

Title: Dialogue. Respect. Friendship.

Date: January 11, 2009

Speakers: Ali Cheaib and Lorne Finkelstein

Service Leader: Lyla Miklos

Music Ministers: Daniel Allen and Rachel Derry

Invocation Reader/Writer: John Stares

1. Gathering Music:

(Once the Musicians and Service Participants have finished rehearsing and/or testing the mikes the sound technicians will play a piece of instrumental music on CD. This music will have been pre-selected by the Music Committee. The Ushers will open the doors to the sanctuary at this point. Ideally this music will start at 10:15am.)

2. Bell

(The Worship Assistant will ring the Bell at 10:25am, so congregants will be settled into their seats once the Prelude begins.)

3. Prelude:

LYLA: We kindly ask you to quietly take your seats as we listen to our Prelude.

Premiere Niede

D. Allen

Daniel Allen (vocals/guitar)

4. Welcome:

LYLA: Good Morning! Welcome to the First Unitarian Church of Hamilton.

My name is Lyla Miklos and I will be your service leader this morning. I am a member of this church and am the Co-Chair of your Church Services Committee.

Our speakers today are Ali Cheaib and Lorne Finkelstein, Co-Chairs of the Hamilton Arab, Muslim and Jewish Dialogue Committee.

Sadly, the message they will share with you today is far too poignant and timely.

On Thursday, January 8 the Unitarian Universalist Association issued an official statement and prayer for peace by Eric M. Cherry. To read the full statement and prayer please visit the UUA's website.

Over the past 10 days people of faith around the world have been shocked and saddened by the recent violence in Israel and Gaza. The Unitarian Universalist Association joins with its partner organizations including Churches for Middle East Peace in calling for effective and robust diplomatic efforts to bring about an

immediate cease-fire and secure the access of humanitarian relief efforts in the region.

Spirit of Life and Love, be present with all who are suffering terribly from the violence in Gaza. Lift up the hearts of those who fear. And inspire courage among the peacemakers.

Be present with political leaders, ensuring a retreat from violence and a procession towards the peace table. Guide the hands of all those who are caring for the injured, the hungry and the grieving. And, open our own hearts to compassion. Remind us of our complicity and responsibility. And lead us towards generous engagement—always towards a vision of peace.

Amen

I got to know our two amazing guest speakers, Ali and Lorne, when we sat together on the Community Roundtable of SHCI – Strengthening Hamilton’s Community Initiative – a grassroots coalition of activists and leaders with the common goal of ending racism in our city.

I will never forget a very early Saturday morning emergency SHCI meeting at City Hall called by then Mayor Larry Dilanni after the brutal gay bashing of a member of our community. Ali and Lorne both stood up and spoke out against this violent act of hate. I am still profoundly touched by their words of support, determination and hope.

I am in no way surprised to see both of these men continue the work they started with SHCI, by now focusing on bridging the divide between their two communities. Individually they are each inspiring. Together they are a powerful force for our collective humanity.

We are blessed in this congregation with wonderful music and today is no exception. Our Music Ministry today will be provided by Daniel Allen with Rachel Derry providing accompaniment for our hymns.

If you have a Joy or a Sorrow you would like shared with the congregation during today’s service please make sure to write it the grey binder, before our Musical Meditation ends. It can be found at the small table against the wall to my right.

This service is also piped into the lobby where there are comfortable chairs for you, your children or guests if you have to step out of the sanctuary to feel more comfortable, but would still like to hear the service.

After our worship please join our Fellowship in the lobby.

If you would like to enjoy an intimate post-service discussion you are welcome to attend the Speakeasy Salon in the minister's office, following the service. Today's discussion will be facilitated by John Stevenson and our guests Ali and Lorne have agreed to attend.

If you are a newcomer please visit our newcomers table so you may know us better and take a green mug for your beverage so we may know you better.

Whoever you are, whomever you love, wherever you are in your search for meaning, today you are the people of this congregation, and you are welcome in this house of worship.

5. Chalice Lighting/Invocation: by John Stares

LYLA: The flaming chalice is one of the most recognizable symbols of our Unitarian Universalist faith.

At the beginning of every service, we light our chalice to mark our entry into sacred space and to affirm our participation together in the worship activities of this liberal religious community.

Today's Responsive Invocation was written by a member of our congregation – John Stares. I would like to ask John to lead us in his invocation. You will respond with the words in Italics.

(John comes to the podium.)

I would like to ask Ali Cheaib to light our chalice. As Ali lights our chalice please join John in reading our responsive invocation which can be found in your order of service.

(Ali gets up and walks towards the Chalice.)

(John comes to the podium.)

(Ali Cheaib lights the chalice and then returns to his seat.)

JOHN & CONGREGANTS:

As we bring light this morning to our sacred chalice,

*let our thoughts drift to those notions that hold us together as a congregation;
Our belief in the inherent worth and dignity of every human being,*

and of the inherent worth and dignity of all our relations in this precious web of creation.

Justice, compassion,

and the power of spiritual growth.

Freedom in our search for truth,

and our passionate yet humble prayer for peace amongst the peoples of this world.

(John returns to his seat.)

6. Hymn of the Month: #1054 Let This Be A House Of Peace

LYLA: Our Hymn of the Month is an opportunity for us to become more familiar with the songs in our supplemental hymnal "Singing The Journey"

Please stand if you are able and let us join together in worship by singing our Hymn of the Month, hymn #1054 from your aqua hymnal entitled "Let This Be A House Of Peace".

*Let this be a house of peace
Of nature and humanity
Of sorrow and elation
Let this be our house
A haven for the healing
An open room for questions
And our inspirations*

*Chorus: Let this be a house of peace
(Let this be our house of peace)
Let this be a house of peace
(Let this be our house of peace)
Let this be a house of peace*

*Let this be a house of freedom
Guardian of dignity and worth
held deep inside us
Let this be our house
A platform for the free voice
Where all our sacred differences
here shall not divide us*

(Chorus)

*Let all in this house seek truth
Where scientists and mystics*

*abide in reverence here
Let this be our house
A house of our creation
Where works of art and melodies
Consecrate the atmosphere*

(Chorus)

*Let this be a house of prophesy
May vision for our children
Be our common theme
Let this be our house
Of myth and lore and legend
Our trove of ancient story
And cradle of our tender dreams*

7. Announcements:

LYLA: Our written and oral announcements bring into formal worship all the other aspects of our life as a church community.

In doing so, we remind ourselves that all we do is, in fact, a celebration of that which is of worth.

Please make a point of reading all the announcements in your order of service following today's worship service.

We have a few additional announcements, which you won't find in your orders of service.

(Read oral announcements.)

I would now like to invite Mary Eve and Michelle Corbeil to the podium to give a special announcement from the Canvass Committee.

8. Musical Invocation:

Aube Minaret III

D. Allen

Daniel Allen (vocals/guitar)

LYLA: Daniel Allen will now share with us our Musical Invocation.

9. Reading: Opening Session Speech from the Generation of Peace Delegation at the First World Congress of Imams and Rabbis for Peace

LYLA: Our reading today is taken from the Opening Session speech from The Generation of Peace Delegation at the First World Congress of Imams and Rabbis for Peace, which took place in Brussels in 2005. 16 youth from around the world made up this delegation. They presented this speech to 100 Imams and Rabbis, and 70 dignitaries from all over the world.

We call upon all imams and rabbis to work together all over the world where arms have replaced dialogue, and wherever life in general has become frail.

What is the real value of peace, if fear, rejection and hate govern souls and hearts? Not all of us are believers, but we all wish to see in you, a pacifist elite, respectful and wise, able to contribute to the edification of a common culture of peace.

We are persuaded that to live in peace is not to abolish all violence, which resembles strangely death, but it is always to build. To build the links between peoples, founded on a desire to know each other better, to mutual respect and to listen, justice and loyalty, serenity and dialogue. To build a world that allows each one of us to grow and develop a better life, rich in anticipation and of the dreams to be realized.

Where to live in peace would also be a spirit of mind, an attitude, a way of life and through envisaging the relations with others, learning and winning.

10. Offertory:

'Ti Miel

D. Allen

Daniel Allen (vocals/guitar)

LYLA: In the context of worship, the offering is an expression of our spirit of generosity, which is at the heart of our liberal religion.

We will now receive our offering while we listen to Daniel Allen perform our Offertory Music.

(Let the ushers collect the offering while the music plays)

Thank you for your contributions to our community. By being here today with us in worship, you are contributing to the work of this church.

11. a) Meditation In Words: By Adab Ibrahim

LYLA: This is our time as a church community to come together to celebrate and grieve with our fellow congregants, supporting each other through both our struggles and our victories.

After the meditation in words, we will join together in silence and, after the silence, during the musical meditation, you are invited to come forward, and light a candle. This time in our worship is when we embrace the quiet and the silence to reflect on the words and music we hear.

Our meditative reading comes from Adab Ibrahim, a Muslim woman who in 2004 was one of the many organizers of the First Philadelphia Interfaith Peace Walk for Jewish-Muslim Reconciliation. Last year's Peace Walk went on to include even more faith groups including the Unitarian Society of Germantown. This year's Peace Walk will take place on May 3rd. Adab continues to be one of the many visionary organizers of this event.

Here is what she had to say in 2004 . . .

Muslims, Jews, Christians, and Buddhists were part of the five hundred plus who walked three miles in the heart of Philadelphia to promote peace and reconciliation between people of all faiths.

The walk begins at the Al-Aqsa Islamic Society. In the midst of people greeting each other and friendly chatter, the call to prayer resonated through the front doors, and out to the PA system speakers.

Women and men began filing into the segregated prayer halls. The shoes, as vast and diverse as their wearers, were removed as people entered. I joined my Muslim sisters and prayed that Allah would guide our journey, and bless this endeavor.

Our program continued outside, where I welcomed the walkers, and introduced our speakers. Their speeches rang out words of endearment, and hope. They spoke about justice and freedom for all people.

They pleaded for an end to war, and to stop bloodshed and violence. They told us to live in peace and harmony, the way God intended for us all. These proclamations were the 'common ground' that indeed, helped develop this interfaith effort.

We took to the streets wearing white and carrying signs that read "Peace, Salaam, Shalom". This spiritual journey entailed walking, singing, and visiting various places of worship.

Our next stop was an historic Catholic Church. The Pilipino parishioners anxiously awaited our arrival, and rushed out to greet us. The service started with the priest, who addressed us and welcomed us into his sanctuary. The guest speaker, my Imam, stood at the dais, and began reciting the Holy Quran with captivating eloquence and beauty.

Our next stop was the Liberty Bell Pavilion, the site of our nation's Liberty Bell. This symbolic stop was essential because of what this national treasure represents. It is a visible declaration of liberty, justice and freedom for all.

It was now time to stride into the heart of the city, and past City Hall. As we walked, we drew thoughtful stares, and supportive honks from vehicles that stopped until we crossed. Some wondered what drew this diverse crowd to walk through the streets of Philadelphia on a Sunday afternoon?

We reached our final destination, the synagogue. Our multi-faith guest speakers addressed us, one by one, about praying for peace and following God's guidance. Closing the service was a Christian organizer of the event.

He shared his belief that the message of Peace could be spread through this city of 'Brotherly Love', throughout the Middle East and all over the world.

We retired downstairs. This was the part of the ceremony that we inevitably earned after a long day's walk. As we dined, we were given a beautiful performance of the odes of the Sufi poet, Rumi. An Arab man recited the poetry in a melodic voice, and the talented Jewish cantor belted it back in Hebrew.

Many of us experienced new things by entering new places. Hopes were exchanged and ideas for coalition-building were ignited. Acquaintances and contacts were made. Friendships blossomed. The atmosphere of like-minded people gave way to trust and understanding needed among Jews and Muslims to move forward. It was accomplished by putting aside differences, and reaching for our commonly shared values.

11. b) Meditation In Silence:

(Wait one minute.)

LYLA: Salaam. Shalom. Peace.

11. c) Meditation In Music:

Rosewood Tree

D. Allen

Daniel Allen (vocals/guitar)

12. Joys & Sorrows/One Last Candle:

(Wait for Daniel Allen to finish and the candle line to conclude.)

LYLA: I have some Joys and Sorrows to share with you today.

(Read written joys and sorrows.)

(Light the "Last Candle")

I lit one last candle for all those joys and sorrows, which remain in our hearts until the time comes to speak them aloud. Whatever our level of sharing, may this community be a blessing and support to us all.

13. Unison Words of Support:

LYLA: Please join me in the two unison readings of support, which can be found in your grey hymnal.

Our first reading is #509 a Muslim Prayer.

*Save us, our compassionate Lord,
From our folly, by your wisdom,
From our arrogance, by your forgiving love
From our greed, by our infinite bounty
And from our insecurity, by your healing power.*

Our second reading is #507 a Jewish Prayer

*Grant us the ability to find joy and strength,
Not in the strident call to arms,
But in stretching out our arms
To grasp our fellow creatures
In the striving for justice and truth.*

14. Hymn: #148 – Let Freedom Span Both East and West

LYLA: Please stand if you are able and let us join together in worship by singing hymn number #148 from your grey hymnal entitled "Let Freedom Span Both East and West".

*Let freedom span both east and west
And love both south and north,
In universal fellowship
Throughout the whole wide earth.*

*In beauty, wonder, everywhere
Let us communion find;
Compassion be the golden cord
Close binding humankind.*

Beyond all barriers of race,

*Of colour, caste or creed,
Let us make friendship, human worth,
Our common faith and deed*

*Then east and west will meet and share,
And south shall build with north,
One human common wealth of good
Throughout the whole wide earth*

15. Sermon: Dialogue. Respect. Friendship.

LYLA: I now invite our speakers Ali Cheaib and Lorne Finklestein to our pulpit to share with us their talk entitled "Dialogue. Respect. Friendship."

ALI & LORNE: (TBD)

16. Hymn: #1021 – Lean On Me

LYLA: Please stand if you are able and let us join together in worship by singing hymn number #1021 from your aqua hymnal entitled "Lean On Me".

*Sometimes in our lives
We all have pain, we all have sorrow
But if we are wise, we know that there's always tomorrow*

*Chorus: Lean on me
When you're not strong
And I'll be your friend
I'll help you carry on
For it won't be long
'til I'm gonna need somebody to lean on*

*Please swallow your pride
If I have things you need to borrow.
For no one can fill those of your needs that you won't show.*

(Chorus)

*If there is a load
You have to bear, that you can't carry.
I'm right up the road, I'll share you just call me.*

(Chorus)

*Just call on me brother when you need a hand.
We all need somebody to lean on.*

*I just might have a problem that you'd understand.
We all need somebody to lean on.*

17. Chalice Extinguished/Benediction:

LYLA: Please remain standing for our Benediction as Lorne Finklestein extinguishes our chalice.

(Lorne stands and walks towards the Chalice.)

LYLA: Our Benediction is from Steve Tesich.

(Lorne extinguishes the Chalice.)

No birth certificate is issued when friendship is born.

There is nothing tangible.

There is just a feeling that your life is different and that your capacity to love and care has miraculously been enlarged with out any effort on your part.

It's like having a tiny apartment and somebody moves in with you.

But instead of becoming cramped and crowded, the space expands, and you discover rooms you never knew you had until your friend moved in with you.

18. Postlude:

LYLA: Please be seated as we listen to and enjoy our Postlude.

Ta Lumiere

D. Allen

Daniel Allen (vocals/guitar)

19. Leaving Music

(The Sound Technicians will play music on CD than has been pre-selected by the Music Committee once the Postlude has ended.)

20. Fellowship Hour/Speakeasy Salon