

First Unitarian Church of Hamilton Service and Sermon
These Are the Voyages . . .
Date: Sunday, August 21, 2005

1. Bell

2. Gathering Music

“You’ll Have Time”

By William Shatner and Ben Folds

Performed by William Shatner

From the Album “Has Been” [Track #3, Copyright 2004]

Live life

Live life like you’re gonna die

Because you’re gonna

I hate to be the bearer of bad news

But you’re gonna die

Maybe not today or even next year

But before you know it you’ll be saying

“Is this all there was?

What was all the fuss?

Why did I bother?”

Now, maybe you won’t suffer maybe it’s quick

But you’ll have time to think

Why did I waste it?

Why didn’t I taste it?

You’ll have time

Because you’re gonna die

Yes it’s gonna happen because it’s happened to a lot of people I know

My mother, my father, my loves

The president, the kings and the pope

They all had hope

And they muttered just before they went

Maybe, I won’t go

Live life like you’re gonna die

Because you are

Maybe you won’t suffer maybe it’s quick

But you’ll have time to think

Why did I waste it?

Why didn’t I taste it?

You’ll have time

‘Cause you’re gonna die

I tell you who else left us

Passed on down to heaven no longer with us

Johnny Cash, JFK, that guy in the Stones

Lou Gehrig, Einstein and Joey Ramone

Have I convinced you?

Do you read my lips?

This may come as news but it’s time

You’re gonna die

You're gonna die

By the time you hear this I may well be dead
And you my friend might be next
'Cause we're all gonna die

Yeah, oh maybe you won't suffer and maybe it's quick
But you'll have time to think
Why did I waste it?
Why didn't I taste it?
You'll have time
You'll have time cause you're gonna die
Yes you're gonna die
Yes you're gonna die
You're gonna die, I tell you
You're gonna die
You're gonna die

'Cause maybe you won't suffer maybe it's quick
But you'll have time to think
Why did I waste it?
Why didn't I taste it?
You'll have time cause you're gonna die.

Live life
Live life like you're gonna die
Because you're going to
Oh yes
I hate to be the bearer of bad news
But you're gonna die

Maybe not today or even next year
But before you know it you'll be saying
"Is this all there was?
What was all the fuss?
Why did I bother?
Why did I waste it?
Why didn't I taste it?
You'll have time, baby
You'll have time
'Cause your gonna die
You are gonna die
Oh yeah

3. WELCOME

LESLIE: Good morning! Welcome to the First Unitarian Church of Hamilton. My name is Leslie Kaye and I am your service leader this morning.

Whoever you are, whomever you love, wherever you are in your search for truth and meaning, today you are the people who are the Church and you are welcome in this house of worship. We invite you to stay after the service for coffee and conversation so that we may get to know you better and answer your questions. If you are new to this church, pick up a copy of our newsletter at the greeting desk so that you may find out more about the life of this church. Our service can also be heard in the foyer where there are comfortable chairs and toys if you need a place where your small child can feel more comfortable.

Welcome.

Our speaker today will be Lyla Miklos, Programming Supervisor for SPACE: The Imagination Station – Canada’s Science Fiction Television Network. A friend of our congregation for many years, last summer she gave a sermon entitled “Everything I Need to Know About Life I Learned From Star Trek” which examined the cultural and social impact of a television show originally created in the 1960’s by Gene Roddenberry. This summer she will give a sermon on the subject of Star Trek, but will instead examine the impact it has had on her as an individual.

We are blessed in this congregation with wonderful music and today is no exception. Helping Lyla today is Rachel Derry Miles.

Out of respect for our worship and those who like to meditate and to our musicians, we ask you to express your appreciation for everyone’s contributions at the end of the service, rather than by applause during the service.

4. ANNOUNCEMENTS

LESLIE: [Announcements]

5. PRELUDE

LESLIE: Now let us prepare to worship together as we listen to our Prelude

“You’ve Got to Be Carefully Taught” & “Children Will Listen”
From South Pacific [1949] & Into The Woods [1987]
By Richard Rogers, Oscar Hammerstein II and Stephen Sondheim
Performed by Mandy Patinkin
From the album “Oscar & Steve” [Track #16, Copyright 1995]

You’ve got to be taught to hate and fear;
You’ve got to be taught from year to year.
It’s got to be drummed in your dear little ear.
You’ve got to be carefully taught.

You’ve got to be taught to be afraid
Of people whose eyes are oddly made.
And people whose skin is a different shade.
You’ve got to be carefully taught.

You’ve got to be taught before it’s too late,
Before you are six or seven or eight,
To hate all the people your relatives hate . . .

Careful the things you say –
Children will listen
Careful the things you do –
Children will see
And learn.

Children may not obey,
But children will listen
Children will look to you
For which way to turn,
To learn to what to be.

Careful before you say,
"Listen to me."
Children will listen

How do you say to your child in the night,
"Nothing's all black, but then nothing's all white."?
How do you say, "It will all be all right."
When you know that it mightn't be true?
What do you do?

Careful the wish you make –
Wishes are children
Careful the path they take –
Wishes come true,
Not free.

Careful the spell you cast,
Not just on children.
Sometimes the spell may last
Past what you can see
And turn against you . . .

Careful the tale you tell:
That is the spell
Children will listen

6. OPENING WORDS

LESLIE: Our opening words come from the Star Trek: The Next Generation episode "The Offspring" written by Rene Echevarria

"It is the struggle itself that is most important. We must strive to be more than we are. It does not matter that we will never reach our ultimate goal. The effort yields its own rewards."

7. CHALICE LIGHTING

LESLIE: We have a special guest with us today to light our chalice. A health care professional, wife, and mother who has been a fan of Star Trek since it first debuted on television in 1966. Star Trek introduced her to science fiction fandom and the filk music she loves. Filk, for the uninitiated, is science fiction folk music. She and her husband Dave were inducted into the Filk Hall of Fame last April. Both are invited as The Filk Guests of Honour at the 41st Marcon in Columbus, Ohio. A Science Fiction Convention that honours the Roddenberry Universe.

Please welcome Judith Hayman to come forward and light our chalice.

[Judith comes to the stage and prepares to light the chalice.]

Our Chalice reading comes from the Star Trek episode "Is There In Truth No Beauty" written by Jean Lissette Aroeste.

[Judith lights the chalice.]

"The glory of creation is in its infinite diversity. And the ways our differences combine to create meaning and beauty."

[Judith returns to her seat.]

8. OPENING HYMN

LESLIE: Let us join together in worship by singing hymn #2 from Singing the Living Tradition entitled "Down The Ages We Have Trod".

Down the Ages We Have Trod
Words by John Andrew Storey
Music by Thomas Benjamin

Down the ages we have trod many paths in search of God,
Seeking ever to define the Eternal and Divine.

Some have seen eternal good pictured best in Parenthood,
And a being throned above ruling over us in love.

There are others who proclaim God and Nature are the same,
And the present Godhead own where Creation's laws are known.

There are eyes which best can see God within humanity,
And God's countenance there trace written in the human face

Where compassion is most found is for some the hallowed ground,
And these paths they upward plod teaching us that love is God.

Through the truth we can't perceive this at least we must believe,
What we take most earnestly is our living Deity.

Our true God we there shall find in what claims our heart and mind,
And our hidden thoughts enshrine that which for us is Divine.

9. OFFERTORY

LESLIE: We will now receive the offering to be used to further the ministry of this liberal religious community while we listen to the offertory "Spock Thoughts" written by Charles R. Grean and performed by Leonard Nimoy.

"Spock Thoughts"
Written by Charles R. Grean
Performed by Leonard Nimoy
Originally from the album "The Two Sides of Leonard Nimoy" [1968]

Go placidly amid the noise and haste and remember what peace there may be in silence.
As far as possible, without surrender, be on good terms with all persons.
Speak your truth quietly and clearly and listen to others.
Even the dull and ignorant, they too have their story.
Avoid loud and aggressive persons, they are vexations to the spirit.
If you compare yourself with others you may become vain and bitter,
For always there will be greater and lesser persons than your self.
Enjoy your achievements as well as your plans.
Keep interested in your own career, however humble,
it is a real possession in the changing fortunes of time.
Exercise caution in your business affairs for the world is full of trickery.
But let this not blind you to what virtue there is,
Many persons strive for high ideals and everywhere life is full of heroism.

Be yourself.
Especially do not feign affection, neither be cynical about love.
For in the face of all aridity and disenchantment it is perennial as the grass.
Take kindly to counsel of the years, gracefully surrendering the things of youth.
Nurture strength of spirit to shield you in sudden misfortune.
But do not distress yourself with imaginings.
Many fears are born of fatigue and loneliness.
Beyond a wholesome discipline be gentle with yourself.
You are a child of the universe, no less than the tress and the stars.
You have a right to be here.
And whether or not it is clear to you, no doubt the universe is unfolding as it should.
Therefore be at peace with God, whatever you conceive him to be.
And whatever your labours and aspirations in the noisy confusion of life, keep peace with your soul.
With all its sham, drudgery and broken dreams it is still a beautiful world.
Be careful. Strive to be happy.

10. JOYS & CONCERNS

LESLIE: This is the our time as a church community to come together to share the joys or concerns of our lives—to listen, to pray, to meditate, or focus our thoughts on the ways we may care for one another.

After the meditation, we will join together in silence and, after our silence, during the music, you are invited to come forward, light a candle, and take a chalice tag so that we may know and support you after the service. If you feel comfortable, please write your concern and your full name in the book on the table to the right if you have not already done so, so that we may follow up with a caring card or letter.

11. MEDITATION

LESLIE: Now let us join together in the spirit of meditation and prayer.

From the novel of “Star Trek: The Motion Picture” by Gene Roddenberry, based on the screenplay by Harold Livingston and story by Alan Dean Foster

“Logic without need is sterile. Vejur may . . . ultimately learn everything there is to know about our universe . . . this part of it we can understand. But for all that knowledge . . . all the power, it has less wisdom than a child,” Spock said.

“But it must have taken wisdom for someone or something to build Vejur?” Kirk replied.

Spock shook his head. “If there’s an answer to that, Vejur doesn’t have it. I saw . . . the planet from which it came – a planet of living machines, infinitely complex technology, machines that could repair themselves, change themselves to adapt to outside changes . . .”

Spock felt himself clinging to Kirk’s hand – he was both shocked and pleased to feel such profound pain over the timeless, meaningless existences he had seen among the machines on that planet. They should not have been built so well and left there to exist without the capacity to know hunger or fear or loneliness or anger or any of those marvelous things that would have driven them to adjust their programming to fit their own needs. How important it was for a living thing to have needs!

“Jim,” said Spock finally, “Vejur has knowledge which spans this universe. And yet in all this magnificence, Vejur feels no awe . . . no delight . . . no beauty.” Spock began to sink back exhausted. “And, Jim, no answers! But it has to look for answers!”

“To what questions?” Kirk asked.

“ ‘Is this all I am?’ “ Spock said, quoting the essence of the emptiness he had felt. “Is there nothing more?”

LESLIE: Now may we all bring our thoughts or prayers to rest in the welcoming silence.

[Wait one minute. Then say: “Amen.” Signal sound technician.]

Main Title from “To Kill A Mockingbird”
By Elmer Bernstein
Performed by The Royal Scottish National Orchestra
[1997, Varese Sarabande Records]

[During the music people will be coming up for the Joys and Concerns.]

[Wait for music to end.]

LESLIE: In the spirit of community we share strength and find common purpose. At this time, we turn our minds toward one another, seeking to bring into our circle of concern all who ask for our love and support.

[Read out the Joys and Concerns that people have written in the book, being careful to read only the ones designated to be shared with everyone.]

[Light one more candle.]

LESLIE: I light this candle for all those joys and sorrows, which remain, in our hearts. Whatever our level of sharing, may this community be a blessing and support to us all.

12. READINGS

LESLIE: Our reading for today’s service comes from the novel of “Star Trek VI: The Undiscovered Country” by JM Dillard, based on the screenplay by Nicholas Meyer and Denny Martin Flinn and story by Leonard Nimoy, Nicholas Meyer and Denny Martin Flinn

“Do you like the painting, Lieutenant?” Spock asked.

“I do not understand this representation,” Valeris admitted.

“It is a depiction from ancient Earth mythology. The expulsion from Paradise.”

She frowned. “Why keep it in your quarters?”

A moment passed before Spock answered – and when he spoke, there was an odd quality to his voice.

“It is a reminder to me that all things must end.”

“Sir,” she said, standing. “It is of endings I wish to speak. I address you as a kindred intellect. Do you not recognize that a turning point has been reached in the affairs of the Federation?”

“History is filled with turning points,” Spock said, unruffled by her intensity. At her puzzled reaction, he added: “You must have faith.”

“Faith . . . ?”

“That the universe will unfold as it should.”

“Is that logical?” Valeris asked, confused by her mentor’s advice.

“Logic is only the beginning of wisdom, Lieutenant, not the end.”

13. HYMN

LESLIE: Let us join together in singing our second hymn from Sing Praises to Jehovah entitled “God’s Loyal Love”. Music and Lyrics are on the piece of paper distributed to all of you along with your order of service.

God’s Loyal Love (Isaiah 55:1-3)

Loyal love! God is love.
This truth cheers us from above.
Love caused God to send his Son,
Who for us the ransom won,
That we might gain righteousness,
Life eternal, happiness.
Hey there, all you thirsty ones,
Come and drink life's water free.
Yes, come drink, you thirsty ones; God's loving-kindness see.

Loyal love! God is love.
All his works give proof thereof.
Love for us he's further shown,
Giving Christ a heav'nly throne
To fulfill his cov'nant sworn.
See! His Kingdom has been born.
Hey there, all you thirsty ones,
Come and drink life's water free.
Yes, come drink, you thirsty ones; God's loving-kindness see.

Loyal love! God is love.
Peace he sent us like a dove.
Us he gave the 'faithful slave',
Him a grand commission gave,
That Jehovah's name he bear,
In his vindication share.
Hey there, all you thirsty ones,
Come and drink life's water free.
Yes, come drink, you thirsty ones; God's loving-kindness see.

Loyal love! God is love.
May God's love move us to love.
Loyally let's help the meek,
As God's righteousness they seek.
May we preach from door to door.
Comfort spread the whole world o'er.
Hey there, all you thirsty ones,
Come and drink life's water free.
Yes, come drink, you thirsty ones; God's loving-kindness see.

14. SERMON: These Are The Voyages . . .

LYLA: These are the voyages of Lyla Miklos. My continuing mission: to explore the world around me, to seek out new ideas and new experiences; to boldly live life and go where I have never gone before . . .

My parents both raised Catholic, baptized me in a Catholic Church when I was a baby

They met in Frobisher Bay, Baffin Island in the early 70's. My Father was working for his parents managing The Frobisher Inn and my Mother was working for CBC Radio.

My father overtime became an agnostic.

My Mother converted and became a Jehovah's Witness after meeting a woman doing missionary work.

I have many childhood memories of trekking through the snow with my three younger brothers and our Mother in our Parkas with our Watchtower and Awake magazines in tow trying to "save" the people of this isolated Arctic community.

As a young child I didn't question whether any of what I was preaching was right or wrong. It just was. I knew no other reality.

Jehovah's Witnesses are a Bible-based Christian religion. Some see them as a Fundamentalist cult. Yet, although their interpretation of the Bible is different, it is not entirely unique. Much like the Amish and Mennonites they believe they must live in this world, but be no part of "the world". Which means a delicate balance of obeying Caesar's and God's laws. It also means a complete and utter rejection of any other faith systems or beliefs, as all other religions are seen as the creation of Satan.

Jehovah's Witnesses believe that after God's Great War of Armageddon, in which he will wipe clean all evil from the Earth, that all zealous Witnesses will live forever on a Paradise Earth. War, Famine, Sickness, Death, Pain, Hunger, Hostility and Want will be no more. Heaven is a destiny for only a select few. Only 144,000 of the faithful would join God in heaven as King-Priests. Any non-believers will just simply die. Witnesses do not believe in Hell or Purgatory. When you die you simply cease to exist on any level other than being worm food.

After 1000 years of this restored Earthly Paradise God will once again tempt his followers with the past pleasures of their former existence. Again any who stray from God's New World order will die. After this last Temptation God's followers will continue to live forever on a Paradise Earth.

My life as a Witness was an isolating one. Two nights a week of Bible Study. Every Sunday, Kingdom Hall. At least once a week if not more I'd be out preaching door to door. Being no part of the world meant:

- not making friends with anyone who wasn't a Jehovah's Witness
- not joining any extra-curricular activities which would take my attention away from god's work
- not listening to music, watching TV shows, films, or reading books with "worldly" content
- no nationalistic pride
- no birthdays or Christmas or a host of other celebrations with Pagan or Non-Christian roots

Being a Witness wasn't just a religion for me, but my entire identity.

And it wasn't enough to simply call yourself a Jehovah's Witness, you had to constantly strive to be a better Jehovah's Witness. Those most highly regarded within the faith are those who are

willing to completely devote their lives to God's work. Which means becoming a full-time Pioneer, Missionary or Bethelite.

Although my religion proclaimed to have cornered the market on "The Truth" and had myriads of literature to provide me with answers to everything from teenage angst to the meaning of life I still felt empty and unfulfilled. Being ostracized and ridiculed at school for being different hurt, but it was never the underlying reason behind why I abandoned the religious faith I was raised with.

Being a Jehovah's Witness was making me depressed. I was constantly told that as an unmarried and unbaptized woman I needed to know my place. I was not to question the Elders or any tenants of my faith, because to do so was to question God's order. I was powerless as an individual and any talents I had were not to be squandered for my own self-fulfillment, but were to be used to carry on God's work.

Having such a fatalistic hope in the future of humanity also added to my depression. You see, God's War of Armageddon would only happen once man had declared he had achieved true peace and security. I kept asking myself why God would create man and allow him to accomplish so much and then destroy him the moment he is able to teach himself not to hate anymore.

I couldn't believe in humanity. I could only hope that God would eventually save us from ourselves. And the thought of living forever with the self righteous, overly pious, extremely judgmental, sexually repressed and hypocritical Jehovah's Witnesses I grew up with sounded far more horrifying than death.

I couldn't find any concrete reason to live . . . and then something saved me.

On September 28, 1987 Star Trek: The Next Generation premiered on Television. Each week I saw a crew of humans and aliens from diverse cultural, ethnic, economic, and spiritual backgrounds working together to resolve complex problems using diplomacy and only resorting to violence when all other means of ending a conflict had failed. What's more this vision of the future had humanity living on a peaceful United Earth, aligned with other worlds in the Universe in peace via an organization called the United Federation of Planets. No God created this peaceful co-existence. Humans and Aliens achieved it all on their own, through self-determination.

Star Trek: The Next Generation gave me a reason to want to keep living. I wanted to live so I could one day bring to fruition the hopeful future for mankind that Gene Roddenberry's creation had envisioned.

By my final years of High School I permanently cut off my affiliation with the Jehovah's Witnesses. I could no longer identify as a Witness. I was too independent, outspoken and inquisitive to continue to associate with them. It wasn't who I was.

But a new void opened up.

I was so used to having a religious community I felt like my insides had been gutted out and left exposed. I had nothing to fill this void with and my distaste for organized religion at this point did not motivate me to fill this emptiness any time soon.

In an ironic way the world of Star Trek fandom re-created a construct so much like the one I knew as a Witness it was almost uncanny. Sci-Fi Conventions, Fan Clubs, Endless Reams of Literature and House Films all re-created a community I already knew so well, just instead of wearing my Sunday best I wore my most inspired geek attire.

More importantly, Star Trek restored my sense of wonder in the world around me. I wanted to ask questions again and explore and unravel the mysteries of the universe without feeling like my inquiries were disrespectful, insidious or unwarranted.

Although Star Trek gave me a renewed sense of purpose, I felt it's adherence to a code of anything that is a mystery now will one day be explained, created a new paradox. Star Trek's strict adherence to humanist principles was a conundrum the series had a certain self-awareness of. Remember Leslie's readings from Star Trek: The Motion Picture and Star Trek VI: The Undiscovered Country. In both instances Spock states that logic is just the beginning of understanding not the end.

Gene Roddenberry's humanist beliefs were peppered throughout Star Trek, but even more so in Star Trek: The Next Generation. His belief that religion was primitive and lacked intelligence was a concept repeated throughout both series.

One of the strongest examples of this was an episode of The Next Generation entitled "Who Watches The Watchers" written by Richard Manning and Hans Beimler.

In this episode a team of Federation anthropologists, working in a camouflaged outpost have been observing a race of Vulcan-like humanoids, named the Mintakens, whose development is at the equivalent of earth's Bronze Age. But when an explosion rips through the outpost and the Enterprise attempts to rescue the expedition team a series of misfortunes causes the Mintakens to mistakenly believe that Captain Jean Luc Picard is a God named the Overseer.

Dr. Barren the head of the Federation science team suggests that Picard go down to the planet and pretend to be the Overseer, which is in direct conflict with the Prime Directive. The Prime Directive is one of the founding principles of the Federation. No Starfleet personnel may interfere with the cultural evolution and development of alien life.

Here is some of their heated debate . . .

Picard: Absolutely out of the question. The Prime Directive . . .

Barren: Has already been violated. The damage is done. All we can do now is minimize it.

Picard: By sanctioning their false beliefs?

Barren: By giving them guidelines. Letting them know what the overseer expects of them.

Picard: Dr. Barren, I can not. I will not impose a set of commandments on these people. To do so violates the very essence of the Prime Directive.

Barren: Like it or not we have rekindled the Mintakens belief in the Overseer.

Riker: And are you saying that this belief will eventually become a religion?

Barren: It's inevitable and without guidance that religion could degenerate into inquisitions, holy wars, chaos.

Picard: Horrifying. Dr. Barren your report describes how rational these people are. A Millennia ago they abandoned their belief in the supernatural. Now you are asking me to sabotage that achievement and send them back into the darkness of superstition and ignorance and fear. No. We will find some way to undo the damage we have caused.

Picard decides to use reason and logic to solve this dilemma and beams the leader of the Mintakens, a woman named Nuria, aboard his ship to explain who and what he really is. Here is some of their conversation . . .

Picard: If huts are better, why did you once live in caves?

Nuria: The most reasonable explanation would be that at one time we did not know how to make huts.

Picard: Just as at one time you did not know how to weave cloth. How to make a bow.

Nuria: That would be reasonable.

Picard: Someone invented a hut. Someone invented a bow, who taught others, who taught their children. Who built a stronger hut. Who built a better bow. Who taught their children . . . now Nuria suppose one of your cave dwelling ancestors were to see you as you are today? What would she think?

Nuria: I don't know.

Picard: Oh . . . put yourself in her place. You see she cannot kill a Horn Buck at a great distance. You can. You have a power she lacks.

Nuria: Only because I have a bow.

Picard: She has never seen a bow. Doesn't exist in her world. To you it's a simple tool. To her it's magic.

Nuria: I suppose she might think so.

Picard: Now how would she react to you?

Nuria: I think she would fear me.

Picard: Just as you fear me.

It is interesting to note the subtle then overt changes to the humanist code within Star Trek following the death of Gene Roddenberry in 1991. The next Star Trek series launched in January of 1993 and was called Star Trek: Deep Space Nine. This was the first Trek series created without any direct involvement or guidance from Roddenberry.

In this series the planet Bajor and its citizens the Bajorans were once occupied by an alien race called the Cardassians. The Cardassians abandoned Bajor and leave behind a Space Station. Bajor wants to join the United Federation of Planets and asks Starfleet to assist in the running of the abandoned Cardassian Space Station in a joint Federation/Bajoran operation.

The Starfleet personnel soon discover a wormhole next to the planet, which takes you to the other side of the Universe. Even more fascinating, they discover entities who live within the wormhole whose sense of time is non-linear. For these beings the past, present and future do not exist as separate and distinct entities, but rather connect and join and touch each other like the individual threads in a ball of yarn.

The human Starfleet officers see these aliens as a new life form whose complexities they must try to unravel and understand. The Bajorans believe these aliens are The Prophets. Deities they have worship for centuries.

Soon a conflict erupts on the Station. Humanist beliefs and Bajoran beliefs clash over what is being taught in the Space Station's school in regards to the aliens in the wormhole or The Prophets within the Celestial Temple.

Here is a conversation between Commander Sisko and his son Jake from the Star Trek: Deep

Space Nine episode "In The Hands of The Prophets" written by Robert Hewitt Wolfe. Due to the influence of a Bajoran religious leader named Vedek Winn, all the Bajorans living on Deep Space Nine have just pulled their children out of class in protest over the school's curriculum.

Ben: I heard about what happened at School. Did Mrs. O'Brien call classes off?

Jake: No. There was only me and four other kids left, but she still kept the school open. She changed the lesson to teach us about Galileo. Did you know that he was tried by the inquisition for teaching that the Earth moved around the Sun?

Ben: Tried and convicted. His books were burned.

Jake: How could anyone be so stupid?

Ben: It's easy to look back seven centuries and judge what was right and wrong.

Jake: But the same thing is happening now. With all the stuff about the Celestial Temple and the wormhole. It's dumb.

Ben: No it's not. You've got to realize something Jake. For over 50 years the one thing that allowed the Bajorans to survive the Cardassian occupation was their faith. The Prophets were their only source of hope and courage.

Jake: But there were no prophets, they were just aliens that you found in the wormhole.

Ben: To those aliens, the future is no more difficult to see than the past. Why shouldn't they be considered prophets?

Jake: Are you serious?

Ben: My point is, it's a matter of interpretation. It may not be what you believe, but that doesn't make it wrong. If you start to think that way, you'll be acting just like Vedek Winn, only from the other side.

Benjamin Sisko comes to the same conclusion Henry Drummond comes to at the end of the play "Inherit The Wind" when he grabs a copy of Darwin's Evolution of the Species and the Holy Bible and presses them together and places both of them in his brief case. Symbolizing that both religion and science must coexist.

It was almost as if Star Trek and I were both maturing from a dogmatic doctrine to a philosophy that was open to more than one interpretation to the meaning of life all around us. As the world of Star Trek opened itself up to new ways of thinking and more acceptance of the diversity of views that an entire universe may present I found I was coming to yet another crisis of faith.

Although Star Trek rescued me from my depression and gave me a renewed sense of hope and even provided me with a new community of "believers" if you will, I found something was still lacking.

I felt for a very long time that for me to be complete as a human being my physical, mental and spiritual selves all needed to be fed and kept in balance.

Despite a past and present which denied magic as either good or real, I kept being drawn to it. As a child I loved to read fairy tales and myths. As an adult and even more so as a queer woman I found comfort in Magic and Witchcraft or later as I came to know it Wicca. This was a faith that revered women as equals and sometimes even as Goddesses. Wicca teaches that human sexuality in all its forms is something not to be ashamed of, but to be celebrated. This was a far

cry from my Witness upbringing, which instructed me to wash my brain out with soap if I even had a dirty thought.

In Scott Cunningham's "Living Wicca" magic is defined as the movement of natural, yet subtle, Energies to manifest positive, needed change. Magic is the process of rousing energy, giving it purpose, through visualization, and releasing it to create a change. This is a natural, not supernatural, practice.

Cunningham also says "Magic reminds us that we do, indeed, have control over our lives. If we don't like where our lives our heading, we can change that direction through positive ritual. Thoughts are things; that is, thoughts generate and release energy and, if repeated with intent, can be powerful sources of energy. Thus, as we control negative thoughts, we improve our lives.

What's more, the Goddess and God are everywhere, which means they are within us. Thus whatever we do, wherever we go, they are present. We're not here to ask forgiveness of our deities. This would be similar to apologizing to our stylist or barber because our hair just keeps on growing. The Universe is a classroom. We're the students. Karma, life, ourselves, others and the Goddess and God are the teachers, and we can't always know the answers."

Cunningham's explanation of Magic and Wicca remind me of something Kirk and McCoy say at the end of "Star Trek V: The Final Frontier".

Kirk: Cosmic thoughts gentlemen?

McCoy: I was thinking, is God really out there?

Kirk: Maybe he isn't out there. Maybe he's right here. In the human heart.

As a Jehovah's Witness it was my mission in life to obey God's orders so I could gain his approval and live forever in a Paradise Earth.

As a Star Trek Humanist it was my mission in life to better the fate of the world around me so I could realize a future for humanity where we would achieve peace amongst ourselves and travel the cosmos seeking out new life and new civilizations.

As a Wiccan it was my mission in life to enrich, nourish and protect the fabric of the universe of which I am a part and to celebrate my existence by experiencing and living life to its fullest.

So here I was, an ex-Jehovah's Witness, baptized Catholic, with a Humanist hope for the future as presented by Star Trek, practicing Wicca . . . but still I felt that I was missing something and that was a spiritual community.

Through several different twists and turns of fate I discovered Unitarian Universalism. I remember when I first walked though these doors looking for the books that would tell me what UUs believe. I tried to find the pamphlets that would let me know how to be a good UU, but was at a loss. Where were the instruction manuals that told me what to believe and how to behave?

It took me a little while to figure out that I was already living the life of a UU before I even walked in the door. The hymnal I opened up every week revealed all.

(Indicate the page before the hymns, which states our principles and sources.)

Here was a spiritual community where I fit right in. Where a free and responsible search for truth and meaning and respect for the interdependent web of all existence of which we are all a part were guiding principles that every UU lived by.

These are the voyages of Lyla Miklos . . . the journey made way for discoveries both profound and rewarding . . . may the adventure continue.

15. CLOSING HYMM

LESLIE: For our closing hymn we shall sing hymn #205, Amazing Grace. After we sing all four verses be prepared to once again sing the final verse at the end.

Amazing grace!
How sweet the sound that saved a wretch like me!
I once was lost, but now am found,
Was blind but now I see.

'Twas grace that taught my heart to fear,
and grace my fears relieved,
how precious did that grace appear
the hour I first believed!

Through many dangers, toils, and snares,
I have already come;
'tis grace that brought me safe thus far,
and grace will lead me home.

When we've been there ten thousand years,
Bright shining as the sun,
We've no less days to sing God's praise
Than when we'd first begun.

Amazing grace!
How sweet the sound that saved a wretch like me!
I once was lost, but now am found,
Was blind but now I see.

16. CLOSING WORDS

LESLIE: Our closing words are from the novel "All Good Things . . ." written by Michael Jan Friedman based on the Star Trek: The Next Generation episode written by Ronald D. Moore and Brannon Braga.

I'll again ask Judith Hayman to come to the podium to read our Closing Words.

JUDITH: In the final episode of Star Trek: The Next Generation Captain Jean Luc Picard's nemesis Q, a seemingly omnipotent alien, helps Picard leap through his past, present and future to stop a spatial anomaly from destroying the entire universe.

"I will say this for you, Jean-Luc . . . you always have been full of surprises." Q said, "So surprise me again. Tell me you've taken something away from this experience. Say you've expanded your horizons just the tiniest, little bit."

The captain looked at the entity askance. What knowledge had he taken away from this? And why was it so important to Q that he learned something?

After all, he had accomplished what he'd needed to accomplish. He had done what was necessary to preserve his own kind.

Unless . . .

Suddenly, Picard saw what it had been about. And he wasn't happy – not in the least. In fact, he felt more humiliated than ever.

"I saw my way out of a paradox," the captain responded. "And in the process, I broke free of my preconceptions of time and space. That's what this was all about, wasn't it?" He grunted, amazed at the Continuum's audacity.

Q's eyes narrowed. "Now you're catching on, mon capitaine. For one spilt second, your mind was open to possibilities and ideas you'd never dreamt of. But it was only the beginning."

Picard wanted to be angry – but somehow he couldn't be. As twisted as Q's methods were, his motives seemed almost . . . altruistic.

"You think of yourself as an explorer," Q expanded, warming to the subject. "And yet, how little you understand the universe you live in."

He gestured ever so slightly, and the captain's head was suddenly full of images and concepts he couldn't begin to comprehend. It was staggering . . . overwhelming.

Q went on, his voice a distant drone. "The real voyage of exploration has yet to begin, Jean-Luc . . . a voyage vastly unlike any other in your experience. And it has nothing to do with mapping star systems and charting nebulae. It's a voyage of perceptions . . . of thoughts . . . of moments and possibilities . . ."

Just as Picard thought he was beginning to see, the images vanished. It left him feeling empty . . . and terribly alone, like someone who has been cut off from the very thing that defined him.

"Well," Q told him, "maybe you're not quite ready yet. But you seem to have demonstrated a certain aptitude for higher learning. Perhaps someday you'll get the picture." He dusted off his judge's robes. "In any case, I'll be here watching . . . and waiting. And if you're very, very lucky, I'll drop by to say hello from time to time. Until we meet again, mon capitaine."

[Judith snuffs out the chalice light.]

17. POSTLUDE

LESLIE: Please be seated while enjoying our postlude. This song inspired by musical compositions by John Williams from the films ET: The Extraterrestrial and Close Encounters of The Third Kind was Lyla's very first Filk Song and her introduction to Judith Hayman and the Filk Community.

Please enjoy "You Have Taught Me How To Fly" written, adapted and performed by Lyla Miklos.

You Have Taught Me How To Fly

Lyrics by Lyla Miklos

Adapted from Music by John Williams from ET: The Extraterrestrial and Close Encounters of The Third Kind

Performed by Lyla Miklos

You have taught me how to fly
You have taught me how to fly
You have taught me how to fly
Yes you have taught me how

Now when I dream, I dream in brighter shades

Now when I see, it's a more distant gaze
Now when I hear, it's like thunder claps
What have you done to me?

You have taught me how to fly
Now my feet are lighter than air
I can touch the tallest tower
Cause you have taught me how

Now when I sing, it's like a bird in spring
Now when I run, I'm faster than the wind
Now when I feel, it comes in stronger waves
What have you done to me?

You have taught me how to fly
Now I even touch the sky
And I grab a piece of cloud
Cause you have taught me how

Suddenly wings have sprouted on my back
And when I spread my wings I will soar
You've turned my heart into a butterfly
And you have made it run away

You have taught me how to fly
Now I don't just touch the sky
Now I even reach the stars
And hold them in my hands

I don't know what it is you've done to me
Now all my wishes are coming true
Magical visions dance in front of me
Fantasy is real

You have taught me how to fly
Now I don't just reach the stars
I have entered other worlds
Cause you have taught me how

You have taught me how
You have taught me how
You have taught me how
Now watch me fly

18. COFFEE & CONVERSATION