

Universalist Unitarian Church of Joliet
Sunday, April 3, 2022 - 10:30 A.M.
“Humans Wrote the Bible, God Wrote Life”
The Teachings of John Shelby Spong
Presenters: February Sky (Phil Cooper & Susan Urban)

*Please feel free to sing at home at any point in the service
where you feel moved to do so!*

Words to all the songs and readings, including congregational songs,
are on the pages following this one.

RINGING OF THE OPENING CHIME
ANNOUNCEMENTS AND WELCOME
INVITATION TO WORSHIP

PRELUDE: "I Am the Ride," by Chris Smither

OPENING WORDS by John Shelby Spong

***OPENING HYMN:** "Gentle Soldier of My Soul," by Dave Carter

UNISON CHALICE LIGHTING (see below)

COVENANT (see below)

SHARING OF JOYS & CONCERNS

A time for joys and sorrows from the personal lives of members and friends.

TIME FOR ALL AGES: "You Are Theist, I Am Humanist," by Meg and Scott Bassinson

OFFERTORY

OFFERTORY MUSIC: "Music of Spey," by James Scott Skinner

INTRODUCTION

SONG: "The Word of God," by Catherine Faber

HOMILY 1: God Talk???

SONG: "When I'm Gone," by Phil Ochs

HOMILY 2: Social Action as a Path to Oneness with the Divine

SONG: "Live Fully, Love Wastefully," by Susan Urban

***CLOSING HYMN:** "If I Had A Hammer," by Pete Seeger and Lee Hays

CLOSING WORDS by John Shelby Spong

POSTLUDE: "Suzanne," by Leonard Cohen

UNISON CHALICE EXTINGUISHING (see below)

***Rise in body or in spirit**

I AM THE RIDE

Chris Smither

Forms are loosely fitting, juries still are sitting
And a sense of duty keeps us all in motion
Prison sirens wailing that security is failing
Do not inspire a lifetime of devotion
No one will sympathize, no one really tries
They need a faith that leads them like a drum
I can hear it pounding down among the ruins
Sad to say, I don't think I'm the only one.

I awoke and someone spoke, and asked me in a whisper
If all my dreams and visions had been answered
And I don't know what to say, I never even pray
I just feel the pulse of universal dancers
They'll waltz me till I die, and never tell me why
I've never thought to ask them where we're going
The holy and the profane are all helplessly insane
Wishful, hopeful, never really knowing.

They asked if I believe, and do the angels really grieve
Or is it all a comforting invention?
It's like gravity, I said, it's not a product of my head
It doesn't speak, but nonetheless commands attention
And I don't care what it means, who decorates the scenes
The problem is more with a sense of pride
It keeps me thinking "me" instead of what it is to be
I'm not a passenger, I am the ride
I'm not a passenger... I am the ride

GENTLE SOLDIER OF MY SOUL Dave Carter

Hey-yah, my love has gone all upon the crimson trail

His drum at dawn beating brimstone through the veil

Clear light through smoke and ash

And balmy seas, where breakers crash and roll

Gentle soldier of my soul

Hey-yah; hey-yah

He lays me down in his garden growin' bed

He weaves a crown, twigs and feathers for my head

He sings the fields awake

And folds me in the love that makes me whole

Gentle soldier of my soul

Hey-yah; hey-yah; hey-yah

Hey-yah; hey-yah; hey-yah

When i have passed through the forest of my trials

And stand at last where the shadows run for miles

We'll ride on ponies fine

With painted shields through fields of shining gold

Gentle soldier of my soul

Hey-yah; hey-yah

UNISON CHALICE LIGHTING by Rev. Lindsay Bates

To face the world's shadows, a chalice of light.

To face the world's coldness, a chalice of warmth,

To face the world's terrors, a chalice of courage.

To face the world's turmoil, a chalice of peace.

May its glow fill our spirits, our hearts, and our lives.

COVENANT

Love is the doctrine of this church.

The quest of truth is its sacrament, and service is its prayer.

To dwell together in peace, to seek knowledge in freedom,

To serve humanity in fellowship,

To the end that all souls shall grow into harmony with the Divine,

Thus do we covenant with each other and with God.

YOU ARE THEIST, I AM HUMANIST

Meg and Scott Bassinson

You are theist, I am humanist, I think that you're naïve.

You have no proof to offer as truth, you simply say "I believe."

New age bubbles get you in trouble, lost in a feel-good fluff.

True understanding is quite demanding, praying is not enough.

Totally unprepared are you to make a case that's plain,

Maybe the incense, chants, and drums have ruined your poor brain.

You need someone saner and wiser telling you what to do,

You are theist, I am humanist, I--will think--for you!

I am theist, you are humanist, you're locked inside your head.

You're existential, self-referential, claiming that God is dead.

Occam's razor, Pascal's wager, soul-less tautology,

Wisdom traditions, not erudition, make much more sense to me.

Totally unprepared are you to let go of your mind.

How 'bout a leap of faith, my friend, you might like what you find.

When you find that you're out of answers, you won't know what to do

I am theist, you are humanist, I -- will pray -- for you.

We cannot agree on anything, each has a point of view,

I am theist --- I am humanist,

That's why we're UU!

THE WORD OF GOD

Catherine Faber

From desert cliff and mountaintop we trace the wide design,
Strike-slip fault and overthrust and syn and anticline.

We gaze upon creation where erosion makes it known,
And count the countless eons in the banding of the stone.

Odd long-vanished creatures and their tracks & shells are found;
Where truth has left its sketches on the slate below the ground.

The patient stone can speak, if we but listen when it talks.

Humans wrote the Bible; God wrote the rocks.

There are those who name the stars, who watch the sky by night,
Seeking out the darkest place, to better see the light.

Long ago, when torture broke the remnant of his will,
Galileo recanted, but the Earth is moving still.

High above the mountaintops, where only distance bars,
The truth has left its footprints in the dust between the stars.

We may watch and study or may shudder and deny,
Humans wrote the Bible; God wrote the sky.

By stem and root and branch we trace, by feather, fang and fur,
How the living things that are descend from things that were.

The moss, the kelp, the zebrafish, the very mice and flies,
These tiny, humble, wordless things---how shall they tell us lies?

We are kin to beasts; no other answer can we bring.

The truth has left its fingerprints on every living thing.

Remember, should you have to choose between them in the strife,
Humans wrote the Bible; God wrote life.

And we who listen to the stars, or walk the dusty grade,
Or break the very atoms down to see how they are made,

Or study cells, or living things, seek truth with open hand.

The profoundest act of worship is to try to understand.

Deep in flower and in flesh, in star and soil and seed,

The truth has left its living word for anyone to read.

So turn and look where best you think the story is unfurled.

Humans wrote the Bible; God wrote the world.

WHEN I'M GONE

Phil Ochs

There's no place in this world where I'll belong when I'm gone
And I won't know the right from the wrong when I'm gone
And you won't find me singin' on this song when I'm gone
So I guess I'll have to do it while I'm here

And I won't feel the flowing of the time when I'm gone
All the pleasures of love will not be mine when I'm gone
My pen won't pour a lyric line when I'm gone
So I guess I'll have to do it while I'm here

And I won't breathe the bracing air when I'm gone
And I can't even worry 'bout my cares when I'm gone
Won't be asked to do my share when I'm gone
So I guess I'll have to do it while I'm here

And I won't be running from the rain when I'm gone
And I can't even suffer from the pain when I'm gone
Can't say who's to praise and who's to blame when I'm gone
So I guess I'll have to do it while I'm here

Won't see the golden of the sun when I'm gone
And the evenings and the mornings will be one when I'm gone
Can't be singing louder than the guns while I'm gone
So I guess I'll have to do it while I'm here

All my days won't be dances of delight when I'm gone
And the sands will be shifting from my sight when I'm gone
Can't add my name into the fight while I'm gone
So I guess I'll have to do it while I'm here

And I won't be laughing at the lies when I'm gone
And I can't question how or when or why when I'm gone
Can't live proud enough to die when I'm gone
So I guess I'll have to do it while I'm here

REPEAT FIRST THREE LINES OF FIRST VERSE

So I guess I'll have to do it, I guess I'll have to do it,
Guess I'll have to do it while I'm here

LIVE FULLY, LOVE WASTEFULLY

Susan Urban

Way down in Mississippi, back in nineteen sixty-four,
A woman of eighteen was courted by a college man.
The problem was that she was white,
But he had skin as dark as night,
Her daddy was a member of the local Ku Klux Klan.

They parted ways with tears of anger, bitterness and grief,
And forty-five long years would pass before they met again.

Inauguration in D.C.,
The startled eyes, "Oh, yes, it's me!"

They married in the springtime, with magnolias blooming then.

CHORUS:

Live fully, love wastefully, be everything you're capable of being.
Despite the hate, despite the fear, companions on our journey here,
But in the end, the love we leave behind will heal it all.

A girl was born in 1950, swaddled all in pink.

They taught her how to cook and how to sew and be a mom.

Though science was her favorite thing,

The schools said "No, you need a ring,"

She wept the day she wed a civil engineer named Tom.

The kids grew up, they all moved out, then Tommy passed away.

And so she went to Stanford and she earned her PhD.

A full professor she became,

With Physics papers in her name,

Sometimes she says, "I hardly can believe that this is me."

CHORUS

Two women barely 20 fell quite hopelessly in love,

In nineteen forty-four, they had no choice but to pretend.

They made a home with love and care,

Just small town roommates living there,

And everybody wondered why they never dated men.

The time, it flew so quickly, seven decades passed them by,

And then at last they married on a sunny day in June,

Their friends and family happy now,

So glad it all worked out somehow,

Although these two decided not to plan a honeymoon.

CHORUS

IF I HAD A HAMMER

Pete Seeger & Lee Hays

If I had a hammer, I'd hammer in the morning
I'd hammer in the evening, all over this land.
I'd hammer out danger, I'd hammer out a warning,
I'd hammer out love between my brothers and my sisters,
All over this land.

If I had a bell, I'd ring it in the morning,
I'd ring it in the evening, all over this land.
I'd ring out danger, I'd ring out a warning,
I'd ring out love between my brothers and my sisters,
All over this land.

If I had a song, I'd sing it in the morning,
I'd sing it in the evening, all over this land.
I'd sing out danger, I'd sing out a warning,
I'd sing out love between my brothers and my sisters,
All over this land.

Well, I got a hammer, and I got a bell,
And I got a song to sing, all over this land.
It's the hammer of Justice, it's the bell of Freedom,
It's the song about Love between my brothers and my sisters,
All over this land.

It's the hammer of Justice, it's the bell of Freedom,
It's the song about Love between my brothers and my sisters,
All over this land.

UNISON CHALICE EXTINGUISHING

Carry the Flame of Peace and Love Until We Meet Again.

SUZANNE

Leonard Cohen

Suzanne takes you down to her place by the river,
You can hear the boats go by, you can spend the night forever,
And you know that she's half crazy, and that's why you want to be there
And she feeds you tea and oranges that come all the way from China,
And just when you want to tell her that you have no love to give her,
She gets you on her wavelength and lets the river answer
That you've always been her lover.

And you want to travel with her,
And you want to travel blind,
And you think you'll maybe trust her,
For she's touched your perfect body with her mind.

And Jesus was a sailor when he walked upon the water,
And he spent a long time watching from a lonely wooden tower,
And when he knew for certain only drowning men could see him,
He said, "All men shall be sailors then until the sea shall free them."
But he himself was broken long before the sky would open,
Forsaken, almost human, he sank beneath your wisdom like a stone.

And you want to travel with him
And you want to travel blind,
And you think you'll maybe trust him,
For he's touched your perfect body with his mind.

Suzanne takes your hand and she leads you to the river,
She is wearing rags and feathers from Salvation Army counters,
And the sun pours down like honey on our lady of the harbor,
And she shows you where to look amid the garbage and the flowers.
There are heroes in the seaweed, there are children in the morning,
They are leaning out for love, and they will lean that way forever
While Suzanne holds the mirror.

And you want to travel with her
And you want to travel blind,
And you think you'll maybe trust her,
For you've touched her perfect body with your mind.