



Soul Matters

What does it mean to be
a people of WHOLENESS?

Contents

<u>Calendar Connections</u>	2
<u>Chalice Lightings & Opening Words</u>	3
<u>Meditations, Prayers & Blessings</u>	6
<u>Readings</u>	9
<u>Music</u>	12
<u>Stories for All Ages</u>	14
<u>Sermon Seeds</u>	15
Seeds for Passover, Easter and Earth Day	20
Seeds for Calendar Connections	22
<u>Recommended Sermons</u>	23
<u>Closing Words</u>	25
<u>Support & Connection</u>	26

Calendar Connections

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

Interfaith:

- [Visakha Puja](#) - Buddha's Birth, Enlightenment and Death (Buddhist) - April 8 (more [here](#))
- [Palm Sunday](#) (Christian) - April 14
- [Lent](#) (Christian) - March 6 - April 18 (A [humorous take](#))
- [Maundy Thursday](#)/Holy Thursday (Christian) - April 18
- [Good Friday](#) - (Christian) April 19
- [Easter](#) (Christian) - April 21

- [Passover](#) (Jewish) - April 19 - 27 (more [here](#))

Unitarian Universalist:

- [William Ellery Channing's](#) Birthday - April 7 (1780)
- Death of [Sophia Lyon Fahs](#) - April 14 (1978)

- [Hosea Ballou's](#) Birthday - April 30 (1771) (more [here](#))
- [Climate Justice Month](#) - March 22 to April 22

National & Cultural:

- [Jazz Appreciation Month](#) (more [here](#))
- [National Poetry Month](#) (more [here](#))
- Martin Luther King Jr Assassinated - April 4 (1968)
- [U.S. declares war on Germany](#) - April 6 (1917)
- [Vimy Ridge Day](#) (Canada) - April 9
- [Fair Housing Act passed](#) - April 11 (1968)
- [Freddie Gray is arrested in Baltimore and dies](#) after sustaining injuries in police custody - April 12 (2015)
- [Earth Day](#) - April 22
- [Take Our Daughters and Sons to Work Day](#) - April 26 (more [here](#), [here](#) and [here](#))
- [Day of Silence](#) (LGBTQ) - April 27 (more [here](#) and [here](#))

For Fun and On the Fringe:

- [April Fool's Day](#) - April 1 (more [here](#))
- [Star Trek Day](#) - April 5 (more [here](#))
- [National Tell a Story Day](#) - April 27
- [National Superhero Day](#) - April 28 (more [here](#))

Chalice Lightings & Opening Words

All of You is Holy

Anonymous, shared by [Rev. Victoria Safford](#)

Forget about enlightenment,
Sit down wherever you are,
and listen to the wind that is singing in your veins.
Feel the longing, the fear, the love in your bones.
Open your heart to who you are, right now,
not who you'd like to be,
not the saint you're striving to become,
but the being right here before you, inside you...
All of you is holy.
You're already more and less
Than whatever you can know.
Breathe out,
Look in,
Let go.

Being Human Means We Are of This Earth

Sweethome Teacup

Full reading at <https://www.uua.org/worship/words/invocation/being-human-means-we-are-earth>

May we recognize and abandon the familiar attitudes and practices that do not serve the whole...
Being human means we are of this earth...
we are the Sun and the moon and the stars.
We are all that we see...

The Church Incarnate

Elizabeth Mount

Full reading at <https://www.uua.org/worship/words/invocation/church-incarnate>

Come into this place, bringing all you hold with you...
this community can hold you and your strongest emotions,
yes, even the messy ones are welcome here...

To Remember We Are One

Soul Matters

May the single flame we now kindle
Remind us that we are one,
that the struggles and wounds of each of us impact us all.
We grow together.
We fail together.
We move forward on the path only by walking side by side.
By giving ourselves to the greater whole, we find ourselves again.
May this morning help us take another step along our way.

From the Fragmented World

Phillip Hewett

Full reading at <http://www.uuss.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/03/Evil-People-SERMON-04-24-2016.pdf>

From the fragmented world of our everyday lives we gather together in search of wholeness.

By many cares and preoccupations, by diverse and selfish aims are we separated from one another and divided within ourselves.

Yet we know that no branch is utterly severed from the Tree of Life that sustains us all.

We cherish our oneness with those around us and the countless generations that have gone before us....

Here We Re-member Ourselves

Gretchen Haley

Give up the fight
For some other moment
Some other life
Than here, and now
Give up the longing
for some other world
The wishing
for other choices to make
other songs to sing
other bodies, other ages,
other countries, other stakes
Purge the past; forgive the future -
for each come too soon.
Surrender only to this life,
this day, this hour,
not because it does not
constantly break your heart
but because it also beckons
with beauty
startles with delight
if only we keep
waking up
This is the gift
we have been given:
these "body-clothes,"
this heart-break, this pulse
this breath,
this light,
these friends,
this hope.
Here we re-member ourselves
All a part of it all -
Giving thanks, and centering joy.
Come, let us worship
Together.

Bring Your Broken Hallelujah

Rev. Theresa Ines Soto

Full poem at <https://westforkuu.org/2016/11/17/broken-hallelujah/>

Bring your broken hallelujah here.
Bring the large one that is beyond
Repair. Bring the small one that's
too soft to share...

Invocation

Rev. Angela Herrera

Full piece at <https://uuneedham.org/chalice-lighting-november-27/>

Don't leave your broken heart at the door...
Don't leave your anger behind...
Bring them with you,
 and your joy, and your passion...
There is work to do
 and you have all that you need to do it
 right here in this room.

For Holy Days on Which We Recall the Old Stories

Dillman Baker Sorrells

Full reading at <https://www.uua.org/worship/words/chalice-lighting/holy-days-which-we-recall-old-stories>

For holy days on which we recall the old stories, we light the flame.
For Passover which reminds us...
For Easter which reminds...

Meditations, Prayers & Blessings

You Are Not Enough

Alexis Engelbrecht, Soul Matters Family Ministry Coordinator

The phrase is everywhere. Though the words may vary, the essence remains: You are enough.

You have what it takes. If you just believe, anything is possible. You can do it.

May I suggest that you are not enough?

I am not enough. Each of us, as individuals, is not enough.

Alone, one can feel overwhelmed and hopeless. Alone, one must fend for oneself. Alone, one is left to only what one's personal experiences and knowledge.

No – I am not enough... but... when I am with another, my tears can be accompanied by the comfort of companionship. When I am with another, one seemingly impossible challenge is divided by half. When I am with many, the work is shared.

Our insights and wisdom multiple with the presence of others at the table.

We cannot be everything at once. Instead, when you are with me, and I am with you – when we are part of this community grounded in Love – we are enough...we are whole.

Meditation on Broken [and Whole] Hearts

Thomas Rhodes

Full meditation at <https://www.uua.org/worship/words/meditation/meditation-broken-hearts>

“And how is it with your heart?

Does your heart feel whole, shielded by intellect, cocooned by reason, closed to feeling?

...Or has your heart been broken and healed so many times

that it now lies open to the world...

that we may carry the hearts of others...”

Let Us Rest in This Peace

Victoria Weinstein

Full meditation at <https://www.uua.org/worship/words/meditation/184424.shtml>

Spirit of Life and Love,

We have gathered again out of our separateness to know that we are not alone...

In our fears, we are not alone.

In our grasping for peace,... we are not alone...

And so we dwell in You, Spirit of healing and wholeness...

Willing to be held here in an immense and eternal love...

It reaches between us to fill spaces...

It gives new vision to eyes dimmed...”

It Is Enough - Choir-led Meditation

The wholeness found in one thing and one step...

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=agEHdjmlrh0>

The Healing Moment (on belonging to the whole)

Elizabeth Tarbox

Full meditation (words and audio) at <https://www.questformeaning.org/quest-article/the-healing-moment/>

“when I am here at the edge of creation, breaking with the small tide over the sand, the need to do good rolls away...

I am with the broken stubble of the marsh grass that holds on through the wrecking wind and the burning flood.
I am with the grains that mold themselves around everything, accepting even so unworthy a foot as mine,
holding and shaping it until it feels that it belongs...”

All of You is Holy

Anonymous, shared by [Rev. Victoria Safford](#)

Forget about enlightenment,
Sit down wherever you are,
and listen to the wind that is singing in your veins.
Feel the longing, the fear, the love in your bones.
Open your heart to who you are, right now,
not who you'd like to be,
not the saint you're striving to become,
but the being right here before you, inside you... All of you is holy.
You're already more and less
Than whatever you can know.
Breathe out,
Look in,
Let go.

Meditation on Opposites

Alex Kapitan

Full meditation at <https://www.uua.org/worship/words/poetry/meditation-opposites>

Open us to the knowledge that in this room
there are complexities and diversities of identities...
In this room there are –people who embody juxtaposition,
who can tell stories written on their bodies about both and neither...
Spirit of many names and of no name at all,
Help us find release from our belief that all things must be either/or,
this belief that walls us off from one another...

Being the Resurrection

(on our call to resurrect the whole humanity communion that Jesus dreamed)

Victoria Weinstein

Full piece at <https://www.uua.org/worship/words/meditation/5690.shtml>

The stone has got to be rolled back from the tomb again and again every year.

Roll up your sleeves.

He is not coming back, you know.

He is not coming back unless it is we who rise for him...

He will not be back to join us at the table

To share God's extravagant banquet

God's love feast, all are invited, come as you are

And so it is you and I who must feast for him...

Communion Circle

Mark L. Belletini

Full reading at <https://www.uua.org/worship/words/poetry/communion-circle>

The earth.

One planet.

Round, global,

so that when you trace its shape

with your finger,

you end up where you started. It's one. It's whole.

All the dotted lines we draw on our maps

of this globe are just that, dotted lines.

They smear easily...

Readings

All of Us Need All of Us to Make It (A Black Lives Matter Prayer)

Megan Foley, Theresa I. Soto

Full piece at <https://www.uua.org/worship/words/litany/all-us-need-all-us-make-it>

Say it with me, loud or soft: "All of us need all of us to make it."

In a world where some of us are targeted for struggle and brutality, where others of us benefit and flourish, we pray:

"All of us need all of us to make it." ...

In the excruciating space that lives between seeing and naming, and hearing and changing, we pray:

"All of us need all of us to make it." ...

Unitarian Universalists believe that all of us need all of us to make it; this is why we are in solidarity with the movement for Black lives today and every day.

Gitanjali 69

Rabindranath Tagore

The same stream of life that runs through my veins night and day
runs through the world and dances in rhythmic measures.

It is the same life that shoots in joy
through the numberless blades of grass
and breaks into tumultuous waves of leaves and flowers.

It is the same life that is rocked
In the ocean cradle of birth and death,
In ebb and flow.

I feel my limbs are made glorious
by the touch of this world of life.
And my pride is from the life-throb of ages
dancing in my blood this moment.

We Are Whole [even when...]

Beth Lefever

Full reading at <https://www.uua.org/worship/words/meditation/175456.shtml>

We are whole, even in the broken places, even where it hurts... where self-doubt corrupts our self-love; where shame makes our faces hot and our souls cold...

We are whole, even as we are in process, even as we stumble, even as we pick ourselves up again...

Wholeness Is About Darkness and Light

Parker Palmer

If I am to let my life speak things I want to hear, ... I must also let it speak things I do not want to hear and would never tell anyone else! My life is not only about my strengths and virtues; it is also about my liabilities and my limits, my trespasses and my shadow. An inevitable though often ignored dimension of the quest for 'wholeness' is that we must embrace what we dislike or find shameful about ourselves as well as what we are confident and proud of.

You Get Proud by Practicing

Laura Hershey

Full poem at <http://www.thenthdegree.com/proudpoeem.asp>

...Remember, you weren't the one
Who made you ashamed,
But you are the one
Who can make you proud.
Just practice,
Practice until you get proud, and once you are proud,
Keep practicing so you won't forget.
You get proud
By practicing.

Each of Us Has A Name

Zelda (translated by Marcia Falk)

Full poem at <https://www.lilith.org/articles/each-of-us-has-a-name/>

Each of us has a name given by God
and given by our parents...
Each of us has a name given by the mountains and given by our walls...
Each of us has a name given by our sins
and given by our longing...

One Body

Rev. Steve Garnaas-Holmes

Unless you can feel it,
the one sinew running through our breath,
the one nerve in which we all throb,
unless you know in the worst terrorists
yourself,
and see in the most foreign face
your own heart looking out at the world,
unless you know in your gut
the demagogue, the refugee, the infidel
as part of yourself,
unless you feel in the loveless the Beloved
surely as in you,
you do not yet inhabit your body
and can't yet be
the one
we already are.

Remember

Joy Harjo

Full poem found at <https://www.poets.org/poetsorg/poem/remember-0>

Video meditation using poem: https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=107&v=UOfJV93a_G4

Remember the earth whose skin you are:
red earth, black earth, yellow earth, white earth
brown earth, we are earth...
Remember that you are all people and that all people are you...

Being the Resurrection

(On our call to resurrect the whole human communion that Jesus dreamed)

Victoria Weinstein

Full piece at <https://www.uua.org/worship/words/meditation/5690.shtml>

The stone has got to be rolled back from the tomb again and again every year.
Roll up your sleeves.
He is not coming back, you know.
He is not coming back unless it is we who rise for him...

He will not be back to join us at the table
To share God's extravagant banquet
God's love feast, all are invited, come as you are
And so it is you and I who must feast for him...

Resurrection

(On pain as the seed, not impediment of, wholeness)

Mary Ann Bernard

Full poem here: <https://www.journeywithjesus.net/poemsandprayers/458-mary-ann-bernard>

Long before this winter's snow
I dreamt of this day's sunny glow
And thought somehow my pain would pass
With winter's pain, and peace like grass
Would simply grow...
Now, I know...
from the dark, cold, grime
A flower comes. It groans, yet sings,
And through its pain, its peace begins.

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.

Suggestions from Soul Matters Music Resources Coordinator, [Sara Brandt-Doelle](#)

Hymns -Easier to Lead & Sing

16	Tis a Gift to Be Simple
18	What Wondrous Love
27	I Am That Great and Fiery Force
34	Though I May Speak with Bravest Fire
123	Spirit of Life
128	For All That Is Our Life
155	Circle 'Round for Freedom
170	We Are a Gentle Angry People
203	All Creatures of the Earth and Sky
311	Let It Be a Dance
1007	There's a River Flowin' in My Soul
*1031	Filled With Loving Kindness
*1053	How Could Anyone

Hymns - More difficult to lead

36	When in Our Music
133	One World
134	Our World Is One World
1019	Everything Possible

Recommended Choir Anthems, Vocal Solos & Band Pieces

Geodes: Carrie Newcomer

https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=49&v=UqL2MZaor4k
https://www.amazon.com/Sanctuary-Carrie-Newcomer-Songbook/dp/0692176667/ref=sr_1_1?ie=UTF8&qid=1542952821&sr=8-1&keywords=carrie+newcomer+songbook&pldnSite=1

Peace of the Wild things: Jake Runestad <https://jakerunestad.com/store/the-peace-of-wild-things/>

Peace of the Wild things: Malcolm Dalglish

<https://www.ooliticmusic.com/>

Finally on My Way to Yes: Elizabeth Alexander <https://www.seafarerpress.com/works/finally-on-my-way-to-yes>

You Will be Found: Benj Pasek <https://www.jwpepper.com/You-Will-Be-Found/10760618.item?fbclid=IwAR3EMrflbDKPVnQB2-iVLz73eWSHrQ7XDfF5PhxAw-jD-6LNWXkRWGY7Z10#/>

Fix You: Guy Berryman https://www.jwpepper.com/Fix-You/10310160.item?fbclid=IwAR17MzPqM57-Gx8hWwm5uNp-wK9sZKhytCy57P7eI_7SGlscSTtHLOxw9LY#/submit
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nwCNaql2IC0>

It is Enough: Alane Brown

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=agEHdjmlrh0>

Japanese Bowl: Peter Mayer

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qOAzobTIGr8>

We Are One - Ana Egge

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XLCCdJSEq6c>

And When I Rise - Plum Village song

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

The River

written and performed by Coco Love Alcorn

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=S7L_hA0ideM

Rhythm and Roots Choir: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LCzZg5vwWS8&list=RDNHtuHY3Mj6Q&index=3>

UU Choir version: <https://www.facebook.com/heather.rionstarr.14/videos/10155207841542727/>

"Water heal my body. Water heal my soul. When I go down-down to the water, by the water I feel whole."

Stories for All Ages

Bundle of Sticks

An Aesop Fable

<https://fablesfaesop.com/the-father-his-sons-and-the-bundle-of-sticks.html>

Create a real bundle of twigs as in the story and invite children to try to break it.

Theme Message: The wholeness of us together is stronger than the wholeness of a single person

The Complaint Against the Stomach

From Fah's "Long Ago and Far Away" (online, pg. 121)

https://www.uua.org/sites/live-new.uua.org/files/long_ago_many_lands1.pdf

Offer this bit of a silly but memorable tale with stick signs with the parts of the body. Invite folks to hold them and/or read the speaking parts in the story.

Theme Message: We are bound by and strengthened by a wholeness that we can't always see.

The Tale of the Journeying Stream

A Sufi tale

<http://www.awakin.org/read/view.php?tid=498>

Invite sounds of the burbling of the stream, the wind.

Theme message: Wholeness is not about remaining unchanged. It is about knowing our essence as we change and grow.

The Journey of the Birds

From Tapestry of Faith, Signs of Our Faith, Signs of Community

<https://www.uua.org/re/tapestry/children/signs/session9/journey>

Theme Message: Wholeness is about recognizing the gifts of us all. Communities are made whole and strong when they recognize that they need everyone's gifts.

Grandmother's Lesson (a story for Passover)

From Tapestry of Faith, Wonderful Welcome, The Gift of Invitation

<https://www.uua.org/re/tapestry/children/welcome/session5/grandmothers-lesson>

Theme Message: As part of the Passover Seder, tradition is to welcome Elijah. In this spirit of invitation, we all may look for ways to invite people into our circle. It makes us whole.

Making the World Whole Again

Soozi Holbeche

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=u8fURcEQ4W8>

The Skin Horse: A Story About Becoming Real [and Whole]

<https://www.wisdom-pills.com/skin-horse-story-becoming-real/>

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.

Quote - Finding Our Wholeness in Others

[*Rev. Anya Sammler-Michael*](#)

My father is a professor and I learned from him that you don't really know something until you teach it to another. We don't really know our own wholeness until we see the wholeness of another or work to serve wholeness in our world. Wholeness, a sense of our own fullness, a spiritual realization of our own strength and beauty, is given when we give of ourselves... We heal our own aches by healing the aches in others. We put back the pieces of our own souls by helping others redeem their own wholeness.

Quote - You Are Not Enough

Alexis Engelbrecht, Soul Matters Family Ministry Coordinator

The phrase is everywhere. Though the words may vary, the essence remains: You are enough.

You have what it takes. If you just believe, anything is possible. You can do it.

May I suggest that you are not enough?

I am not enough. Each of us, as individuals, is not enough.

Alone, one can feel overwhelmed and hopeless. Alone, one must fend for oneself. Alone, one is left to only what one's personal experiences and knowledge.

No – I am not enough... but... when I am with another, my tears can be accompanied by the comfort of companionship. When I am with another, one seemingly impossible challenge is divided by half. When I am with many, the work is shared.

Our insights and wisdom multiple with the presence of others at the table.

We cannot be everything at once. Instead, when you are with me, and I am with you – when we are part of this community grounded in Love – we are enough...we are whole.

Reflection - Of Holons and Wholeness

Richard Rohr

Full reflection at <https://cac.org/of-holons-and-wholeness-2015-05-28/>

"[This] insight is also affirmed by Mandelbrot's discovery of fractals, the repetitive and imitative patterns found in nature, mathematics, and art. We literally see that the part contains the whole or replicates the whole, and yet each part still has a wholeness within itself... We now believe such wholeness is true physically, biologically, and spiritually, and can even be seen as a basis for understanding mystical union... Each of us replicates the Whole and yet has a certain wholeness within ourselves—but we are never entirely whole apart from connection with the larger Whole. Holons create a very fine language for what I call the mystery of participation, for understanding how holiness transmits and how God's life is an utterly shared phenomenon... Salvation is not a divine transaction that takes place because you are morally perfect, but much more is an organic unfolding, a becoming who you already are, an inborn sympathy with and capacity for the very One who created you... This is the basis for the inherent dignity of everything and the foundation for all non-violence..."

Quote - The Paradox of Wholeness

Wendell Berry, from The Art of the Commonplace

One cannot live in the world; that is, one cannot become, in the easy, generalizing sense with which the phrase is commonly used, a "world citizen." There can be no such thing as a "global village." No matter how much one may love the world as a whole, one can live fully in it only by living responsibly in some small part of it. Where we live and who we live there with define the terms of our relationship to the world and to humanity. We thus come again to the paradox that one can become whole only by the responsible acceptance of one's partiality.

Video Reflection - Separating Self from Selfie

Rev. Nadia Bolz-Weber

<https://www.facebook.com/MAKERShavealittlefaith/videos/173068843360649/>

On our fear of sharing and exposing our whole selves. "In the end, the only real love in the world is found when you let yourself be truly [and fully] known."

Reflection - Tender Places

Rev. Lindasusan Ulrich

Full piece at <https://www.uua.org/braverwiser/tender-places>

"Then out of the blue, the five-year old turned to me and said matter-of-factly, "You're fat." ... In the brief space between his statement and my reply, I remembered everything I'd endured around my weight... This little boy's words touched old, tender wounds. But this time, I took a breath and decided to try something different. "That's right," I said. "I am fat. Just like your dad is tall, and you're short, and your mom has red hair. Isn't it cool how bodies come in all sorts of shapes and sizes?" ... By reclaiming the word "fat" as an adjective rather than an accusation, I didn't just teach a kindergartener about the beautiful variations among human bodies. I reminded myself that my tender places are a source of strength — and that the tigers are no longer in the grass... Spirit of Compassion, help us draw strength from all that we are. Give us new language with which to claim our wholeness, a new litany of joy built out of words that wounded..."

Quote - Hiding our Wholeness and Losing Ourselves

Parker Palmer

Here is the ultimate irony of the divided life: live behind a wall long enough, and the true self you tried to hide from the world disappears from your own view! The wall itself and the world outside it become all that you know. Eventually, you even forget that the wall is there — and that hidden behind it is someone called "you."

Poem - Split

Nayyirah Waheed

Full poem at <https://theusesofanger.wordpress.com/2014/03/13/you-cannot-rem/>

"your mouth was not designed to eat itself..."

Quote - Wholeness Is About Darkness and Light

Parker Palmer

But if I am to let my life speak things I want to hear, things I would gladly tell others, I must also let it speak things I do not want to hear and would never tell anyone else! My life is not only about my strengths and virtues; it is also about my liabilities and my limits, my trespasses and my shadow. An inevitable though often ignored dimension of the quest for 'wholeness' is that we must embrace what we dislike or find shameful about ourselves as well as what we are confident and proud of."

Quote - Universal Salvation is not Just of All of Us

Paula Goldade, UU and Wellspring participant

As a Unitarian Universalist, I have come to see that universal salvation is not just for all of us but for all of me. There is no crevice inside of me that love cannot touch.

Quote - Happiness is Not Wholeness

Dan Putt

Happiness is just one part of our existence, wholeness is to embrace all that is within us. It's to embrace our shadow qualities, to embrace our self-doubt, fear, anxiety, as well as the brightness, joy, and curiosity. It is all welcome.

Reflection: I-It and I-Thou

David Brooks

Full article at <http://www.awakin.org/read/view.php?tid=2217>

Excerpt: "But other I-It relationships are truncated versions of what should be deep relationships. You're with a friend, colleague, spouse or neighbor, but you're not really bringing your whole self to that encounter. You're fearful, closed or withdrawn — objectifying her, talking at her, offering only a shallow piece of yourself and seeing only the shallow piece of her..."

Quote - On the Religious Life as the Pursuit of the Wholeness Found in Congruence

Eugene Peterson

The Christian life is the lifelong practice of attending to the details of congruence— congruence between ends and means, congruence between what we do and the way we do it, congruence between what is written in Scripture and our living out what is written, congruence between a ship and its prow, congruence between preaching and living, congruence between the sermon and what is lived in both preacher and congregation, the congruence of the Word made flesh in Jesus with what is lived in our flesh.

It is what we admire in an athlete whose body is accurately and gracefully responsive and totally submissive to the conditions of the event: Michael Jordan at one with the court, the game, the basketball, and his fellow players. Or a musical performance in which Mozart, a Stradivarius, and Itzhak Perlman fuse and are indistinguishable from one another in the music. Congruence also occurs often enough in more modest venues: a child unself-consciously at play; a conversation in which words become as movements in a ballet, revealing all manner of beauty and truth and goodness; a meal bringing friends into a quiet awareness of affection and celebration in a mingling of senses and spirits that provides something like a Eucharistic dimension to the evening.

Essay - The Elusive Art of Inner Wholeness and How to Stop Hiding Our Souls

Essay on Parker Palmer's [A Hidden Wholeness](#)

Maria Popova

<https://www.brainpickings.org/2014/11/03/parker-palmer-hidden-wholeness/>

Frame - Kristin Lin, On Being

“Wholeness is never lost, it is only forgotten.” What a wise way to frame wholeness — not as an achievement, but rather as the reality of being present to who we are, in its entirety, at this very moment.

Quote - The Wholeness and Unity of Contemplation and Action

[*Richard Rohr*](#)

When people ask me which is the more important, action or contemplation, I know it is an impossible question to answer because they are eternally united in one embrace, two sides of one coin. So I say that action is not the important word, nor is contemplation; and is the important word! How do you put the two together? I am seventy-four now and I’m still working on it! The dance of action and contemplation is an art form that will take your entire life to master. Like Moses at the burning bush, many of us begin with a mystical moment and end with social action or what looks like politics. But it also works in the other direction. Some start by diving into the pain of the world and that drives them toward their need for God.

Video Meditation - Making the World Whole Again

Soozi Holbeche

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=u8fURcEQ4W8>

Speech - “Disability Justice” is Simply Another Term for Love

Mia Mingus

<https://leavingevidence.wordpress.com/2018/11/03/disability-justice-is-simply-another-term-for-love/>

“I wish someone had been there to talk about disability in a complex and nuanced way—to be able to hold (what we now call) disability justice. I wish I had known that there was so much more out there, especially during the hardest times; especially when I was inside the medical industrial complex experiencing so much violence. Especially on those mornings when my blisters were still raw from the days and weeks before, but I was forced to put on my painful brace. A brace that I didn’t need to be whole, but others needed me to wear so that I could be “the right kind of disabled child.” One who they needed to be seen as trying to be as abled as possible, trying to fix myself and my walk and my body to be something other than I was. Something other than I am... It shouldn’t be that we have to go to the margins of the margins of the margins of the margins. And don’t get me wrong; I love living out there. There are amazing things and people out there. And it shouldn’t be that that’s the only place where we can be whole. It shouldn’t be that we have to hold our tongues or risk backlash or be met with empty silence just to be able to talk about our own realities and the realities of our communities. Just to be able to talk about our own lives...”

Your Body Is Welcome Here

Rev. Sean Neil-Barron

Full reading at <https://www.uua.org/worship/words/opening/your-body-welcome-here>

“Your body is welcome here, all of it.

Yes, even that part. And that part. And yes, even that part.

The parts you love, and the parts you don’t...”

Essay - How Tender, Loving Male Friendships Can Save Us from Toxic Masculinity

On the male struggle for wholeness

Tony Liu

<https://onbeing.org/blog/tony-liu-how-tender-loving-male-friendships-can-save-us-from-toxic-masculinity/>

Excerpt: “[My research and experiences have] legitimized my experience of male tenderness...They helped me affirm that I do not want a life of “power, control, secrecy, fear, shame, isolation, and distance” — this sounds like a recipe for early death, greater loneliness, and a reduced capacity to be human.”

Quote - [Mark Nepo](#)

The Lebanese greeting, “Ya Ayuni!” literally means, “Oh, my eyes!” or “Oh, my darling!” Implicit in this ancient greeting is the recognition that we need each other to see, that one view is insufficient. Empowered by the presence of each other, the Lebanese people say, “Oh, my eyes! You’re here! Now we can see!” This custom reminds me of how Native American elders meet in a circle, not just for equity, but so that each elder will have a direct view of the Center. The belief at the heart of this worldview is that the Center and the Whole are not comprehensible by any one person alone. Therefore, we need everyone’s view to glimpse the enduring truths of life. And so, we gather meaning, we don’t choose it. Like the Chien, the mythical bird of ancient China that has only one eye and one wing, we must find each other in order to see and fly. “Ya Ayuni!” “Oh, my eyes! You’re here! Now we can see!” The joyous practice of this custom—that we sorely need to enliven today—is to welcome other views in the belief that we need each other to be complete.

Article -Does manual labor boost happiness?

Derek Beres

<https://bigthink.com/surprising-science/could-working-with-your-hands-boost-happiness>

Seeking and finding wholeness with “our hands.”

Article & Book - The Lessons of Wabi-Sabi - Utne Reader

Leonard Koren, from [Wabi-Sabi for Artists, Designers, Poets & Philosophers](#)

<https://www.utne.com/mind-and-body/exquisite-decay>

“All things are incomplete. All things, including the universe itself, are in a constant, never-ending state of becoming or dissolving. Often we arbitrarily designate moments, points along the way, as “finished.” But when is a plant complete? When it flowers? When it goes to seed? When the seeds sprout? When everything turns into compost? Wabi-Sabi represents the exact opposite of the Western ideal of great beauty as something monumental, spectacular, and enduring. Wabi-Sabi is found in nature not at moments of bloom and lushness, but at moments of inception or subsiding...”

Video - The Art of Kintsugi

<https://youtu.be/TQW8t6wOCy4>.

Video - EASTERN PHILOSOPHY: Kintsugi

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

Video - Kintsugi: The Art of Embracing Damage

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IT55_u8URU0

Article - From Broken to Beautiful: The Power of 'Kintsugi'

https://www.huffpost.com/entry/from-broken-to-beautiful_b_5903994

Seeds for Passover, Easter and Earth Day

Podcast - Passover and Easter - On Being

(The miraculous wholeness that emerge from suffering and violence)

<https://onbeing.org/programs/sandy-eisenberg-sasso-richard-hays-and-linda-loving-passover-and-easter/>

Article -How to Make Next Passover’s Seder More Meaningful, Starting Now

Rabbi Susan Schnur

<https://www.lilith.org/articles/how-to-make-next-passovers-seder-more-meaningful-starting-now/>

“Passover is a journey towards wholeness, towards a metaphoric “promised land,” and if we remember that—and that alone—we will create a Seder each year that is not only deeply meaningful but, de facto, different from every other year’s...”

Angle - from a minister’s’ brain-storming call

Passover speaks about physical liberation but also spiritual liberation, and as such is very much a story about the journey of liberating the hidden, wounded or rejected parts of ourselves. With this in mind, Parker Palmer’s work on “hidden wholeness” could be a great tie into Passover.

Angle - from the Soul Matters RE Packet

Wholeness is about tending to and not ignoring the many dimensions of yourself. Don't live just one slice of yourself; Lean into all of who you are. Don't let yourself become imprisoned in one slice of who you are.

Practice: The work of caring for and enjoying all the slices

Book - The Cross and the Lynching Tree, by James H. Cone

A Christian Century Review: <https://www.christiancentury.org/reviews/2012-01/cross-and-lynching-tree-james-h-cone>

“The Cross and the Lynching Tree is a theological meditation on a dimension of the lethal oppression experienced by African Americans that has been formative for both the faith and civic posture of the black community for a very long time. Cone foregrounds lynching and its ubiquitous threat as the concrete denial of African Americans' claims to a recognition of their full humanity and of their citizenship in the body politic and in the household of God. The book is also a reflection on contemporaneous and historical erasure as a means of cultivating what my colleague Mary McClintock Fulkerson terms the “obliviousness of whiteness” to black suffering...”

Angle - On the Cross & a Heart Broken Open to Take in the Wholeness of the World

[Parker Palmer](#)

We all know people who’ve suffered the loss of the most important person in their lives. At first, they disappear into grief, certain that life will never again be worth living. But, through some sort of spiritual alchemy, they eventually emerge to find that their hearts have grown larger and more compassionate. They have developed a greater capacity to take in others’ sorrows and joys, not in spite of their loss but because of it. Suffering breaks our hearts — but there are two quite different ways for the heart to break. There’s the brittle heart that breaks apart into a thousand shards, a heart that takes us down as it explodes and is sometimes thrown like a grenade at the source of its pain. Then there’s the supple heart, the one that breaks open, not apart, growing into greater capacity for the many forms of love. Only the supple heart can hold suffering in a way that opens to new life.

Angle - A Cross That Holds the Wholeness of our Contradictions

Richard Rohr

More here: <http://spiritofstephens.org/resources/prayers-and-theme-readings/1380-the-mystery-of-the-cross-richard-rohr-ch-9-things-hidden-scripture-as-spirituality>

The mystery of the cross is saying that human existence is neither perfectly consistent (though that's what educated, ideological and control-needy people want), nor is it total chaos (our philosophical words for that are post-modernism, nihilism or even atheism). Human existence, though, is filled with contradictions. To hold the contradictions with God, with Jesus, is to be a Christian and to share and participate in the redemption of the world (Colossians 1:24). It feels like a forgiving of reality for being what it is. If the choices are either perfect consistency or utter chaos, don't go there. The cross is holding the middle. The world is neither particularly consistent nor total chaos; it's a coincidence of opposites, and even geometrically that forms the cross. The price you pay for holding together the contradictions within yourself, others and the world is always some form of crucifixion, but the gift you receive and the gift you offer is that at least in you-"everything belongs."

Article - The Wounds of Resurrection (and a wholeness that welcomes our wounds)

Christiana N. Peterson

<https://imagejournal.org/2016/04/19/the-wounds-of-resurrection/>

As I thought about scars and wounds, it struck me that Jesus's resurrected body betrays the myth of our vague views of resurrection. Carravaggio was depicting a clearer version of a resurrected body: Jesus's new body wasn't whole and pristine, but riddled with scars and even open wounds... If Jesus didn't shrug off his suffering, maybe we don't need to see our scars and wounds as things that need to be erased in the resurrection. N.T. Wright says that "the risen Jesus was more human, not less, than he was before." For the abused and mistreated, the sick and dying, the anxious and depressed, our emotional and physical wounds, whatever form they take in resurrection, could be striking reminders that we are not less because of our hurts...

Article - The Bridge of Well-Being: The Journey from Suffering to Wholeness

Mark Nepo

<https://onbeing.org/blog/the-bridge-of-well-being-the-journey-from-suffering-to-wholeness/>

Excerpt: "I had no idea at the time, but this dream was a myth about enduring suffering and approaching wholeness. I had no idea that this dream was a parable of my journey through cancer. When I jumped into the river of life so long ago, I was looking for the unknown other that would complete me. I thought I would find wholeness through love or passion for some kind of work or in the depth of my creativity. I had no idea that the thing that would complete me was being broken open by cancer."

Quote - Rev. Scott Tayler

Spring and Easter don't preach the same sermon. Spring promises the inevitability of relief: The cold will end on its own and the flowers will naturally bloom. Easter tells us that wholeness won't come without work. Spring says sit still and watch the dirt transform to beauty. Easter says get busy and make friends with dry earth. Dig in and don't be afraid of blistering your hands. The pain, sorrow and bloodied soiled is not redeemed by the seeds; it is the seed. Don't run away from the pain. Don't wait it out. Instead, trust it. If you do the work to befriend it, it will leave you whole.

Wholeness Lies Outside of the Cave

Quote/Angle - Parker Palmer

Wholeness does not mean perfection: it means embracing brokenness as an integral part of life. Knowing this gives me hope that human wholeness — mine, yours, ours — need not be a utopian dream, if we can use devastation as a seedbed for new life...

Here is the ultimate irony of the divided life: live behind a wall long enough, and the true self you tried to hide from the world disappears from your own view! The wall itself and the world outside it become all that you know. Eventually, you even forget that the wall is there — and that hidden behind it is someone called "you."

Easter and Earth Day

Thoughts from ministers' brainstorm - Easter invites us to look for hope even when all seems lost. It frames the crisis of climate change in a powerful way. What needs resurrected for the body and Wholeness of the earth to live on? Easter is also about the Incarnation which is a powerful way to frame the sacredness of the earth.

Seeds for Calendar Connections

Rev. Hosea Ballou, born April 30, 1771

No One is Irredeemable

On Hosea Ballou, Universalism & the call to never cast one out of the whole

Rev. Emily Wright-Magoon

<http://www.uumidland.org/blog/2018/10/01/no-one-is-irredeemable/>

"Even early Universalists quickly understood the logical outcome of their radical theology.

If all are saved, then there are no "bad people" over there and "good people" over here.

The Universalist Gordon McKeeman said

Hell is, in fact, a burning issue

for it is the issue of separation,

whether we can, with safety and impunity,

set up little islands in the human experience

and therefore protect ourselves

against any relationship with the mainland.

And Universalism says unequivocally, it cannot be done."

Recommended Sermons

Your Emerging Self: What Is in Your Heart?

Rev. Seth Carrier-Ladd

<http://www.uuchurchmuncie.org/podcast/rev-seth-carrier-ladd-your-emerging-self-what-is-in-your-heart/>

A map of knowing your false self, making space for your true self and finding wholeness along the way.

Healing into Wholeness

Heather Petit

<http://www.uucdc.org/worship/sermons/healing-wholeness>

"Instead of healthy, I am learning to think in terms of wholeness. I can look at my body in terms of healthy, and find it is never there. Even if I exclude the genetics, healthy is a fragile condition. I can be healthy one day and the next day not. It can always be taken away from me by an event or an act of God. But what I am, is whole. When we heal our most grievous wounds, the ones in our hearts and spirits, we discover that we are whole... we know ourselves as whole, no matter what else is going on..."

The Missing Peace

Rev. Kathleen Rolenz & Rev. Wayne Arnason

<http://fvuuf.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/02/The-Missing-Peace.-Feb13142016.Arnason.pdf>

"In the reading we heard from Parker Palmer, he warns us against living "divided lives, so far removed from the truth we hold within that we cannot know the integrity that comes from being what you are." I think that's what the character in The Missing Piece story is doing. Its desire to be completed obscures the wholeness that is already there. Because it thinks that having a missing piece is a deficit and a problem, it is missing another "peace," a far more important "peace," spelled P-E-A-C-E..."

Sabbath as Whole-Heartedness

Rev. Emily Wright-Magoon

<http://www.uumidland.org/blog/2017/10/05/sabbath-as-whole-heartedness/>

The monk looks at him with an acute, compassionate ferocity for a brief moment, taking it all in, and then says: "You know that the antidote to exhaustion is not necessarily rest? ...The antidote to exhaustion is wholeheartedness."

Blessed Bodies

[https://www.podbean.com/media/share/pb-f8xtx-](https://www.podbean.com/media/share/pb-f8xtx-616ee6?fbclid=IwAR1te8m1vIG7_uUf5vDccrcF_ghGuCsbHLiFTMfK1gtZiiaG0YfT8jdQIA)

[616ee6?fbclid=IwAR1te8m1vIG7_uUf5vDccrcF_ghGuCsbHLiFTMfK1gtZiiaG0YfT8jdQIA](https://www.podbean.com/media/share/pb-f8xtx-616ee6?fbclid=IwAR1te8m1vIG7_uUf5vDccrcF_ghGuCsbHLiFTMfK1gtZiiaG0YfT8jdQIA)

"There is no wrong way to have a body." -Glenn Marla

Our bodies are sacred, blessed, and beautiful just the way we are. Come join us for embodied worship, thoughtful meditation, and permission to love ourselves and each other in the bodies we have right now.

Transforming Toward Wholeness

Rev. Joan Javier-Duval

<https://ucmvt.org/app/uploads/2016/01/jan10-2016.mp3>

On transformation as becoming more fully who we are rather than becoming something different. Wholeness is the awareness of connectedness life around us, but it is also about finding or restoring connection to who we are most deeply called to be. And it is also authenticity, leading a life where we don't work to hide our broken pieces but unveil and honor them as the work of a life well-lived, a life through which we've constructed beauty out of the broken moments.

How Integrity Can Give You the Life You Want

Rev. Theresa I. Soto

<http://uucs.podbean.com/e/how-integrity-can-give-you-the-life-you-want/>

Finding Wholeness by asserting boundaries. Sometimes becoming whole requires the ability to say no.

Radiant Wholeness - An Easter Sermon

Rev. Sheri Hostetler

<https://blog.menno.org/2017/04/16/easter-sermon-radiant-wholeness/>

"We are created in the image of God. Inside each of us is a radiant wholeness that seeks to be expressed in our human form. Thus, we have the mystery of the Incarnation. That mystery is not just that God became flesh in Jesus but that God — this radiant wholeness — seeks to become flesh in each of us. Jesus' calling was to show us that it was possible to be whole within this human form, to show us the way..."

Breaking Down the Walls; Making Us a New Family

Sarah Miles

<https://www.patheos.com/blogs/nadiabolzweber/2015/04/a-devastating-good-friday-sermon-from-my-friend-sara-miles/>

The crucifixion as a refusal to be separated and a call to gathering up the whole.

Excerpt: "The crucifixion is ongoing... We must witness the crucifixion—of Jesus, of Jessica Hernandez, of Michael Brown and Tamar Rice— without running away, or pretending it's not real, or that we're not responsible. We must look upon the one we have pierced, without flinching. And we must witness how, lifted high on the lynching tree, Jesus gathers all people— the corrupt judges, cynical torturers, bored soldiers, scapegoating crowds, condemned thieves, cowardly friends and devastated followers—to himself. What he says is: forgive them all, Father. And then he breathes the Spirit on us... This is the good news of Good Friday, and the radical challenge of the resurrection. Jesus, with his broken body, breaks down the walls that divide humanity, and makes us into a new family, children of God. And if we are to remember his death and enter his life, we must take up in a new way the familiar human cross of being a son, a mother, a friend. We must turn to and claim each other—neighbors, strangers, enemies— and refuse to be separated..."

Earth Day: Can the Earth Forgive Us?

Justin Schroeder

<https://firstuniv.podbean.com/e/april-22-2018-sermon-by-rev-justin-shcroeder-earth-day-can-the-earth-forgive-us/>

Restoring a healthy and whole earth requires recovering right relationships before rushing to the work.

Closing Words

May we leave this place

Bets Wienecke

<https://www.uua.org/worship/words/closing/6027.shtml>

May we leave this place
Seeking an uncharted and freely chosen way to wholeness,
Knowing we have companions along the way.

There Are Miles Behind You

Andrew Pakula

<https://www.uua.org/worship/words/closing/125415.shtml>

There are miles behind you
And many more ahead.
As you journey on toward wholeness
May all that is good and true guide your way
May the joy of love lighten every step
And the miracle that is life be ever in your sight.

In the Rising Sun Today

Joel Miller

<https://www.uua.org/worship/words/closing/rising-sun-today>

We all know loss and pain.
Let none of it divide us.
In the rising sun today
Let us do together what we cannot do alone:
Roll away the stones that close our hearts.

Easter is...

Rev. Patrick O'Neill:

Easter is an impossible story written for everyone who has ever felt the sting of death and wishes for something more.
Easter is a story for anyone who loves life so much that they prayer for more life to follow.
Easter is a story for people who can envision a loving divinity that will not be conquered by evil.
It's a story that never dies;
Of immovable objects that get tossed aside;
Of happy endings in a tragic world;
Of miracles;
Of faith rewarded and vision restored and hope justified.
That's what Easter is.
May it be so for us.
Amen

Opportunities for Support & Inspiration

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/>

Attend one of our two monthly online ministers' brainstorming groups:

First Tuesdays and First Thursdays of each month at 1pm eastern

Attend our monthly online musicians' brainstorming group:

Second Thursdays of each month at 1pm eastern

Join the Soul Matters Inspiration Facebook Page:

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

Find musical inspiration on our Soul Matters Spotify music playlists:

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

** ** *



© 2018-19 Soul Matters ALL RIGHTS RESERVED

Packets are for use ONLY by member congregations of the Soul Matters Sharing Circle.

Learn how to join at <http://www.soulmatterssharingcircle.com>