

Song List

- 188 Come, Come, Whoever You Are
- 295 Sing Out Praises for the Journey
- 195 Let us Wander Where We Will
- 116 I'm On My Way (Encore)

Gathering music:

- Wayne - Bartok

Announcements: Board Member

Bell: Board member

Prelude:

Introduce speaker

Jim Fisher, born into the Unitarian Universalist faith, attended the Arlington Virginia Unitarian Church as a child, and was instructed some of that time by Eileen Brennan.

While attending Bowdoin he also attended the Unitarian Universalist Church of Brunswick. In graduate school he joined the Eno River Unitarian Universalist Church in Durham, North Carolina. During a series of job changes he has subsequently joined the St. Johns Unitarian Church of Cincinnati, the Yellow Springs Unitarian Fellowship in Ohio, and more recently in Maine the UU Churches in Yarmouth, Augusta, returning to Brunswick before moving one last time to Blue Hill eleven years ago. \

He holds a PhD with a focus on the relation of population and social change. He currently works as the senior planner at the Hancock County Planning Commission.

Call to Worship

The Székely (Sekler) Hymn (translation by Nagy Ferenc of Segesvar in Romania and G.K. Beach of Arlington VA)

"Who knows the pathway where hard fate shall lead us,
What gleam yet pierces through the dark of night?
Still lead your people once more to their glory
On legend's starpath, Csaba, prince of light.
Small band of Székelys, battered as an old rock
Faithfully standing in the plain, we saw
We're inundated by a hundred storm-floods.
God, save our homeland, Transylvania!"

"Whoever you are, whatever you bring, wherever you are on your journey--you belong here because you are here, and because in this special place, in these special moments, we bid one another welcome."

(heard at First Unitarian Congregation, Toronto ON whose partner church is Second Unitarian Church in Budapest Hungary)

Chalice lighting

We are a Unitarian Universalist faith community. Each week we join thousands of others around the world in rekindling the steady flame of our shared faith as we light the chalice. In this precious time we gather to gaze into each other, out at the vast galaxies, and into our own depths, that by knowing the source we might make the fire stronger and yet not be consumed. We light this chalice to call us here, into this room, into this community, into this sacred place and time.

Please rise as you are able and begin each sentence with me saying, "We light this chalice." And so we say together,

Congregation: *We light this chalice*

*We light this chalice,
for the light of truth,*

*We light this chalice,
for the warmth of love,*

*We light this chalice,
for the fire of commitment.*

*We light this chalice,
As a symbol of our faith, as we gather together.*

Opening hymn:

Please remain standing and join in singing our opening hymn #188 *Come, Come, Whoever You Are*

Welcoming visitors:

Each week we open our doors wide and welcome both old friends and new faces. Please raise your hand if you are visiting us for the first time, if you wish to and only if you wish. John will bring you the microphone to introduce yourself and tell us where you are from.

Thank you and welcome. Please join us in the community room for coffee after the service.

Children's Story

Whispering Game:

Whisper to your neighbor so that nobody else will hear.

Whisper only once.

If you aren't sure what you heard, do your best to capture what you think was said or its intent.

Do not intentionally change what you think you heard.

“Send reinforcements. We're going to advance.”

“Some call at bells, bestow my eyes”

“Get gongs on ropes and face the sky.”

“Get peaches, go fill our bait with gum”

“Throw every hand, try every rung.”

From all that dwells below the skies

let songs of hope and faith arise;

let peace, goodwill on earth be sung

through every land, by every tongue

Reading

Unitarian Universalist Origins: Our Historic Faith *By Mark W. Harris*

Unitarians and Universalists have always been heretics. We are heretics because we want to choose our faith, not because we desire to be rebellious. “Heresy” in Greek means “choice.” During the first three centuries of the Christian church, believers could choose from a variety of tenets about Jesus. Among these was a belief that Jesus was an entity sent by God on a divine mission. Thus the word “Unitarian” developed, meaning the oneness of God. Another religious choice in the first three centuries of the Common Era (CE) was universal salvation. This was the belief that no person would be condemned by God to eternal damnation in a fiery pit. Thus a Universalist believed that all people will be saved. Christianity lost its element of choice in 325 CE when the Nicene Creed established the Trinity as dogma. For centuries thereafter, people who professed Unitarian or Universalist beliefs were persecuted.

Robert Frost (1874–1963). Mountain Interval. 1920.

The Road Not Taken

Two roads diverged in a yellow wood,
And sorry I could not travel both
And be one traveler, long I stood
And looked down one as far as I could
To where it bent in the undergrowth;

Then took the other, as just as fair,
And having perhaps the better claim,
Because it was grassy and wanted wear;
Though as for that the passing there

Had worn them really about the same,

And both that morning equally lay
In leaves no step had trodden black.
Oh, I kept the first for another day!
Yet knowing how way leads on to way,
I doubted if I should ever come back.

I shall be telling this with a sigh
Somewhere ages and ages hence:
Two roads diverged in a wood, and I—
I took the one less traveled by,
And that has made all the difference.

Hymn:

Please rise now and join in singing: 295 Sing Out Praises for the Journey

Spoken meditation

Let us gather ourselves in the spirit of meditation, for words followed by silence

Spoken meditation

Inner Light

There is an inner light that guides our lives
That gives us purpose, hope, and strength
To do that which we must to find —
Fulfillment as we move through life.

Its voice is music, art, and prayer,
Is dancing, song, and poetry.
It seeks out justice in our courts of law
And healing by the doctor's hands.

Wherever kindness, love, and sympathy
And comforting are found, a silent glow
Of inner light is felt. Its gentle pulse
Extends into the universe.

Silent meditation musical response: Wayne Smith – Bartok?

Responsive Reading

Please remain seated and join in reading???

Offering:

The offering will now be given and received. If you are a first time visitor, please let the plate pass you by, for your presence is your gift. Let the ushers now pass amongst you.

Please join me in reading the words in the Order of Service

Congregational response: For these and all gifts of our community, we are grateful.

Joys and Sorrows:

In the life of a congregation there are triumphs and trials for all of us and for each of us. This is the time that we set aside in our service to lift up the joys and the sorrows of our lives. Please stand and take the microphone, introduce yourself and in very brief words tell us your joy or sorrow.

For all we have heard and all that goes unspoken in our hearts, we light this candle.

Please join me in reading the response printed in the Order of Service:

Congregational Response:

Thus do we weave our lives together.

We mourn. We rejoice. We will remember.

Musical interlude:

Hymn

Please rise as you are able and sing: 195 Let us Wander Where We Will

Sermon

This sermon has four parts: prologue, methodology, Diaspora and epilogue. If you become lost, you may return to the mantra of Glinda the Good Witch, “there’s no place like home”. Click your heels three times. This may help to tide you over until coffee is served in the community room.

Prologue: People move, things move, ideas move

A child attending Sunday school at the Arlington Virginia Unitarian Universalist Church
I had to be wrenched, sometimes physically, from the Sunday School class room
where some sympathetic adult was content to sit with us
where we made crafts of clay and crayons
where we learned how scientific knowledge of groundwater movement

prophesied seven year draughts,
and that even miracles have explanations.
Taken from this hand and mind occupation
to join the other classes for the children's worship service, oh my.
Tedious with the swollen ranks of our baby boom generation,
crowded on wooden benches. Hearing and reciting UU credo,
long forgotten, except for snippets, like this one...

[Please join me if this doxology has been reverberating in your mind these many years. No need to stand.]

*From all that dwell below the skies
let songs of hope and faith arise;
let peace, goodwill on earth be sung
through every land, by every tongue*

But,
On the back wall of that children's sanctuary was a mural depicting cultures in far away lands,
Women in middle eastern attire, perhaps scenes from Palestine,
Were there camels?
While the dull words of worship service led me to daydream,
That mural told of our interwoven fabric of America
and our ancient connection to modernity
and in some subliminal way,
told me that we were and we are part of
a great Unitarian Universalist Diaspora.



Life Course Analysis - A Methodology

Walking along an embankment in rural Bangladesh,
The muddy remains of the monsoon season feeding bright green rice seedlings,
A pale-skinned Bideshi (foreigner),
I use the familiar greeting,
Apnar bari khutai? Where is your home?

I am an expatriate in your country
to understand why you choose to stay where you are
or to move on to another place
Ek jaiga theke ono jaiga jai – from one place to another you go
Ek jaiga theke ono jaiga jai – from one place to another you go
I have gone from one place to another all my life
Have you?

I am here in your village, this village to understand your life.
Apni khutai thaken? Where do you live?
Are you living here now?

Is this where you eat, sleep, work, play?

Apnar bari khutai? Where is your home?

Is this your home?

Is this your place on this earth, your center?

Do you belong to this place?

Is your house also your home?

Are you a stranger in this place?

Why are you here?

I want to trace the course of your life,
to understand how your needs, hopes, aspirations and crises
brought you to this place.

You may have made great sacrifices to be here.

Perhaps you were forced by war, famine, floods and intolerance
to move on and on, eventually to this place.

When in 1947 your country was torn apart,
and you with your family fled to refugee camps
where you witnessed so many sick and dying and so much hunger
Even now you witness famine, with neighbors struggling for food and shelter.
And as your land is taken by money lenders
you are left with little here
and uncertainty elsewhere.

You have left behind a trail of family, friends, and neighbors

You have endured much to be here now.

Is this a better place than you were?

I want to understand how migration has changed your life

“Stanantor ebong unayon” Migration and development.

Is this the place you meant to be?

Has your life’s trajectory carried you to better places

where you can fulfill your inmost dreams?

For you that are here and have always been here,

And you that are passing through,

Do you have dreams of another place, a new home?

Where would you go?

What will be your sojourn?

I record your life course to understand how you moved,

how ideas have moved you

I want to add it all up, you, your neighbors, your parents and children

I want to paint a mural on the back wall of our sanctuary, our academy

To share the life course of your society

I want to understand, perhaps a little,
why you are here, and
is this place your home?

Diaspora

(from [Greek](#) διασπορά, "scattering, dispersion")

Most often we think of a scattering of people forced by war, intolerance, floods or famine into a mass migration.

- European Jews expelled or exterminated, scapegoats of a failed economy
- Africans taken across the ocean as slaves, to profit America's plantation economy
- Bangladeshis fleeing from a wrathful Pakistani army
- Residents of the lower ninth ward in New Orleans, fleeing from water - presage a future of unparalleled diasporas driven by global climate change.

You may say, this is no Diaspora, this Unitarian Universalist history.
We have not been thrown out of Eden,
chased from our homes by war or flood to a foreign land,
we have not been enslaved or subjected to second-class citizenship.

On the other hand, we are by our very nature a scattered people,
We too are driven by external events
and our internal drive to find a home.






Our Unitarian roots, say historians, are in Transylvania.

[Transylvania ... That bored child in me, waiting for worship service to end, snaps awake, but would only conjure images of dark castles, tall candelabras, and bats, lots of bats and Count Dracula – who I think must have been a backsliding Calvinist.]



I cannot paint the mural of our Diaspora this morning
I haven't the time nor a palette rich enough to pull our scattered lives into focus.

We do have our heroes and our martyrs, and their lives coursed across nations and religious philosophies.

<p>Michael Servetus born in 1511 of Catholic and Jewish families, suspected of participating in protestant activities in college. Travelled through Germany and Italy, pursuing studies in theology, medicine and cartography. He is credited with developing a non-trinitarian Christology very influential in the development of UU in eastern Europe.) Servetus was condemned on two counts, for spreading and preaching Nontrinitarianism and opposing infant baptism) and was burned at the stake with his books for heresy in Geneva at the age of 42.</p>	
<p>Francis Dávid (aka David Ferenc), born in 1510, who converted from Catholicism to Lutheranism to Calvinism and finally to Unitarianism, and who persuaded King John Sigismund to accept Unitarianism, and at the same time to promote the coexistence of all regions in the Decree of Religious Tolerance--known as The Edict of Torda--enacted at the Diet of Torda in 1568. Tried as an innovator, Dávid died in prison at Deva in 1579.</p>	
<p>Norbert Capek, born a Catholic in 1870 in Bohemia, converted to Baptism at age 18, travelled across Europe as an ordained Baptist evangelist. He travelled to American and converted to Unitarianism at age 51, returning to Prague to form the Liberal Religious Fellowship and who invented our flower communion in 1923 in Prague. During the Nazi occupation of Czechoslovakia he was sent to Dachou concentration camp, where he was executed in a gas chamber in 1942</p>	
<p>John Murray, born to strict Calvinist parents in 1741 in Alton, Hampshire in England. He moved at age 10 to Ireland, returning to England at age 19. Subsequent to his return he was excommunicated from the family's church for professing belief in universalism. At age 29 he emigrated to "lose himself in America." He travelled or "itinerated" the east coast preaching the universalist message. He and Hosea Ballou are credited as the fathers of American Universalism.</p>	
<p>Bela Viktor János Bartok</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Born in 1881 into a catholic family in part of greater Hungary • He struggled with poor health as a young child and was kept indoors (and close to a piano) and inherited his mother's love of music • Move to Budapest for advanced study in music • Became very interested in the diverse folk music traditions of the region and began incorporating folk themes into his compositions. • Bartok ultimately rejected Catholicism and was living a secular life. His letters at this time suggested a rejection of all religions. • His interest in folk music from many neighboring countries put him at odds with the increasingly nationalistic leadership of Hungary. • Bartok was also a budding naturalist, collecting plants, minerals and insects. • Bartok's interests, diversity in nature, ethnomusicology and diverse folk traditions, may resonate with some of us in this room. Now considered a founder of ethnomusicology. • In 1907, at the age of 26, he traveled to Transylvania and there first encountered Unitarianism. • "Bartók thought life's meaning was not directed towards immortality or the afterlife, but to "give a few people some minor pleasures" and to "have a zest 	

for life, a keen interest in the living universe." "If I ever crossed myself, it would signify 'In the name of Nature, Art, and Science.'" He concluded his first missive with, "Greetings from An Unbeliever (who is more honest than a great many believers)."

- In 1916 at the age of 37 Bartok declared his conversion to Unitarianism.
- He joined the Mission House Congregation of the Unitarian Church in Budapest in 1917. (He briefly directed music, but was too conservative!)
- His anti-fascist views made life increasingly difficult in Hungary.
- He moved to America in 1940, but never fully adjusted to his new home.
- He died five years later in New York from leukemia.
- His son, Bela Bartok, jr. remained in Hungary and later became president of the Hungarian Unitarian Church.

Epilogue: People move, things move, ideas move

People move. Our Unitarian Universalist founders moved and moved again.
They changed religions and changed again.
They spent much of their lives seeking truth, justice and I think seeking a home.

It's a bit unfair to give so much attention to the martyred leaders of a faith.
Great people, great leaders, great thinkers abound.
Many will lead productive lives,
cheering on their causes,
organizing people and resources,
accomplishing great things.

Many will grow frustrated
that their ideas slip and slide,
never gaining social traction.

Great leaders and great ideas
Like any seed, or seedling,
May struggle in thin and rocky soils,
Yet may thrive when conditions are right.

Alfred Kroeber, the dean of American Anthropology postulated that complex social patterns form a "superorganic" structure, or "style pattern".
Societies build upon this superorganic structure with incremental change
Ideas, traveling across continents, like invasive species,
may find their ecological niche.

Some are prized,

- the lupines social changed, bringing new and brilliant colors to our social landscape.

Some challenge our neat and organized social order,

- the Eurasian Milfoil that change open waters to weedy thickets.



The superorganic structure can prove adaptable
Absorbing new ideas, allowing each to develop or not
Taking what works, adding another color to the style palette

Or the superorganic can ossify,
The brittle archeological remains of past greatness.
Rejecting innovation, ignoring or suppressing change
Sending forth the innovators to other lands.
An intellectual and spiritual Diaspora.

May our home, America
May our home, Unitarian Universalism
Be homes for scattered people.
People that innovate, that defy
People that question and challenge the status quo,
People that advocate for a greater good
May they find a home in this place, this religion,
this superorganic soil in which
Roots may find the water and nourishment so long denied

[İsmet Özel](#)'s poem titled "Of Not Being a [Jew](#) concludes

*Your load is heavy
He's very heavy
Just because he's your brother
Your brothers are your [pogroms](#)
When you reach the doorsteps of your friends
Starts your Diaspora*

Finally, as Dorothy concludes after her remarkable sojourn in Oz, (Let's all click our heels three times and recite: "There's no place like home.")

Hymn

Please rise as you are able and sing: #116 *I'm on My Way*

Benediction

Epilogue

Margaret Fisher – In Coming Home

Coming home to friends, to woods,
To lake and camp, to bay and island,
And to the village we have known
Is coming back to purest gentleness,
Uncomplicated love encompassing
Our past and future dreams.

The warm embrace of friends in greeting,
The dappled, sunlit forest path,
The yodeling of loons upon the lake,
The welcome shelter of the camp,
Familiar places in the village,
Great open vistas on the bay,
And fragrant island spruce and mosses –

Here we find the inspiration
That sustains us. Here the healing
Beauty, peace, and love, the memories
To which we joyously return

Extinguish the flames --

Postlude:

- Bartok?