you,” said the man.

The little girl told the man, “I don’t know why it’s raining. But I do know that you can keep dry with me under this portable sanctuary.”

The man smiled in relief. He had been having a really bad day – see, he was wearing a suit because he was on his way to a job interview. He had been without work for a long, long time, and was desperate. He had to walk to the interview because he couldn't afford a car. When it started to rain, he cursed his luck – he would show up to his really important job interview soaked, and he knew it would make a really bad first impression.

The girl spotted her family across the street and went to meet them. She told the man to take the umbrella and give it to someone else when they need it.

Well, I can tell you that the man got that job he was interviewing for. And soon enough, he was able to afford to buy a few umbrellas of his own. Whenever it would rain, he would bring not only his umbrella that the little girl had given him, he would bring two more small umbrellas to give away to people who were stuck outside in the rain. And every time he gave away an umbrella, he would say,

“I don't know why it's raining. But I do know that you can keep dry under this portable sanctuary.”

And soon, everyone in town had an umbrella, and a spare just in case someone else needed one, and they would pass on the words “I don't

know why it's raining. But I do know that you can keep dry under this portable sanctuary.”

The story gently reminds us that we overlook opportunities to offer shelter and sanctuary every day. If we really pay attention, we notice that all around us people are “wet with rain.” And maybe we have a portable sanctuary to offer.

Having ourselves been given the sanctuary of a caring religious community, of empathy, of kindness, safety and acceptance, we in turn can share that same gift with others

Along the way, we also discover that our sanctuaries need sheltering and protection themselves. It's a paradox: our sanctuaries can't protect and repair us unless we also protect and repair them. The green sanctuary movement is a great example of this. The solace of nature and the life-giving interdependent web needs us as much as we need them. The same is true for the sanctuaries in our personal lives. Friendship, silence, stillness, music, art: these are all things that wither if we don't tend to and make space for them. So, in the end, maybe the most important question for us today is “How are we caring for our sanctuaries so they can take care of us?”

We go to sanctuaries to remember the things we hold most dear, to reconnect with the things we cherish and love. This is why most of us come to church.

Diverse. Multicultural. Inclusive. Welcoming. If I made a list of every single Unitarian Universalist congregation I have served, visited or worshipped at, they would have a few things in common—including the use of these words... I love those words. I want what they promise. But I have been often disappointed. It is simply not enough to print them on an Order of Service or in a newsletter; they must have meaning and intention at their core. A desire for multicultural worship is wonderful, but it will not flower if that seed of yearning is not nurtured by a commitment and a plan. We must all actively create for others the very same refuge that we seek for ourselves. Have you ever found sanctuary for yourself in the midst of offering it to others?

Sanctuary is not just saying “Come and rest” but also “Be filled and go”

Parker Palmer wrote, “...After 77 years of life in a world that’s both astonishingly beautiful and horrifically cruel, “sanctuary” is as vital as breathing to me. Sometimes I find it in churches, monasteries, and other sites designated as sacred. But more often I find it in places sacred to my soul: in the natural world, in the company of a trustworthy friend, in solitary or shared silence, in the ambience of a good poem or

good music. Sanctuary is wherever I find safe space to regain my bearings, reclaim my soul, heal my wounds, and return to the world as a wounded healer. It's not merely about finding shelter from the storm: it's about spiritual survival. “

“return to the world as a wounded healer.”

Wounded healer is a term created by psychologist Carl Jung

It is the recognition of other people's suffering and vulnerabilities in our own hearts, and making this recognition the starting point for serving another human being who has the same wounds, scars, fears. It is the ability to turn our own hurting places into strengths that create a healing sanctuary for others who are also hurting.

“I don't know why it's raining. But I do know that you can keep dry under this portable sanctuary.”

We can say this because we also know what it is to be wet and afraid of a storm.

We each have troubles, concerns about injustices, disasters, and worries that may be different than the ones that hold center stage in my mind, heart, and spirit. I am drawing on every source of spiritual strength, growth, and wisdom I can find in order to Make Love Visible however I can. As we come together this day, I hope you will join me in this broken-openhearted work. We in this Beloved Community are

made for this very thing, for creating and being sanctuary for ourselves and for others. If we muster our courage, our strength, and our awesome tenderness and empathy, we can look into the heart of our different life experiences, our own wounds, and find a way together to live from a Love, a fierce effective muscular Love, that grounds, inspires, and activates us.

“Come and rest in this love, this sanctuary” then “Be filled and go”

Go and seek out opportunities to offer people “your umbrella.”

Amen, Blessed Be and May it be so.

Hymn : “Blue Boat Home”

Benediction

Shantideva Prayer -*Shantideva was an 8th century Indian Buddhist monk.*

May we become at all times, both now and forever
A protector of those without protection
A guide for those who have lost their way
A ship for those with oceans to cross
A bridge for those with rivers to cross
A sanctuary for those in danger
A lamp for those without light
A place of refuge for those who lack shelter
And a servant to all in need
For as long as space endures,
And for as long as living beings remain,
Until then may we, too, abide
To dispel the misery of the world.

“We extinguish this flame but not the light of truth, the warmth of community, or the fire of commitment. These we carry in our hearts until we are together again.” -Elizabeth Selle Jones