



# Soul Matters

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What does it mean to be  
a people of SANCTUARY?



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# Calendar Connections

October 2018

*Click on the name on each event for more information or inspiration.*

## Interfaith:

- [Feast of St Francis of Assisi](#) (Christian) - Oct. 4
- World Communion Sunday (Christian) - Oct. 7
- National Observance of [Children's Sabbath](#) - Oct. 20-22
- [Reformation Day](#) (Christian) - Oct. 31
- [Samhain](#) (Wiccan) - Oct. 31 - Nov. 1 [[more](#)]

## Unitarian Universalist:

- Birthday of [e e cummings](#) - Oct. 14
- [Michael Servetus](#) burned at the stake in Geneva - Oct. 27 (1553) (more [here](#))

## National & Cultural Holidays:

- [LGBTQ History Month](#)
- [Breast Cancer Awareness Month](#)
- [Bullying Prevention Month](#)
- Birthday of Mohandas Gandhi - Oct. 2 (1869)
- NASA launches first peopled mission, Apollo 7 - Oct. 11 (1968)
- [Indigenous Peoples Day](#) - Oct. 8
- [National Coming Out Day](#) - Oct. 11
- John Brown's Raid - Oct. 16 (1859)
- Laquan McDonald is killed by officer Jason Van Dyke in Chicago - Oct. 20 (2014)
- Suffrage Movement March In New York - Oct. 23 (1915)
- [United Nations Day](#) - Oct. 24
- Halloween, All Soul's Eve - Oct. 31
- Dia de los Muertos - Oct.31 - Nov.2

## For Fun and On the Fringe:

- World Vegetarian Day - Oct. 1
- First episode of Unitarian [Rod Sterling](#)'s "Twilight Zone" - Oct. 1 (1959)
- [Mad Hatter Day](#) - Oct. 6
- [World Smile Day](#) - Oct. 6
- Apple introduce new iPod - Oct. 13 (2005)
- [Clergy Appreciation Day](#) - Oct. 14
- War of the Worlds radio lay causes mass hysteria - Oct. 30 (1938)

# Chalice Lightings & Opening Words

## **This Place Is Sanctuary**

*Rev. Kathleen McTigue, in Shine and Shadow*

Full piece found at <http://skinnerhousebooks.tumblr.com/post/96454625324/this-place-is-sanctuary-by-kathleen-mctigue-in>

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...

## **We are All Longing to Go Home**

*Starhawk*

"We are all longing to go home to some place we have never been – a place half-remembered and half-envisioned we can only catch glimpses of from time to time. Community. Somewhere, there are people to whom we can speak with passion without having the words catch in our throats. Somewhere a circle of hands will open to receive us, eyes will light up as we enter, voices will celebrate with us whenever we come into our own power. Community means strength that joins our strength to do the work that needs to be done. Arms to hold us when we falter. A circle of healing. A circle of friends. Someplace where we can be free."

*May our time together be another step on our journey home.*

## **The Strength to Go Out and Shelter Others**

*The Soul Matters Team*

Welcome to this holy space.  
This shelter for our hearts and hopes,  
a sanctuary for our deepest longings.  
Here may we find rest and repair,  
connection and comfort.  
Here may we find our center  
our breath  
our voice,  
And the strength to go out into the world and be shelter for others.

## **River Call**

*Rev. Manish Mishra-Marzetti*

Full reading found at <https://fpwatertown.org/this-is-now-by-margaret-weis-may-19-2013/>  
Also [here](#) and in *Voices from the Margins: An Anthology of Meditations* (Skinner House Books)

"...Rest here, in your both, with me," the river calls.  
'Listen to how I flow, the sound of life coursing all around you.'  
Let the current hold you,  
Let the current guide you,  
The river that gently flows through your soul,  
Whispering,  
'Come, let us worship.'"

## **Today We Return to the Shelter of Each Other**

*The Soul Matters Team*

Today we return to the shelter of each other  
To arms that hold us in the midst of the storms  
To voices that remind us of our own  
To hearts that accept us for who we are.  
May we be for each other a source of safety and sending  
May we offer each other both comfort and challenge.  
May this place of peace lead us to share peace with others.  
Let us begin.

## **The Abundance of Our Lives Together**

*Katie Gelfand*

<https://www.uua.org/worship/words/chalice-lighting/abundance-our-lives-together>

We light our chalice as a symbol of gratitude  
as we celebrate the abundance of our lives together.  
In this sanctuary we harvest bushels of strength for one another,  
and offer our crop with the hands of compassion and generosity.  
In the authentic and gentle manner of our connections,  
we cultivate a simple sweetness to brighten our spirits.  
May we be grateful for the ways we nourish and uplift each other,  
For it is the sharing of this hallowed time together that sustains us.

## **The Spirit of Water**

*Katie Gelfand*

<https://www.uua.org/worship/words/chalice-lighting/spirit-water>

We light this chalice as a symbol of reunion.  
We reunite in this sanctuary to share the flow of our hearts with one another.  
We gather together in ritual  
to celebrate our fountains of joy  
to hold each other through storms of grief  
to guide one another through rapids of transformation  
to rest together on ponds of stillness.  
[To offer each other peace, so that we may share it with the world]

## **Be Still with Me and Enter**

*Rev. Marta Valentin*

Full piece found in [A Long Time Blooming](#) (UUA meditation Manual), page 17

I gather you to this time and space.  
Wind your thoughts like a river  
Toward the center of who we are...

## **Here in this sanctuary of ancient dreams...**

*Rev. Jack Mendelsohn*

<https://www.uua.org/worship/words/opening/5352.shtml>

Here in this sanctuary of ancient dreams and wisdom and beauty we come to grow, to be healed, to stretch mind and heart, to be challenged, renewed; to be helped in our own continuing struggles for meaning and for love; to help build a world with more justice and mercy in it; to be counted among the hoppers and doers.

In the face of cynicism, darkness, brutality around us and within, [may we find the courage to] affirm rather than despair, to think and act rather than simply adjust and succumb.

Here we invite the spirit of our own humanity and the healing powers under, around, through and beyond it, to give us the nerve and grace, the toughness and sensitivity, to search out the truth that frees, and the life that maketh all things new.

### **Being Sanctuary**

*Jennifer "Jo" VonRue, Linette Lowe*

<https://www.uua.org/worship/words/opening/being-sanctuary>

Welcome to this space, this sanctuary of peace where we come to not only create our best selves, but to also do the work of creating a beloved community. We come together today as individuals much like individual pieces of glass or pottery that are different shapes, sizes, and colors, all of which are broken, with imperfect jagged edges, but always beautiful.

While our pieces may not always fit neatly together, it is within this sanctuary, guided by our Principles that we gather together to create a beautiful mosaic. May the brokenness and beauty you find in one another create peace in this space and fill our hearts with love as we create worship together.

### **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.

### **All That You Need Lies Within You**

*Rev. Angela Herrera*

From [Reaching for the Sun](#) (UUA Meditation Manual), page 44

Consider this an invitation  
to you.

Yes – you  
with all your happiness  
and your burdens,  
your hopes and regrets.

An invitation if you feel good today,  
and an invitation if you do not,  
if you are aching –  
and there are so many ways to ache.

Whoever you are, however you are,  
wherever you are in your journey,  
this is an invitation to peace.

Peace in your heart  
and peace in your heart  
and – with every breath –  
peace in your heart.

Maybe your heart is heavy  
or hardened.  
Maybe it's troubled  
and peace can take up residence  
only in a small corner,  
only on the edge  
with all that is going on the world

And in your life.  
*Ni modo*. It doesn't matter.  
All that you need  
for a deep and comforting peace to grow  
lies within you.  
Once it is in your heart  
let it spread into your life  
let it pour from your life into the world –  
and once it is in the world,  
let it shine upon all beings

# Meditations, Prayers & Blessings

## **Breath Meditation**

*Samuel A Trumbore*

<https://www.uua.org/worship/words/meditation/130314.shtml>

Let us turn inward now  
Feel the rhythm of the breath.  
In and out, In and out,  
Find the peace of just being with the flow of the breath.  
Letting go of yesterday and tomorrow.  
Feel the restorative power of the peace of this moment.  
A peace, large enough to open  
to the concerns and sorrows that trouble us.  
A stillness, quiet enough to respond  
to the joys and celebrations that enliven us.  
There is safety here in the rhythm of the breath.  
The ebb and flow of life is enacted with each one.  
Taking in oxygen sustenance,  
Letting go of carbon dioxide waste.  
Taking in the fullness of experience  
Letting go of the residue that wants to cling to us.  
Cultivate inner peace and inner safety  
in this sanctuary  
dedicated to cultivating the Spirit of Life  
dedicated to being a beacon of love for all beings.

## **The Moment of Prayer is an Invitation**

*Earl K Holt III*

<https://www.uua.org/worship/words/meditation/5500.shtml>

The moment of prayer is an invitation to be calm in the midst of the tumult of the world and our over-busy lives, to bring together thought and feeling, mind and spirit, and to find some center -- some still point -- of perspective and peace.

Here in this sanctuary which has been the home for so many secret thoughts and hopes, fears and desires, may we feel free to look at ourselves with true honesty. May we be unafraid to face the decisions we have been trying to avoid, the doubts and questions it has been easier to ignore, the things we have tried to keep hidden not only from others but even from ourselves.

May we come to discover that there are resources within ourselves and beyond us that are as hidden but as real as our secret doubts and fears. New dimensions of the spirit within and without will be revealed to us as we confront ourselves honestly and come to understand that we are not isolated from the community of life and spirit, but that our soul's suffering connects us with the hidden suffering of others. May we come to see that in our deepest loneliness we are not alone, and may we be emboldened by this vision to reach out to others in their need and so finally to discover that to give is not only more blessed than to receive, but that to give to others is to receive what we most need for ourselves. Amen.

## **Holy Stuff**

*Marilyn Sewell*

<https://www.uua.org/worship/words/meditation/holy-stuff>

Father, Mother God, here we are together—rich and poor; educated and not so well educated; gay and straight; democrats and republicans; some of us with light skin, some of us with darker; some of us walking, some of us unable to walk: none of us as whole as we would like to be—help us to know that we are all your children and we are all holy stuff. May we be a blessing to the life of anyone who enters this sanctuary—and may this church be a true sanctuary—and may those who come as strangers in turn help us grow in wisdom, in compassion, and in joy of living. Amen.

## **Shantideva Prayer**

*Shantideva*

<https://www.uua.org/worship/words/quote-reading/shantideva-quote>

May I 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 I, too, abide  
To dispel the misery of the world.

## **A Way in the Wilderness**

*Jan Richardson*

<http://paintedprayerbook.com/2010/07/31/summer-and-sanctuary/>

God of the daylight,  
you come also in darkness,  
and even in shadows you make a home.  
Be rest to the weary  
and solace to the brokenhearted;  
be healing to the sick,  
and to the troubled, be peace.  
Be our comfort, our dreaming,  
our sleep, our delight;  
breathe through these hours,  
O great God of night.

## **Beneath the Hustle and Bustle**

*Rev. Angela Herrera*

From [Reaching for the Sun](#) (UUA Meditation Manual), page 32

Beneath the streams of thoughts  
That clambers and chatters  
Over the landscape of our interior world,

Beneath our habits of momentum and stirring,  
There is a stillness  
deep and peaceful  
the place where creation begins.

Who lives there?  
We know her my many names. Truth. Love. God. Wisdom.  
We turn our hearts toward her face, toward the mystery,  
and bring our prayers of awe, of longing, of hope, of exhaustion.

She holds us in our grief and anger,  
in our disappointment, our loneliness', and our rebirth.  
From her viewpoint she sees us  
Children of the stillness  
Children of love.  
She sees our place in the order of things  
joined together in the larger story  
and she invites us again and again into living  
invites us into loving,  
invites us into being loved.

May we be restored to wholeness  
and blessed with peace.  
May all those whom we encounter  
receive this blessing  
Through our being in the world

### **All of Us in the Arms**

*Rev. Angela Herrera*

From [Reaching for the Sun](#) (UUA Meditation Manual), page 37

This is a prayer for a fresh, unremarkable morning  
a prayer to bring us to attention before the steadiness of the world  
sunrises and sunsets, back and forth  
like the rocking of your grandmother's chair,  
life coming and going, rising and falling,  
droning and beating like ancient music  
and you, remarkable for your ordinariness within it,  
and your thinking about it, and your yearning for meaning.

You, dependant, spun into the interdependant web, confined to a body.  
You, independent, conscious, free, and so  
Sometimes also lonely, but unconfined in spirit.  
This is a prayer for you, for your well-being, your peace, your deep peace,  
and for everyone you love, and for their well-being,  
and for the friends we haven't met yet  
and for strangers we'll never meet,  
though we are closer to them than we think,  
all of us, in the arms of the earth,  
Our mother, with her rocking and singing.

# Readings

## Temple

Steve Garnaas-Holmes

<https://www.unfoldinglight.net/reflections/hssxb67ca63wtpwzts6lczpxhxng5c>

*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 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.

## **The Sanctuary**

*St. Catherine of Sienna*

<https://www.poetseers.org/spiritual-and-devotional-poets/christian/st-catherine-of-siena/st-catherine-of-siena-poems/sanct/index.html>

It could be said that God's foot is so vast  
That this entire earth is but a  
field on His  
toe,  
and all the forests in this world  
came from the same root of just  
a single hair  
of His.

What then is not a sanctuary?  
Where can I not kneel  
and pray at a shrine  
made holy by His  
presence?

## **Stop**

*Steve Garnaas-Holmes*

<https://www.unfoldinglight.net/reflections/6tk5wjbzbg!4tx3sbl2gn8ftgepcg>

*"Take these things out of here!  
Stop making my Father's house a marketplace!"  
—John 2.16*

In fact, stop everything.  
Get rid of all the Stuff,  
even religion itself.  
Shut down the hubbub.  
Enter into the stillness  
at the heart of everything,  
the Sabbath that is the real temple,  
the silence that is God.  
Don't run in the sanctuary,  
you can't hear the silence when you're busy.  
There's no substitute for stillness.  
The offering God desires is your presence.  
Stop  
and wait upon the Beloved.  
Breathe. This is the holy of holies.  
Destroy the temple of doing  
and let the temple of being  
rise up from within.

**Where God Is (*The sanctuary found in church*)**

*Kenny Wiley*

Full reading found at <https://www.uua.org/worship/words/reflection/where-god>

“The first time my heart felt broken, I went to church. When my mom died, I went to church. When I failed a class, I went to church. When I failed a friend, I went to church. When I felt like I’d failed at life, I went to church...”

**Red Brocade**

*Naomi Shihab Nye*

On the Sanctuary Movement and Immigration

Full poem found at <https://www.poets.org/poetsorg/poem/red-brocade>

The Arabs used to say,  
When a stranger appears at your door,  
feed him for three days  
before asking who he is,  
where he’s come from . . .  
That way, he’ll have strength  
enough to answer.  
Or, by then you’ll be  
such good friends  
you  
don’t care...

# Music

## Soul Matters Music Resources

Check out these five sources of support for music:

1. **Monthly Small Group Packet:** Our small group packets also contain music recommendations on the theme. These are intended for personal devotion and inspiration not community worship, but often the list does contain songs that can be used for worship services.
2. **UUMN (UU Musicians Network) Online Database:** The wonderful leadership of the UUMN have added our monthly themes to the UUMN music database. This provides a centralized place for Soul Matters musicians to post and share music ideas with each other. You also get to tap into the suggestions from other UU musicians from around the country. You can access the UUMN Music Database [here](#). More detail is provided on the "[music resources](#)" page in the members-only section of our Soul Matters website.
3. **Soul Matters Music Support Facebook Page:** This support page is for on-going sharing among Soul Matters musicians. Click [here](#) to go to the Facebook page.
4. **Soul Matters Worship Support Facebook Page:** This support page is for on-going sharing among worship leaders and teams. It is also a great source of music support. Click [here](#) to visit the page.
5. **Soul Matters Spotify Playlists:** We create a [Spotify](#) playlist for each month that includes a number of songs on the monthly theme. This is intended to provide inspiration for our small group participants but might be useful to musicians. Click [here](#) for links to the Spotify playlists for each month.

*Some special suggestions for this month...*

### **We Will Be the Shelter for Each Other**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OslDu5QFBdQ>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QxOdVvq8TbU>

### **Here Is My Home**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JmpwTC9HKNk>

# Stories For All Ages

## **The Umbrella Sanctuary**

*Tim Atkins*

<https://www.uua.org/worship/words/story/umbrella-sanctuary>

"Take this umbrella," said the old shopkeep. "I don't know why it's raining. But I do know that you can keep 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.

The old shopkeep waved her off. "No worries little girl. Just be sure to offer the umbrella to someone else when they need it."...

## **A Lamp in Every Corner**

*Janeen K Grohsmeyer*

<https://www.uua.org/worship/words/reading/5958.shtml>

"Zora washed her face and got ready for bed by the light of that flame. "Mother," Zora began, as she climbed into bed and lay down.

"Yes, little one?" her mother asked, tucking the red wool blanket around Zora's shoulders.

"Father said the light of the church comes from its people."

"Yes."

"But also, the people take their light from the church!" Over on the table by the fireplace, the shiny bronze lamp was still burning. "And we have that light every day."

"Yes, indeed," said her mother. "And even when we are not in church, even when the lamp is not lit, we carry the light of truth in our minds and the flame of love in our hearts..."

# Sermon Seeds

## *Angles, Ideas & Twists To Get Your Sermon Started!*

Don't forget to explore the small group packet for additional sermon seeds. It contains quotes and poems to enhance your sermon, as well as numerous sermon angles in the questions and the spiritual exercises.

I pray not for how we treat you in the sanctuary but how we treat you in the streets.

[Rev. Steve Garnaas-Holmes](#)

### **Reviving the Sanctuary Movement (article)**

*Erin Guzmán*

<https://www.christiancentury.org/blog-post/revivingsanctuary>

While it might seem like an ambiguous term, Sanctuary as a practice of solidarity has a deep past with theologically robust roots. The Torah is filled with examples of providing hospitality for “the stranger” and society’s most vulnerable. God repeatedly reminds the Israelites that they were once strangers in the land of Egypt and therefore should not harm the “foreigners” seeking shelter or refuge in their communities (Ex. 22:21; Lev. 19:33; Deut. 10:19). In the New Testament, Jesus reminds us of stories (e.g. The Good Samaritan) where unlikely people help those who are in critical need to illustrate how small signs of grace and hospitality serve as powerful acts of resistance against societal norms. He challenges his followers to provide unconditional hospitality to the “least of these” by saying, “I was a stranger and you welcomed me” (Matt. 25:35-40). Christ himself was just an infant when his family fled to Egypt as refugees escaping infanticide (Matt. 2), and this aspect of his birth narrative is often a powerful source of hope for migrants and refugees facing persecution... These narratives and so many others provide a foundation upon which Judeo-Christian practices of hospitality and justice stand... Sanctuary is not a theoretical gesture but a tangible witness of God’s justice-seeking love. It is the very fabric of the Torah and teachings of Jesus. It gives new meaning to the Incarnation by pushing us to confront the reality of God’s presence in those who are vulnerable and seeking protection. Sanctuary reveals that religious spaces are far from politically powerless but instead are actually positioned on the frontlines of where important struggles might take place.

### **Sanctuary: A Meditation on Home, Homelessness, and Belonging (book)**

*Zenju Earthlyn Manuel*

<https://www.wisdompubs.org/book/sanctuary>

<https://www.amazon.com/dp/B07979F8BR/ref=dp-kindle-redirect? encoding=UTF8&btkr=1>

“Examines the interface between inner and outer sanctuary, and the ways they affect one another... Drawing from her life as a Zen Buddhist priest whose ancestors labored as slaves in Louisiana, Zenju Earthlyn Manuel explores the tension between oppression—based on race, religion, ability, class, orientation, gender, and other “ghosts of slavery”—and finding home within our own hearts...”

### **Undocumented: How Immigration Became Illegal (book)**

*Aviva Chomsky*

<https://www.amazon.com/dp/B00GQA28LM/ref=dp-kindle-redirect? encoding=UTF8&btkr=1>

“Immigrant rights activist Aviva Chomsky shows how “illegality” and “undocumentedness” are concepts that were created to exclude and exploit. With a focus on US policy, she probes how people, especially Mexican and Central Americans, have been assigned this status—and to what ends. Blending history with human drama, Chomsky explores what it means to be undocumented in a legal, social, economic, and historical context. The result is a powerful testament of the complex, contradictory, and ever-shifting nature of status in America.”

## UU Sanctuary Toolkit

<https://uucsj.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/03/Sanctuary-Toolkit-2017.pdf>

## Immigration and Family Separation From the Eyes of a Daughter

<https://www.facebook.com/CBSNews/videos/10155911312580950/>

## TED talk: What we are missing in the debate about immigration

[https://www.ted.com/talks/duarte\\_geraldino\\_what\\_we\\_re\\_missing\\_in\\_the\\_debate\\_about\\_immigration](https://www.ted.com/talks/duarte_geraldino_what_we_re_missing_in_the_debate_about_immigration)

A powerful call to rethink the immigration debate. Learn more about the wider impact of forced removal (deportation) as Geraldino explains how the sudden absence of a mother, a local business owner or a high school student ripples outward and wreaks havoc on the relationships that hold our communities together. His is a call for us to change the immigration debate from a discussion about individuals to one of the social circles that are broken and damaged when individuals are removed. The cost of deportation is much higher than we all assume.

## UU Green Sanctuary Movement Resources

<https://www.uua.org/environment/sanctuary>

## Missing Voices (A sanctuary without “our voices”)

[Connie Simon](#)

Full reflection at <https://www.uua.org/worship/words/reading/promise-and-practice-missing-voices-reading>

Excerpt: “When I started attending a UU church, I was excited by the promise of worship that would draw from the arts, science, nature, literature and a multitude of voices. Indeed, some of the voices that Unitarian Universalists hear in worship each week belong to Thoreau, Emerson, Ballou, and others. Their words are beautiful, but they come from a culture and experience that’s foreign to me. When do I get to hear voices from my culture?... I don’t hear those voices in UU churches, so I have to supplement... Will we always have to go “outside” to hear our voices? If that’s the case, maybe there’s no place for us in Unitarian Universalism...”

## Words Matter

*Carol Thomas Cissel*

Full reflection found at <https://www.uua.org/worship/words/reading/promise-and-practice-words-matter-reading>

Excerpt: “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 repeatedly 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.”

## Background on the 8th Principle

<https://www.8thprincipleuu.org/background>

## A call for Soul and Sanctuary in Corporate Leadership

*Nick Ross*

Full article at <http://www.couragerenewal.org/the-soul-in-corporate-leadership/>

Excerpt: “A pervasive form of addiction today is simply intensity—in its myriad forms—at work, in sport, in entertainment, on vacation, it seems we can never relax. A high-flying adolescent can never get enough and our relentless need for intensity speaks of a curious lack of maturity in our society today. We don’t know how to be still... Greater complexity and ambiguity require greater interiority...”

## Seeking Sanctuary in Our Own Sacred Spaces

*Parker Palmer*

Full article found at <https://onbeing.org/search/?s=sanctuary>

Excerpt: "I believe, only if we know when and where to seek sanctuary, reclaiming our souls in order to engage the world in life-giving ways. When service emerges from whatever kind of sanctuary nurtures the root of one's inner wisdom, it's much less likely to be distorted by the violence of activism and overwork. Once we understand that, we are moving toward [the heart of nonviolence](#) — the only way of being that has a chance to transcend and transform the violence of our culture..."

## The Shelter of Each Other (book)

*Mary Pipher*

[https://www.amazon.com/dp/B01BL3226Y/ref=dp-kindle-redirect?\\_encoding=UTF8&btkr=1](https://www.amazon.com/dp/B01BL3226Y/ref=dp-kindle-redirect?_encoding=UTF8&btkr=1)

"Psychologist Pipher provides a sharp, often unsettling critique of many of the values that currently define our lives, coupled with solid advice for rebuilding families... She contends that what people really need is "protected time and space" and the need to reconnect with one another and the outside world... Lively, straightforward, and somewhat subversive, *The Shelter of Each Other* offers hope for the American family in a time that challenges its viability. "

-Kirkus reviews

Our principles call us to walk each other home

Rev. Elea Kemler

## Sanctuary: Creating a Space for Grace in Your Life (book)

*Terry Hershey*

<http://www.spiritualityandpractice.com/book-reviews/excerpts/view/27882>

Excerpt: "In the latter years of her life, in the backyard of her home in northern Florida, my grandmother had a porch swing. She liked to sit and swing and hum old church hymns such as 'Rock of Ages, Cleft for Me.' I can still see her there, wearing a white scarf over her head, a concession to chemotherapy's unrelenting march. When as a young adult I visited her, she would always ask me to sit with her on the swing for a spell. She would pat my leg and call me 'darlin'.' As long as my grandmother lived — and in spite of her pain — there was always a place for me on the swing. If I were asked to explain grace, I would paint the picture of my grandmother's swing. There, I never had to deliberate or explain or worry, regardless of the weight I carried. The porch swing — my grandmother's presence — bestowed grace without conditions. And I am here today because of that porch swing. I am here today because of a sanctuary...Everyone has a sanctuary, if only in the mind. Even if we can't say what it is, we know of its power. It is a place where we feel grounded, unhurried, and renewed. We go there whenever we can, which never seems often enough. Or that's what we tell ourselves..."

## Finding Sanctuary: Monastic Steps for Everyday Life (book)

*Christopher Jamison*

A series of meditations on the Benedictine virtues of obedience, silence, and humility in a monastery.

<http://www.spiritualityandpractice.com/book-reviews/view/16358/finding-sanctuary>

"Christopher Jamison is the Abbot of Worth, a Benedictine monastery in Sussex, England, that was featured in the BBC series "[The Monastery](#)" about five men living the monastic life for 40 days and nights... Jamison is worried about the excessive busyness of people's lives today. The long work schedules and the constant pressure to perform well leave individuals with little time to nourish their souls. The author believes that we all need a sanctuary where virtue is the door. He examines the three key qualities of the monastic life: obedience, silence, and humility..."

## **Home: The Making of Sanctuary (audio book)**

*Gunilla Norris*

<http://www.spiritualityandpractice.com/book-reviews/view/8128/home>

<https://www.amazon.com/Home-Making-Sanctuary-Gunilla-Norris/dp/1564553647>

“Psychotherapist Gunilla Norris reads on these tapes selections from her four exquisite books on the spirituality of place... Through the spiritual practices of attention, mystery, wonder, and silence, Norris draws out the inner life of rooms, objects, and household tasks... filled with marvels that will enable you to see your home as sanctuary — a holy place.”

## **The Devil = Your Inner Critic - Have a Little Faith**

*Pastor Nadia Bolz-Weber*

<https://www.makers.com/playlists/5b0df8e4597f3100013d3753/5b0dd9e75dc7a655b96a98ae>

When “the accuser’s voice” enters your inner sanctuary...

The divine presence that we sense in sacred places is often reinforced by architecture and decoration that reflect our aspirations toward the heavens. A sacred place requires a clear spiritual focus and separation from its physical surroundings. The word “temple” (and the associated activity of contemplation) -- Latin templum -- means a piece of land marked off from ordinary uses and dedicated to the divine. Sacred structures provide expressions of, rather than merely a shell for, numinous experience

*Jane Hope, from The Secret Language of the Soul*

I have learned to treat my garden as the sacred place it is, and it continually nourishes me both in body and in spirit. Earth is sacred too, and whatever we do to her will come back to us many times over. If we treat her as merely a resource and a place to throw our refuse, we will reap only death and disease. If we treat her as the sacred place she is, we will reap the benefits of living on sacred ground.

*Cynthia Keyes, from The Sacred Garden*

When humans participate in ceremony, they enter a sacred space. Everything outside of that space shrivels in importance. Time takes on a different dimension. Emotions flow more freely. The bodies of participants become filled with the energy of life, and this energy reaches out and blesses the creation around them.

*Sun Bear (Chippewa)*

But most of all, above everything else, who in the Bible besides Jesus knew--knew--that we’re carrying the kingdom of heaven around with us, inside, where we’re all too goddam stupid and sentimental and unimaginative to look?

*J.D. Salinger, Franny and Zooey.*

Deep within us all, there is an amazing inner sanctuary of the soul, a holy place, a Divine Center, a speaking Voice, to which we may continuously return. Eternity is at our hearts, pressing upon our time-torn lives, warming us with intimations of an astounding destiny, calling us home unto itself. Yielding to these persuasions, gladly committing ourselves in body and soul, utterly and completely, to the Light Within, is the beginning of true life. It is a dynamic center, a creative Life that presses to birth within us. It is a Light Within which illumines the face of God and casts new shadows and new glories upon the face of humanity.

*Thomas Kelly, from A Testament of Devotion*

## **How the Stars Get in Your Bones** (A home(sanctuary) for the hope inside you)

*Jan Richardson*

Sapphire, diamond, emerald, quartz:

think of every hard thing  
that carries its own brilliance,  
shining with the luster that comes  
only from uncountable ages  
in the earth, in the dark,  
buried beneath unimaginable weight,  
bearing what seemed impossible, bearing it still.

And you, shouldering the grief  
you had thought so solid, so impermeable,  
(That which)  
you carried as a burden now become —  
who can say what day it happened? —  
a beginning.

See how the sorrow in you  
slowly makes its own light,  
how it conjures its own fire...  
I tell you, this blazing in you —  
it does not come by choosing the most difficult way, the most daunting;  
it does not come by the sheer force of your will.

It comes from the helpless place in you  
that, despite all, cannot help but hope,  
the part of you that does not know  
how not to keep turning  
toward this world,  
to keep turning your face  
toward this sky,  
to keep turning your heart  
toward this unendurable earth,  
knowing your heart will break  
but turning it still.

I tell you, this is how the stars get in your bones.

This is how the brightness  
makes a home in you,  
as you open to the hope that burnishes  
every fractured thing it finds  
and sets it shimmering,  
a generous light that will not cease,  
no matter how deep the darkness grows,  
no matter how long the night becomes.

### **Sanctuary & Stumbling Stone**

*Richard Rohr*

Full reflection at <https://cac.org/the-stumbling-stone-2016-06-14/>

Excerpt: “The term stumbling stone is introduced in Isaiah: “[YHWH] is both your sanctuary and your stumbling stone” (see 8:14, The Jerusalem Bible). What an amazing juxtaposition of images. Most of us first experience God as love, security, and the foundational rock that holds everything. But often that very rock seems to get in your way and you stumble over what once sustained you. This is the paradox of the full God encounter. God is

the rock that will bring you down. God is a trap that will also snare you, Isaiah goes on to say (8:14). This is not what you expected. This is not what you wanted. But, of course it's not a snare to destroy you; it's a snare to save you. It's not a rock to bring you down into evil; but a rock to bring you down into a larger freedom from your small self—which is not yet big enough to hold even a bit of infinity.”

### **Love God in What Is Right in Front of You**

*Richard Rohr*

Full reflection at <https://cac.org/love-god-in-what-is-right-in-front-of-you-2016-01-17/>

Excerpt: “So how do we love God? Most of us seem to have concluded we love God by attending church services. For some reason, we thought that made God happy. I’m not sure why. That idea probably has more to do with clergy job security! Jesus never talked about attending services, although church can be a good container to start with, and we do tend to become like the folks we hang out with. The prophets often portray God’s disdain for self-serving church services. “The sanctuary, the sanctuary, the sanctuary” is all we care about, Jeremiah shouts (7:4). “I hold my nose at your incense. What I want you to do is love the widow and the orphan,” say both Isaiah and Amos (Isaiah 1:11-17, Amos 5:21-24), as do Jeremiah, Hosea, Joel, Micah, and Zechariah in different ways. The prophetic message is absolutely clear, yet we went right back to loving church services instead of Reality. I believe our inability to recognize and love God in what is right in front of us has made us separate religion from our actual lives. There is Sunday morning, and then there is real life.”

### **End of Absence? (The sanctuary of absence)**

*Michael Harri*

Full article at <http://www.awakin.org/read/view.php?tid=1044>

As we embrace a technology’s gifts, we usually fail to consider what they ask from us in return — the subtle, hardly noticeable payments we make in exchange for their marvelous service... what worthy things might we have thoughtlessly [left] behind?

The answer... was painfully clear as I sat at my little beige desk in the offices of Vancouver magazine. What I’d left behind was absence. As a storm of digital dispatches hammered at the wall of my computer screen, I found myself desperate for sanctuary. I wanted a long and empty wooden desk where I could get some real work done. I wanted a walk in the woods with nobody to meet. I wanted release from the migraine-scale pressure of constant communication, the ping-ping-ping of perma-messaging, the dominance of communication over experience.

# Recommended Sermons

## **In Cupped Hands**

*Rev. Jen Crow*

<http://firstuniv.podbean.com/e/2012-08-12-rev-jen-crowin-cupped-hands/> (audio)

Explores the image of our cupped hands and the many ways that our Universalist heritage of love and hope calls us to use our hands to heal the world and hold each other. A celebration of being sanctuary and shelter for each other.

## **Thick and Thin**

*Victoria Safford*

<https://whitebearunitarian.org/thick-and-thin-05-28-17-sermon/> (audio)

Excerpt: “Rev. Charles Grady was minister here from 1966-1969; he died in January, 91 years old, and his memorial service was yesterday, so he is on my mind and in my heart. Our churches, he wrote, are clearings in the wilderness of this time. And he meant this time; this is recent writing. He meant this very time, with exactly this much trouble and exactly this much beauty swirling all around us now. Our churches, he said, are places of refuge and sanctuary for the bruised and tired, and also places of healing and renewal. They are ‘workshops for common endeavor,’ breaking barriers and building bridges. Churches, he believed, and preached his whole life long, have a clear, strong, holy purpose, and it is more than intellectual stimulation; it is more than the relief of finding a tribe of others of like mind and resting easy in the relative comfort of homogeneity; it is more than friendship and socializing; it’s more than self-expression, or self-actualization, more than anything with “self” in the hyphenated title...”

## **You Belong Here: Exploring the Heart of Beloved Community**

*Rev. Andy Burnette*

<http://www.vuu.org/sermons/you-belong-here-exploring-the-heart-of-beloved-community/>

On the gift and work creating a welcoming sanctuary for all.

“Feeling we don’t belong some place costs us something... Every person is welcome in beloved community, but every behavior is not...”

## **Inner Peace, Outer Peace**

*Rev. Seth Carrier-Ladd*

<http://www.uuchurchmuncie.org/podcast/rev-seth-carrier-ladd-inner-peace-outer-peace/>

“Peace: It does not mean to be in a place where there is no noise, trouble or hard work. It means to be in the midst of those things and still be calm in your heart... Peace requires acceptance of the way things are... and ourselves... it’s the presence of a sense of our own worthiness...”

## **Making Space for Grace (Making sanctuary for and finding sanctuary in grace)**

*Rev. Gretchen Haley*

<https://revgretchenhaley.wordpress.com/2017/01/29/making-space-for-grace/>

Excerpt: “If we are going to make it through – we need to make space for grace – that is – we need to make space between ourselves, and everything, and everyone else, so that love can break through. We know to know what part of the work is ours, and which is not. We need to know where we stand, what we’re willing to do. And we need to do this all from a deep connection to our center, to that peace within, that grounding. To live from this place, even as we are engaged with openness towards all that comes our way...”

## **Sanctuary**

Rev. Chris Jimmerson

<https://austinuu.org/wp2013/sanctuary/> (video and text)

Excerpt: ““The ancient prophets though were also offering a critique of the injustices they were witnessing – a vision of how their world could be made better. It is this meaning of prophetic that we use today to describe a church that is bold enough to confront the injustices of its time, creating beloved community both in its midst and out in its world. Likewise, the church providing sanctuary as both a safe-haven for victims of injustice and as prophetic witness against larger systemic injustices also goes all the way back to those ancient times. We stand in a long history and tradition regarding this meaning of prophetic church.”

## **Sanctuary: Creating Safe Haven**

*Tim Kutzmark*

<http://uufresno.org/sermon/sanctuary-creating-safe-haven/>

## **Sermon: “Crossing Borders, Coming Home”**

*Norman Allen & Rev. Katie Romano Griffin*

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EGrktUwALU> (video)

“Pilgrims on Cedar Lane’s recent Border Witness Trip shared a profound experience that uncovered the legal, cultural, and spiritual complexities of injustices perpetrated at the border – and here at home. This Sunday, fresh from celebrating the abundance of Thanksgiving, we’ll share our stories from the border, lift up the strength and resilience of those who cross the desert, and consider the borders that we might cross in our own lives, and in our communities.”

Also include great liturgical elements related to the theme.

## **The Welcoming Congregation: Welcome as Spiritual Practice**

*Alex Kapitan*

<http://uuse.org/the-welcoming-congregation-welcome-as-spiritual-practice/#.W2Ek5y2ZPdQ>

Welcoming congregations as sanctuaries for our whole selves.

# Closing Words

## May You Find Shelter

*Rev. Barbara Hamilton-Holway*

May you find shelter in being seen for who you are.

May you find hope in this place.

May you dwell always in your goodness.

May goodness and hope be your eternal home.

## Walls for the winds

*Irish blessing*

May you always have...

Walls for the winds

A roof for the rain

Tea beside the fire

Laughter to cheer you

Those you love near you

## Holy Stuff

*Marilyn Sewell*

<https://www.uua.org/worship/words/meditation/holy-stuff>

Father, Mother God, here we are together—rich and poor; educated and not so well educated; gay and straight; democrats and republicans; some of us with light skin, some of us with darker; some of us walking, some of us unable to walk: none of us as whole as we would like to be—help us to know that we are all your children and we are all holy stuff. May we be a blessing to the life of anyone who enters this sanctuary—and may this church be a true sanctuary—and may those who come as strangers in turn help us grow in wisdom, in compassion, and in joy of living. Amen.

## The Invisible Sanctuary All Around US

*Rachel Naomi Remen, from My Grandfather's Blessings*

Days pass and the years vanish, and we walk sightless among miracles. O Holy One, fill our eyes with seeing and our minds with knowing. Let there be moments when your Presence, like lightning, illumines the darkness in which we walk. Help us to see, wherever we gaze, that the bush burns, unconsumed. And we, clay touched by Thee, will reach out for holiness and exclaim in wonder, "How filled with awe is this place and we did not know it. "

## The Hand In Yours...

*Erika A. Hewitt*

<https://www.uua.org/worship/words/closing/hand-in-yours>

(Invite the congregation to join hands.)

The hand in yours belongs to a person  
whose heart is sometimes tender,  
whose skin is sometimes thin,  
whose eyes sometimes fill with tears,  
and whose laughter is a beautiful sound.

The hand that you hold belongs to a person who is seeking wholeness,  
and trusts that you're doing the same.

As you leave this sanctuary,  
may your hearts remain open  
may your voices stay strong  
and may your hands remain outstretched.

# Opportunities For Support & Connection

Join the Soul Matters Inspiration Facebook Page:

<https://www.facebook.com/soulmatterssharingcircle/>

Join the Soul Matters Worship Leader Support Facebook Page:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/soulmatterssharingcircle/>

Join the Soul Matters Ministers' Support Facebook Page:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/719788338192570/>

Find musical inspiration on our Soul Matters Spotify music playlists:

<https://www.soulmatterssharingcircle.com/spotify-lists.html>

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