

Welcome Member of the Board

Prelude Medley: "Yankee Doodle" (pre-Revolutionary War),
"The Cruel War" (traditional, Civil War through Vietnam War),
"Rally Round the Flag, Boys" (George F. Root, Civil War)
Linda Hoover, piano

Chalice Lighting: Unison Reading #453

Opening Words # 429

Opening Hymn #155 Circle Round for Freedom

Linda, may we please sing it once just the melody line and then twice more with harmony from those who are inspired?

Circle 'round for freedom,
Circle 'round for peace,
For all of us imprisoned,
Circle for release,
Circle for the planet
Circle for each soul,
For the children of our children,
Keep the circle whole.

Story The Wall by Eve Bunting read by Cappy Nunlist

Sacred Sharing

At this time in our service, we share those joys and sorrows which have deepened our lives. Please come, choose a stone, speak or not, and place it in this chalice to symbolize placing your heart in the loving care and prayers of this congregation.

You are each receiving a small star. Please, if you are moved to do so, come forward and place a star in the chalice or signal our helpers to collect your star and place it for you and - acknowledging that any system of government is flawed - just speak one thing for which you are grateful to this country, or name one soldier, sailor, airman, or marine for whose sacrifice you are giving thanks.

Prayer

Let my body remember.
Let my hands and feet remember.
Let my breath remember

Those who have come before me,
Those who have come before us

Offering

Medley: "Johnny Has Gone for a Soldier" (Irish tune "Shule Agra, Shule Aroon"),
"Tramp, Tramp, Tramp, The Boys are Marching" (George F. Root, Civil War),
"When Johnny Comes Marching Home" (Patrick S. Gilmore, Civil War)
"Dixie" (Daniel D Emmet, Civil War and Reconstruction period)

Special Music "And the Band Played Waltzing Matilda" by Eric Bogle,
Grace Alden, guitar and soloist

Thoughts

Sparrow F. Alden

Among UU religious educators, we have an email conversation group where we support one another. Does anyone have a good story on the theme of veganism, has anyone tried the Mirrors and windows curriculum, who wants to share a hotel room at the upcoming conference? Every year, someone asks, "What do we do with Memorial Day?" Or, in November, with Veterans' Day. It's a tough subject, full of ideas like war, death, service to country, obedience, duty, honor. A whole basket full of double-edged swords. The long time religious educators sit back and wait for Sparrow to respond.

If we cannot face these double-edged swords in church, I believe that church needs to step up its game.

No one wants a child to learn about war and death anywhere other than from their parents. Our congregation supports those parents - who wisely introduce those ideas before the news or media can - by being a second place to work with the ideas that war is very sad, death is OK and sad for the ones still living. And by the time a child can get Memorial Day off from school, she needs to know what Memorial Day is.

It is a day to remember that soldiers, sailors, airmen, and marines have fought in wars that our country declared, and that many of them died because of it. It is the day to say "Thank you" to them, and to do something, anything, to show our respect for them.

It's interesting, I find that in my work, the big goals are to help kids develop acceptance, their own resiliency, a personal code, and a sense of community. This morning, John Corson - who is a retired psychologist with the Veterans' Administration - affirmed something I read about many years ago. That those combat military folks who begin their military service with strong ability to accept others and their life circumstances, with robust resiliency, a clear personal code and a sense of community are those with a better chance to return to emotional and spiritual balance after combat.

I developed the simple ritual we're going to do when I first read these ideas - we've been doing it in Sunday School for many years. We're going to say thank you and we're going to show our respect. At the same time, we affirm to our veterans that this community supports them and their service - and we promise to our kids who may someday wear the uniform that this community supports them and their service.

Linda Hoover suggested our next hymn. "Read all the lyrics," she said. And it's all there. Loving the extraordinary land. Acknowledging that 99% of us are immigrant stock. Recognizing that we - our country - is flawed. Honoring our heroes and naming the sacrifice of the fallen. Seeking a future free of poverty or fear. There are a couple of non-PC words. In exchange for all those ideas, we're going to manage with the period-appropriate language of Katharine Lee Bates, who wrote this for us in 1895.

Hymn "America the Beautiful" (see insert)

O beautiful for spacious skies,
For amber waves of grain,
For purple mountain majesties
Above the fruited plain!
America! America! God shed His grace on thee,
And crown thy good with brotherhood
From sea to shining sea!

O beautiful for pilgrim feet,
Whose stern impassion'd stress
A thoroughfare for freedom beat
Across the wilderness!
America! America! God mend thine ev'ry flaw,
Confirm thy soul in self-control,
Thy liberty in law!

O beautiful for heroes proved
In liberating strife,
Who more than self their country loved,
And mercy more than life!
America! America! May God thy gold refine
Till all success be nobleness,
And ev'ry gain divine!

O Beautiful for patriot dream
That sees beyond the years
Thine alabaster cities gleam,
Undimmed by human tears!

America! America! God shed His grace on thee,
And crown thy good with brotherhood
From sea to shining sea!

Extinguishing the Chalice (in unison)

We extinguish this flame,
But not the light of truth,
The warmth of love,
Or the fire of commitment:
These we carry in our hearts until we meet again.

A Journey to the Cemetery

Now let's walk together to the cemetery, If you'd like a strong arm to lean on, don't hesitate to ask. If you need to remain here, give yourselves some quiet time in this sacred space to think and talk. I'll stand near the entrance to be the home base of our circle while you walk among the headstones.

Find a grave which has a veteran's flag beside it

See if you can tell from the inscriptions when they served and if they may have served or died in wartime.

Please bring that name back and speak it into our circle.

Closing Hymn #123 Spirit of Life (Linda start?)

Benediction Please join the choir: *Dona Nobis Pacem*