

6.26.22 Flower Communion

Greetings and announcements

Sounding the Singing Bowl

Prelude

Light the Chalice

This is our sacred promise:
To gather together in peace
To seek truth in love
To serve human need
So that all shall grow in harmony with the divine.

Yonder Come Day

Responsive Reading “Summer Warmth”

We stand at the edge of summer.

**The sun has at last warmed us enough that we begin to trust
in its presence.**

The last burst of spring blossoms, lavender and white and deep pink banks of
rhododendron, are giving way to summer peonies and roses.

**O source of the turning seasons,
Of earth, of life, of promise gradually becoming a fulfillment,**

May all people find a lightening of the burdens with the brightening of the sky.

Hymn #63 Spring Has Now Unwrapped the Flowers

Sharing from the Heart (joys and Concerns)

Prayer #123-Spirit of Life

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

Silent and Spoken Meditation

Michael DeVernon Boblett

Blessed be the flower that triumphs at last
Over the snows, over the centuries,
over the heavy feet of cattle and of soldiers
treading down the fragile places of the earth.

Blessed be the flower that triumphs at last
Over the tangled branches, over the withered stem,
over the tearing thorns of roses and of barbed wire.

Blessed be the flower that triumphs at last
Even over the hand that gathers it,
cuts it off from life, from roots,
from the memory and taste of iron and tears in the soil.

Blessed be the flower that triumphs at last
Over the closed rooms that are not its home,
over efforts to domesticate its wild truth,
over the vain words of priests and poets.

Blessed be the flower that triumphs at last
Over us, over pasts and futures, over words and silences,
over deaths and lives, placing them all in their proper place,
restoring to all things their joyful smallness.

Blessed be the flower that triumphs at last.

Hymn #64 *Oh, Give Us Pleasure in the Flowers Today*

Reading “For the Flowers Have the Gift of Language”

Speak, flowers, speak!
Why do you say nothing?
The flowers have the gift of language.
In the meadow they speak of freedom,
Creating patterns wild and free as no gardener could match.
In the forest they nestle, snug carpets under the roof of
Leaf and branch, making a rug of such softness.
At end tip of branches they cling briefly
Before bursting into fruit sweet to taste.

Flowers, can you not speak joy to our sadness?
And hope to our fear?
Can you not say how it is with you
That you color the darkest corner?
The flowers have the gift of language.
At the occasion of birth they are buds before bursting.
At the ceremony of love they unite two lovers in beauty.
At the occasion of death, they remind us how lovely is life.
Oh, would that you had voice,
Silent messengers of hope.
Would that you could tell us how you feel,
Arrayed in such beauty.
The flowers have the gift of language.
In the dark depths of a death camp
They speak the light of life.
In the face of cruelty
They speak of courage.
In the experience of ugliness
They bespeak the persistence of beauty.
Speak, messengers, speak!
For we would hear your message.
Speak, messengers, speak!
For we need to hear what you would say.

The Flower Communion

The Unitarian Universalist Flower Communion service which we are about to celebrate was originated in 1923 by Dr. Norbert Capek [pronounced Chah-Peck], founder of the modern Unitarian movement in Czechoslovakia. On the last Sunday before the summer recess of the Unitarian church in Prague, all the children and adults participated in this colorful ritual, which gives concrete expression to the humanity-affirming principles of our liberal faith. When the Nazis took control of Prague in 1940, they found Dr. Capek's gospel of the inherent worth and beauty of every human person, to be-as Nazi court records show-- "...too dangerous to the Reich [for him] to be allowed to live." Dr. Capek was sent to Dachau, where he was killed the next year during a Nazi "medical

experiment." This gentle man suffered a cruel death, but his message of human hope and decency lives on through his Flower Communion, which is widely celebrated today. It is a noble and meaning-filled ritual we are about to recreate. This service includes some of the original prayers of Dr. Capek to help us remember the principles and dreams for which he died. We use flowers in our ceremony this morning to help us symbolize the love that is hidden deep inside us. Capek said: Flowers are beautiful, and so are the feelings of love among people. Their beauty cannot be measured, and neither can the feelings of people be measured.

Their life is short but new flowers will replace the flowers that die, and new love can come into our hearts.

This bud is for the new babies who have joined us this year. Last year these babies did not exist. This year they are here among us. Before they could lift a hand, they learned to smile. Before they could speak, they learned to love. If we help them keep this love in their hearts, they will pass it on to others, many years in the future.

This flower represents the people living all over the world. Maybe we will never see them face to face, or touch their hands. But we can still warm our hands on their hearts, because we know that their hopes are like our hopes, their pain is like our pain, their love like our love.

These flowers were each brought here by a different person and put together on these trays. They stand for all the people here today.

These flowers, so lovely today, will fade tomorrow. But the love among brothers and sisters, families and friends, will go on and on. We know one another, we know what is in each other's hearts.

We have brought our flowers and our love to brighten our church and gladden our hearts

The Consecration

Infinite Spirit of Life, we ask thy blessing on these, thy messengers of fellowship and love. May they remind us amid diversities of knowledge and of gifts, to be one in desire and affection, and devotion to thy holy will. May they also remind us of the value of comradeship, of doing and sharing alike. May we cherish friendship as one of thy most precious gifts. May we not let awareness of another's talents discourage us, or sully our relationship, but may we realize that, whatever we can do, great or small, the efforts of all of us are needed to do thy work in this world.

As the Choir sings Draw the Circle Wide, I invite you to form a circle in our sanctuary. A kind of lining up to receive your flower. At the conclusion of the song we will partake in Communion.

Partaking of the Communion

It is time now for us to share in the Flower Communion. I ask that as you each in turn approach the chancel table quietly--reverently--with a sense of how important it is for each of us to address our world and one another with gentleness, justice, and love. I ask that you select a flower, plant or seed--different from the one you brought--that particularly appeals to you. As you take your chosen flower--noting its particular shape and beauty--please remember to handle it carefully. It is a gift that someone else has brought to you. It represents that person's unique humanity, and therefore deserves your kindest touch. Let us share quietly in this Unitarian Universalist ritual of oneness and love.

The Communion Prayer and Meditation

[Thomas Rhodes](#)

Within our hands we hold the resurrection of the world.
Transient and imperfect, these blossoms are still gifts of infinite value.
Like ourselves.

Too often we seek permanence and perfection.
Resisting change, blind to our shortcomings,
We become caught up in the petty issues and routine activities
Of our daily lives.

But may these flowers serve as a reminder
As they allow themselves to open to the heavens,
For despite their imperfections, they still have integrity,
And though they are transient, they contain the seeds of transcendence.
Like ourselves.

Let us then also open ourselves to mystery and wonder,
Fretting not about small mishaps or even (for now) great misfortune.
For the resurrection of the world is at our fingertips.
The resurrection lies within us.

Let us keep a moment of silent appreciation together.

In the name of Providence, which implants in the seed the future of the tree and in the hearts of humankind the longing for people living in [human] love; in the name of the highest, in whom we move and who makes the mother [and father], the brother and sister what they are; in the name of sages and great religious leaders, who sacrificed their lives to hasten the coming of [peace and justice]--let us renew our resolution--sincerely to be real brothers and sisters regardless of any kind of bar which estranges [one from another]. In this holy resolution may we be strengthened, knowing that we are God's family, that one spirit, the spirit of love, unites us, and [may we] endeavor for a more perfect and more joyful life. Blessed Be and Amen.

The Work of the Church-offertory Amazing Grace

When we gather together as a community, we bring the gifts of ourselves, our hearts and spirits, our time and energy, our talents and skills, to support the work of this church here within our walls and out in the larger community.

We also bring our gift of generosity, giving of what we have so that the work of this church may continue. As always, half our offering today will be sent out into the larger community to support the work of an agency or organization that is making a difference in our world. This month we are sharing our offering will be collected for the Welcoming Immigrants, Our New Neighbors

If you are watching from home, donations may be made through the 'Give' button at the top of our webpage, uuchurchsacobiddeford.com or checks may be mailed to UUCSB, 60 School Street, Saco. This morning's offering will now be received.

Song of Gratitude and Celebration

From all that dwell below the skies,
Let faith and hope and love arise.
Let beauty, truth and good be sung,
Through ev'ry land, by ev'ry tongue. Amen.

Extinguish the Chalice

As we release this flame
From its faithful service today
We allow the spark in each of us to burn on;
To warm our compassion,
To fire our delight
To light our paths,
Today, tomorrow and always.

Closing Hymn # 78, Color And Fragrance

Closing Words

by Alice Berry

Children of the earth and sky, we are nurtured, sustained, given warmth and light from above and below.

Supported by earth's strong, firm crust, we build our homes, till the fields, plant our gardens and orchards.

When we turn from self and seek to be aware, we will find holy light in human faces, in blossom, birdsong, and sky.

Then earth is truly our home, and we are one with all earth's creatures,
Parents of earth's children yet to be.

And now go out into the world in peace. Keep hold of what is good, never pay back wrong with wrong. Be joyful, reflective and give thanks. This is the life and the world that has been given to you!

Go in peace my friends!

Postlude