



UU Belong: The Path of Covenant

Jim Fisher, Worship Leader

Charles Stephens, Worship Associates

Odin and Ukiah Luker, Readers

Welcome and Announcements

Gary Shellehammer

Welcome and Centering Thought

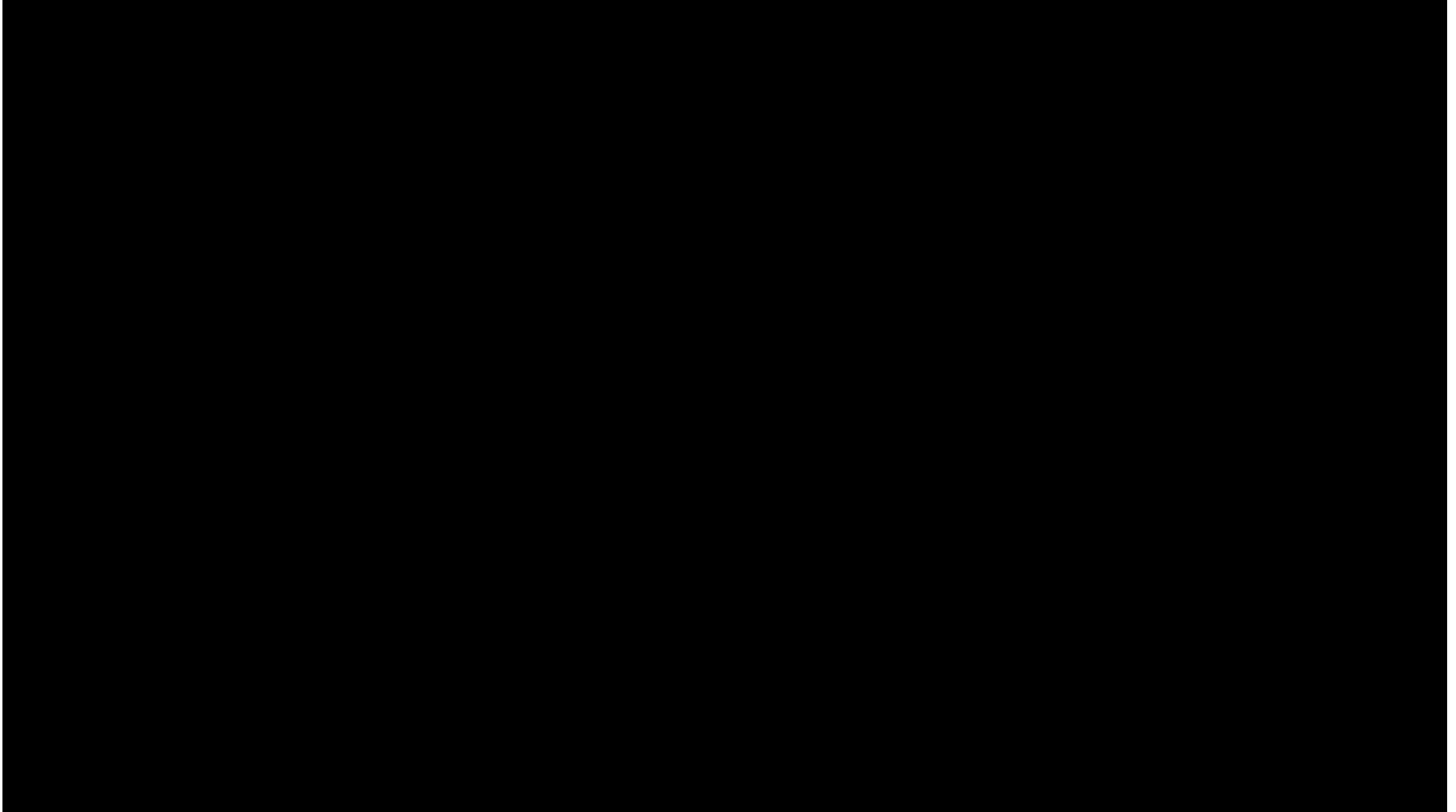
Wordsworth's magnificent poem, "Intimations of Immortality from Recollections of Early Childhood."

There was a time when meadow, grave, and stream,
The earth and every common sight,
To me did seem
Appareled in celestial light,
The glory and the freshness of a dream.

Our birth is but a sleep and a forgetting:
The Soul that rises with us, our life's Star,
Hath had elsewhere its setting,
And cometh from afar:
Not in entire forgetfulness,
And not in utter nakedness,
But trailing clouds of glory do we come
From God who is our home:
Heaven lies about us in our infancy!

Prelude

The South Wind



Morning Has Broken by Eleanor Farieon (1881-1965)

Morning has broken like the first morning
Blackbird has spoken like the first bird
Praise for the singing, praise for the morning
Praise for them springing fresh from the world

Sweet the rain's new fall, sunlit from Heaven
Like the first dewfall on the first grass
Praise for the sweetness of the wet garden
Sprung in completeness where His feet pass

Mine is the sunlight, mine is the morning
Born of the one light, Eden saw play
Praise with elation, praise every morning
God's recreation of the new day



Dorothea Kaufmann

"From the bottom of my very existence
I am pervaded with light energy,
shining colours to my eye,
warmth to my skin,
inspiration to my soul.
In this unity
of creative sparks
and sparkling creation
life unfolds.

Let us open our senses to the light within and around us
and send it out with shining examples
into the world!"





Love is the spirit of this church,
and service its law.

This is our great covenant:
To dwell together in peace,
To seek the truth in love,
And to help one another.

First Walk



Jim (read by Ukiah Luker) and Tom (read by Odin Luker), about 12 years old, get together in their neighboring camps on Tunk Lake in Maine. Jim lives in Virginia and Tom lives in Massachusetts. Their families come to Maine every summer. That's the only time they get to hang out together. They are in the Maine woods, no electricity, not much going on but woods, lakes and family. They like to escape the family part, especially chores like washing dishes and cleaning the cabin. There are paths to Black Mountain, Rainbow Pond, the Beaver Dam and other places. They escape for hours.

Tom: Where to today?

Jim: I don't care. I just want to get out of here before I have to wash the dishes.

Tom: I broke a plate last night. I don't think I'll be washing dishes for a while. Now it's carrying buckets. That's OK, but boring.

Jim: They should put in a pump. I want to build one that you pedal, like a bicycle.

Tom: Cool. I bet the ancient Egyptians could have used a bicycle.

Jim: Huh?

Tom: We're always talking about the ancient Egyptians in church, how they got water from the Nile river to grow food and take baths and stuff. They lived in a desert. I don't know, they just love to talk about the Egyptians in Sunday school.

Jim: I go to the UU Church in Arlington. Are you a UU too?

Tom: A UU 2? In a tutu? You'd look pretty dumb in tutu.

Jim: You would too, in a tutu.

Tom: Shut up. I'm not wearing a tutu.

Jim: So what about the Egyptians? They talk about them in my Sunday school too. It was cool how they got water to the desert to grow food and cotton. Maybe they could have used a bicycle pump? They were too busy building pyramids.

Tom: Sunday school is OK sometimes. I like the teachers this year. They let us goof off a lot. Last winter I kept asking why other churches seem so worried about trespassing? The baptist church across the street always got mad when we trespassed in their playground, but they pray that we should forgive trespassing. I don't get it.

Jim: I like trespassing. We sneak into our neighbor's yards and move their furniture around. Is that a sin?

Tom: Yeah, you're trespassing. But I think they will forgive you if they are Baptists.

Jim: Can you tell who is a UU and who isn't?

Tom: Kind of. The parking lot at our church is full of little cars, Saabs and bugs and old Ramblers. Some of the other churches have a lot of big, new cars, like Cadillacs. I don't think I've ever seen a Cadillac at our church.

Jim: Me neither. Just a lot of weird little cars. My family drives a VW bus most of the time. It's kind of lame. I wonder if someone drove up to our church in a jacked-up Plymouth Challenger with headers, an air scoop and glass packs if people would think they belonged?

Tom: Yeah, and what if they had American flags on their biker jackets, really short hair and were smoking?

Jim: What if they were wearing tutus too?

Tom: They'd belong if they were wearing tutus.

Jim: Ya, we're pretty weird. The part I like about Sunday school is making stuff. We always have clay and paper and popsicle sticks. Our teachers like to talk about the Egyptians and then we can make pyramids or aqueducts or stuff that is kind of Egyptian.

Tom: Sometimes they tell us stories from ancient Greece and Rome.

Jim: Did they tell the story about the war between the Athenians and the Spartans? I thought the Spartans were kind of cool with their catapults. I built a catapult before we came to Maine this summer. It kinda works with tennis balls.

Tom: They probably wanted us to see that Athenians were smarter and maybe their art and refinement was better than the Spartan's military aggression. The pen is mightier than the catapult.

Jim: I used a pen when I built the catapult.

Tom: There's Rainbow Pond. Cool.

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Second Walk



Tom (Read by Charles Stephens) and Jim are on summer break from college and back at the family's respective camps on Tunk Lake. Tom is studying at Macalester College in St. Paul, Minnesota and Jim attend Bowdoin College in Brunswick, Maine. Both are in the throws of liberal arts education, reflecting on High School and thinking about what to do after college.

Jim: Where to?

Tom: The old same place.

Jim: Nick Danger, Third Eye.

Tom: Welcome to the future. We're glad you made it!

Jim: We're all Bozos on this bus!

Tom: I figured you would be a fan of Firesign Theater. Everything you know is wrong.

Jim: Yep. We all need to get away sometime.

Tom: So, how is college treating you? Did you find a class on building catapults and bicycle powered water pumps?

Jim: Almost. I was an inch away from engineering school, but Bowdoin is great. I can barely keep up with the work. Every semester is a new mountain of books. It doesn't leave much time for anything else, or shouldn't. I'm all over the place. How's Macalester?

Tom: Hard, like you say. I'm majoring in poli-sci and geography, so I'm not fighting with the pre-meds. I have to study day and night though. It doesn't leave much time for anything else. Maybe all those Sundays talking about Egypt shifted me to geography. I stopped going to church after that.

Jim: I guess I stopped going around 8th grade. The choices were to take a class on sexuality or sit in the adult service. I tried the sexuality class, but I didn't really get the point. We'd sit in a circle talking about relationships and sex. I guess I wanted a more experiential education.

Tom: I don't know. LRY was a sort of experiential education at my church. I don't think our parents planned on us getting that much experience. It was fun while it lasted. I ended up going to a boarding school where they didn't have a UU church.

Jim: I was a little too young for LRY. By the time I was old enough, it was gone. There was one older couple, the Harmons, that kept roping us in. I had them when I was in Sunday School and they just kept inviting our class back, right into college. It became part of every Christmas vacation. I hardly knew them, but they cared about us and wanted us to stay in touch.

Tom: I stopped going, but it was good to have the option. I went back a few times, like when Martin Luther King was assassinated and after the massacre at Kent State. I was really upset. We were all upset. I'm not sure what I expected going to church. What I found was a lot of people just as upset as me. At least I didn't feel so alone. It seems like some of the other churches don't care or don't want to stand up against the violence.

Jim: I don't have much excuse at Bowdoin. I like to get up early and the UU church is a short walk. I started going off and on. I like Bowdoin, a lot, but it's nice to go to a church with mostly older people that are just happy I'm there. They aren't grading my performance. I feel like the only one there under 50. They are all doing more to protest against war, racism, poverty than me. I'm just trying to pass all my classes. But, they always invite me to come back.

Tom: Most of the time there hasn't been a UU church close enough, so I haven't been going. My folks moved when I finished high school and joined a Society of Friends. There isn't any place to go back to. Anyway, the more I study, the more I resent how the Christian church condoned slavery and the narrow-minded attitude of missionaries in the Third World. I wrote a paper in high school about a model school curriculum that involved world religion so students could have a broad choice of religious beliefs. I guess that isn't going to happen.

Jim: I haven't taken any classes in religion, but a lot of classes in anthropology. You can't really look at other cultures without looking at religion. It's not the same as a world religion course, but you get some ideas about how different things can be.

Tom: Geography is the same. I'm interested in how people build their environment, houses, roads, and so on in line with their culture. Where I grew up there are a million new subdivisions full of tacky tacky little boxes.

Jim: And they all look just the same.

Tom: We could do better. I'm thinking about going to grad school in planning.

Jim: Last year I did a year a year in India. I lived with a Brahmin family, a pretty religious family. I couldn't understand half of what was going on, but I couldn't describe Unitarian Universalist covenants to Hindus either. I remember trying to explain this to a Brahmin who finally said he got it, and he proceeded to show me a series of pictures about how one ascends to higher beings through reincarnation if one lives within the prescription of caste. I gave up. Sikhs, Parsis, and Jains seemed to get the idea of covenant a bit more. I'm applying to be a Peace Corps volunteer.

Tom: We're all bozos on this bus.

Jim: Back to the shadows again...

Spirit of Life

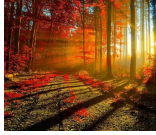
#123 Spirit of Life by Carolyn McDade

Spirit of Life, come unto me.
Sing in my heart all the stirrings of compassion.
Blow in the wind, rise in the sea;
Move in the hand, giving life the shape of justice.
Roots hold me close; wings set me free;
Spirit of Life, come to me, come to me.

Spirit of Love, come unto me.
Deep in my soul all the mystery of creation.
Teach me to care, peace let there be;
Lead me to truth, showing forth the paths of wisdom.
Roots hold me close, wings set me free,
Spirit of Love, come to me, come to me.



Third Walk



Tom (Read by Charles Stephens) and Jim meet again for a hike at Tunk Lake. Both are in their 60s. Much as transpired in their lives, births, deaths, many moves from one place to another. They worked together for more than 15 years and belonged to the same church. They look back and look forward.

Tom: Hard to believe it has been so long.

Jim: Funny how things work out. Where to?

Tom: The old same place?

Jim: Sure. It hasn't changed even if everything else has.

Tom: Graduate school pretty much set my compass. After the University of Rhode Island I wanted to work in more rural settings. I went overboard on the first job, working all over Northern Maine. There was more money in planning back in the 70s and early 80s. I wrote a lot of comprehensive plans, transportation plans, housing assessment and environmental plans for really small towns like Chapman and Portage Lake.

Jim: Is that when you started going to church again?

Tom: One of the reasons I was willing to move to Presque Isle was that they had a small Unitarian Universalist Congregation in Caribou and Presque Isle.

Jim: What next?

Tom: I moved to the Lakes Region Planning Commission in New Hampshire. The work was similar, writing comprehensive plans, housing analyses and a Groundwater Protection Manual, among other things. I joined the Laconia UU Society and stayed for about five years. It wasn't a big church, but bigger than in Northern Maine. I got involved with some church activities there.

Jim: You came to Maine after that. I think you got to the Hancock County Planning Commission in 1990.

Tom: Right, I jumped at the chance to be the Executive Director of a small regional planning commission. I joined the Ellsworth UU church right away. I think the first person I met was Tom Stipe. He was very active then and loved to ride a bicycle. I got more involved in Ellsworth, particularly serving on the UUCE board. I've been here 32 years?

Jim: You never left, even for a while?

Tom: Note really. I have stayed with HCPC and the UUCE for more than 25 years. I like to travel to exotic places during my vacations, but I never moved. I was single most of this time, so the Ellsworth Church has been a place to know people beyond the limits of relationship from work.

Jim: It's been pretty similar for me, but I've collected a few more churches. In Graduate school at UNC I married Donna and we attended the UU Church in Durham. We moved about every 1 to 2 years as I pivoted between different jobs. I think I've joined ten different UU churches in Virginia, North Carolina, Ohio and Maine. It has been a long path to belonging.

When you move with children you want to belong and you want them to have friends and feel like they belong too. We could pretty much count on the UU kids to be undisciplined and creative. I enjoyed teaching RE in Ohio and Maine. I'm not sure I taught anything at all, but it was fun.

Tom: Grown children came late in life to me. They were a little old to drag to church and never took to it.

Jim: Mine didn't either. So much for indoctrination. One is going to a Congregational Church in Massachusetts and the other doesn't attend. It's all about free will. I'm not going to burn a question mark in their yard for not attending a UU church. I remember once apologizing to a UU minister for missing church. He corrected me saying I should never apologize. It's all about free will ... and coffee.

Tom: Speaking of which, let's turn around. A cup of coffee sounds excellent.

Closing Hymn We Shall Be Known

Words and music by Karisha Longaker
of MaMuse.

We shall be known by the company we keep
By the ones who circle round to tend these fires
We shall be known by the ones who sow and reap
The seeds of change, alive from deep within the earth

It is time now, it is time now that we thrive
It is time we lead ourselves into the well
It is time now, and what a time to be alive
In this Great Turning we shall learn to lead in love
(2x)



Benediction

The Road Not Taken BY ROBERT FROST

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.