

Northshore Unitarian Universalist Church

Sunday, February 28, 2021 via Zoom

NSUU Core Values

Music for Gathering “Love is the Spirit of This Church” UU Church in Reston, VA
by Elizabeth Anderson

Welcome Tracee Kneeland

Opening Words by Rev. Dick Gilbert

Chalice Lighting

Opening Song: “Gather the Spirit” Kitsap Unitarian Fellowship, Bremerton, WA
by Jim Scott, Alena Hemingway and Mike Menefee

Sharing Cares and Celebrations

Reading “Walking Toward Morning” by Victoria Safford

Our Core Values

Introduction Rev. Carol Strecker

Guided Meditation Rev. Carol Strecker

Music for Meditation “Tending the Spark” by Heather Houston

Small Group Reflection

Bringing It All Together Rev. Carol Strecker

Music for Reflection “Feels Like Home” by Randy Newman Piano, Judy Putnam

Offertory

Share the Plate

This week the Social Action Committee requests your consideration in donating to the Citizen's Inn program, Haven from Hunger. Make checks out to Citizen's Inn with Haven from Hunger in the memo line and send to NSUU, 323 Locust St., Danvers, MA 01923

A short video will explain the program. Thank you for your contribution.

Closing Song

“This Little Light of Ours”
African American Spiritual adapted
harmony by Clarence Boyer

Singing Group

Announcements**Closing Words**

by Margaret Wheatley

Blessing

May love surround us,
May joy gladden us,
May peace lie deep within.
And may our lives,
And the lives of all
Those we touch, go well.

Edwin C. Lynn

Music Notes***Love Is the Spirit of this Church*****Composer's Note:**

It took three ministers plus a minister's daughter to create this song. It all started in 1878, when Presbyterian minister and hymnwriter Elisha A. Hoffman penned the classic altar call warhorse, *Washed in the Blood*. Over a hundred years later, Unitarian Universalist minister Tony Larsen began leading spirited revivals for religious liberals, setting original lyrics to tunes from well-known revival songs.

Tony's new lyric was based on the first line of a church covenant written by Unitarian minister James Vila Blake in 1894: "*Love is the spirit of this church and service is its law. This is our great covenant: to dwell together in peace, to seek the truth in love, and to help one another.*"

Tony's popular revivals were performed all over the country – including in Madison, Wisconsin, where this minister's daughter showed up in 1993 with a baby on one hip and a tambourine on the other. Twenty-three years later, a commission for the dedication of a new church building offered her the perfect opportunity to create a revised and full-fledged arrangement of *Love is the Spirit of this Church*.

Helen's note: Over a year ago I purchased this song for our Singing Group to learn. Then Covid happened before I even passed out the music, but I hadn't forgotten it. When I went

looking for a recorded version to include in our Sunday service there was nothing on line, so I communicated with composer Elizabeth Alexander who sent me the wonderful video done by the UU church in Reston, VA, for their 50th anniversary. Not only did Elizabeth share permission to use this video but she also put me in contact with music director Cynthia Young who is excited to know that we are enjoying their video of this song and gave free permission to use it.

*Oh our church is built of neither brick nor stone,
For it's love that's the spirit of this church.
It's a shelter fashioned from our hearts alone.
Yes it's love that's the spirit of this church.*

*CHORUS: For it's love, yes it's love,
For it's love that's the spirit of this church.
Not the walls or steeple but a gathered people
Is what makes up the spirit of this church.*

*It is not stained glass that makes these windows bright,
For it's love that's the spirit of this church.
They're illuminated by compassion's light,
Yes it's love that's the spirit of this church.*

CHORUS

*And our sacred altar is not carved of wood,
For it's love that's the spirit of this church.
It is consecrated by the greater good,
Yes it's love that's the spirit of this church*

Gather the Spirit

Jim Scott's songs (like "Gather the Spirit") are in our Unitarian Universalist hymnals. He's lead services and performed concerts at more than 700 UU churches over the course of 35 years. As co-chair of the UU Ministry for the Earth, Jim was one of the creators of the Green Sanctuary program. A longtime member of the Paul Winter Consort, Jim was co-composer of their celebrated "Missa Gaia/Earth Mass." He has produced 9 albums and created the "Earth and Spirit Songbook." Pete Seeger called Jim "Some kind of a magician." -from uua.org.

*Gather the spirit, harvest the power.
Our sep'rate fires will kindle one flame.*

*Witness the mystery of this hour.
Our trials in this light appear all the same.*

(Chorus)

*Gather in peace, gather in thanks.
Gather in sympathy now and then.
Gather in hope, compassion and strength.
Gather to celebrate once again.*

*Gather the spirit of heart and mind.
Seeds for the sowing are laid in store.
Nurtured in love, and conscience refined,
with body and spirit united once more.*

(Chorus)

*Gather the spirit growing in all,
drawn by the moon and fed by the sun.
Winter to spring, and summer to fall,
the chorus of life resounding as one.*

(Chorus)

Tending the Spark

Heather Houston is a prolific song writer, performer and recording artist. She says, “Perhaps my greatest musical inspiration and collaborator is the natural beauty of the Pacific Ocean and the wild lands in and around Santa Cruz County, CA, where I was born and raised.” She is the founder of Sisters in Harmony, Singing Circles for Women. She will be collaborating with local women’s song leader, Sue Robbins of Libana, on March 8, via zoom, to lead women in song. This is open to any woman who wants to register at libana.com. Heather calls this piece “a song for these uncertain times.” This recording is from Heather Houston’s CD Sisters of the Moon.

*And we will care for each other
As the world around us unravels
And we will tend to the spark
of hope that lives within our grieving hearts
And we are here now, in this present moment
Lifting our voices and hearts*

*And we are here now, we have come together
We are tending the spark hope
Oh may it grow
And we will care for each other*

Feels Like Home

"**Feels like Home**" by Randy Newman is a song written with such fascinating and interesting rhythms and chords that it directly speaks to my heart and spirit. It is one of those musical pieces that I never grow tired of hearing over and over and it grabs me every time. It was written for the musical *Randy Newman's Faust*, in which [Bonnie Raitt](#) sang it. [Linda Ronstadt](#), also involved in the musical, recorded it for *Trio II* in 1994, but released it for solo album *Feels like Home* in March 1995.

This Little Light of Ours

"**This Little Light of Mine**" is a popular [gospel](#) song of unknown origin that is sung all over the world. It was often reported to be written for children in the 1920s by [Harry Dixon Loes](#), but he never claimed credit for the original version of the song, and the Moody Bible Institute where he worked said he did not write it.^{[1][2]} It was later adapted by [Zilphia Horton](#), amongst many other [activists](#), in connection with the [civil rights movement](#).^[3] It can be found in The United Methodist Hymnal, #585,^[4] adapted by William Farley Smith in 1987, and in the Unitarian Universalist Hymn Book, [Singing the Living Tradition](#), #118, with harmonies by Horace Clarence Boyer.^[5] -from Wikipedia

*This little light of ours, We're gonna let it shine (x3)
Let it shine, let it shine, let it shine.*

*Ev'rywhere we go, we're gonna let it shine (x3)
Let it shine, let it shine, let it shine.*

*Building up a world, we're gonna let it shine (x3)
Let it shine, let it shine, let it shine.*