

WOMEN AND RELIGION: DEEP ROOTS & HIDDEN HISTORY



**Unitarian Universalist Women's Heritage Society
Worship Service**

**for the
Unitarian Universalist Association
General Assembly, June 23, 1997
Phoenix, Arizona**

Unitarian Universalist Women's Heritage Society

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THE MISSION of the UU Women's Heritage Society is:

- 1) to create awareness of the importance of liberal religion in the lives of women;
- 2) to recover and publish writings by Universalist and Unitarian women in history;
- 3) to engage local congregations in the preservation and communication of the history and writings of their own women;
- 4) to develop religious education materials, worship services and other resources, utilizing our UU women's heritage;
- 5) to celebrate the contributions of UU women to the life of the denomination and the world.

The Society produces a newsletter, occasional papers and a catalog through which it makes the above resource materials available.

MEMBERSHIP

We welcome the membership and support of all women and men who have an interest in the preservation and sharing of the heritage of liberal religious women. Regular dues are \$25/year, with \$20, \$15, \$10 rates available for those who request them. Supporting members contribute \$50-\$99. Sponsors contribute \$100 or more. Life memberships are available at \$500, payable over two years. Contributions are tax deductible. Whatever level of participation you can afford, we are most appreciative of your support. Together we will preserve and share our Unitarian Universalist women's heritage.

WOMEN AND RELIGION—
DEEP ROOTS AND HIDDEN HISTORY

Created by Dorothy Emerson
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for the General Assembly of the Unitarian Universalist Association
June, 1997, Phoenix, Arizona

Unitarian Universalist Women's Heritage Society
147 High Street, Medford, Massachusetts 02155

PRELUDE "A Song of Woman"

Carolyn McDade, 1982

OPENING WORDS

Our Unitarian and Universalist women of the last century . . . have had one virtue in common. They have been pioneers. . . .

These women who have literally made history were not outstanding persons who happened to be Unitarians or Universalists in their religion. Not at all. It was their dynamic religious liberalism which made them great. . . .

The Unitarian and Universalist religion was . . . an ethical leaven, and the result was an era of "Feminine Foment."

Ramona Sawyer Barth, "Unitarian Women of the 19th Century," in the Journal for Liberal Religion, 1948; amended with author's permission to include Universalists.

CHALICE LIGHTING

LEADER: Take from the past not its ashes but its fire. (Anonymous)

RESPONSE: The flame of our heritage lights the way to our future.
(UUWHS motto)

CANDLE LIGHTING

1) We light this candle for women of the past, women who paved the way, women like Lucia Fidelia Wooley Gillette, a Universalist woman who wrote an article in The Ladies' Repository in 1870 entitled "Woman and Religion."

I do not wonder that man, in his great physical strength—his activity of life—his hurry of business . . . manifests so little of the religious elements in his nature. Seeing mostly though the intellect, and not having grown wise enough to believe that the strongest reasons are the reasons of the heart, he works mostly with his brain and hand, and leaves the richer graces of the spirit, to cluster around the character of some saintly mother, or sister, or wife, or friend. . . . I do not wonder that man should wander so long before he finds the one best thing of earth,—but that woman . . . can go forward at all, fills me with astonishment.

2) We light this candle for the present, for us, for our efforts to live in the ways of equality, justice and peace, for our struggles to bring about the sort of restoration described by our colleague and friend, Marjorie Bowens-Wheatley.

If, recognizing the interdependence of all life, we strive to build community, the strength we gather will be our salvation.

If you are black and I am white, it will not matter.
 If you are female and I am male, it will not matter.
 If you are older and I am younger, it will not matter.
 If you are progressive and I am conservative, it will not matter.
 If you are straight and I am gay, it will not matter.
 If you are Christian and I am Jewish, it will not matter.

If we join spirits as brothers and sisters, the pain of our aloneness will be lessened, and that does matter. In this spirit, we build community and move toward restoration.

Marjorie Bowens-Wheatley, "Litany of Restoration," 1987, in Been in the Storm Too Long and Singing the Living Tradition #576, used by permission.

3) We light this candle for the future, for the generations to come, and for the influence we of today have on that future, by our words, our actions, and our visions, as expressed by people like our colleague and friend Carol Hepokoski.

Sometimes it feels like we still have a long road ahead toward the realization of our feminist dreams. . . .

My best hope for the future of religious feminism is that there be expanded envisioning and experimentation in creating new ways of being together as religious liberals in communities.

Carol Hepokoski, "Liberal Religious Feminism: Moving Toward a Gender Inclusive Religious Community," in The Transient and Permanent in Liberal Religion: Collected Papers of the 1995 UU Ministers' Association Convocation, republished by the UU Women's Federation in 1996

SONG "Call to Women"

Carolyn McDade, 1980

INTRODUCTION

Twenty years ago, at our General Assembly in 1977, an historic action was taken that would set in motion changes throughout our Unitarian Universalist Association. A business resolution called "Women and Religion" was adopted unanimously. Before this historic moment could occur, however, there were many moments of personal and collective consciousness-raising, many words shared, many visions expressed, many actions that had to be taken.

The story of the original writing of this resolution begins with Lucile Shuck Longview. As a budding feminist in her 60s, she became aware of her life-long submersion in patriarchal consciousness. At the same time, she also began to note the extent to which biblical teachings sanctify women's inferiority to men. Challenged to improve the image of women, she decided to write a resolution to call the UUA to examine its sexism and set a positive feminist direction for the future of our religious movement.

She wrote the resolution during a snow storm, sent it out to women through the mail to get responses and received enthusiastic support for the idea. When they could get through the snow, Lucile invited a group of friends to meet with her before church around the butcher-block table in the basement kitchen at First Parish in Lexington, Massachusetts, to read her draft of the resolution and help in revising it. The one man present took it to work to get it copied and in the mail the next day. The changes Lucile and her friends set in motion by their words and their actions have had far-reaching consequences in our shared life as Unitarian Universalists. We will be forever in their debt, as we continue to move forward in the continual creation of justice and equality within our religious movement and in the world.

Partially based on "The Women and Religion Resolution: The First Decade," by Lucile S. Longview, a report given at the 10th anniversary celebration, republished by the UU Women's Federation in 1996.

Ironically, these women in Lexington began their work virtually unaware of the other Universalist and Unitarian women who had gone before them in crafting ways to call their religious movements to account for sexism. Only a mere dozen years before the Lexington women began their work, Beacon Press had published a book called Women and Religion. It was written by Margaret Brackenbury Crook, a professor at Smith College for 33 years, the first British woman fully trained for the Unitarian ministry at Manchester College at Oxford, and the first woman minister to serve a large congregation in England. Here is how she began her book:

Women have a heritage in religion to regain, develop, and carry forward. . . .

A masculine monopoly in religion begins when Miriam raises her indignant question: "Does the Lord speak only through Moses? Since then, . . . men have formulated doctrine and established elaborate systems of worship offering only meager opportunity for expression of the religious genius of womankind. . . .

Hardly any women, and not many men, are aware of the reasons for the displacement of women from a share in the theory and practice of [religion] which women often possessed in pre-biblical religions.

We need, as women and in the interests of humanity as a whole, a reconnaissance of some of the mighty principles operative in these religions before we can estimate our position in the present time, or mark our direction.

Margaret Brackenbury Crook, Women and Religion (Beacon, 1964), p. 1.

Some years earlier, 127 years to be exact, Unitarian Maria Weston Chapman waxed poetic in response to the orthodox ministers of Massachusetts, who issued a so-called "pastoral letter" warning of potential dangers to the female character that might be caused by women speaking in public.

Confusion has seized us, and all things go wrong,
 The women have leaped from "their spheres,"
 And instead of fixed stars, shoot as comets along,
 And are setting the world by the ears! . . .
 So freely they move in their chosen ellipse,
 The "Lords of Creation" do fear an eclipse.

They've taken a notion to speak for themselves,
 And are wielding the tongue and the pen;
 They've mounted the rostrum; the termagant elves,
 And—oh horrid!—are talking to men! . . .
 Now, misses may reason, and think, and debate,
 Til unquestioned submission is quite out of date.

Our clergy have preached on the sin and the shame
 Of woman, when out of "her sphere,"
 And labored *divinely* to ruin her fame,
 And shorten this horrid career; . . .
 Like the devils of Milton, they rise from each blow,
 With spirit unbroken, insulting the foe. . . .

Could we but array all our foes in the field,
 We'd teach these usurpers of power
 That their bodily safety demands they should yield,
 And in the presence of manhood should cower;
 But, alas! for our tethered and impotent state,
 Chained by notions of knighthood—we can but debate.

Oh! shade of the prophet Mahomet, arise!
 Place woman again in "her sphere,"
 And teach that her soul was not born for the skies,
 But to flutter a brief moment here.
 The doctrine of Jesus, as preached up by Paul,
 If embraced in its spirit, will ruin us all.
 (signed) *The Lords of Creation*

It is the mission of the Unitarian Universalist Women's Heritage Society to provide access to our rich heritage, so that our present and future efforts may be empowered and supported by women from the past who stand before us as witnesses and guides in our ongoing struggle for equality and justice. We invite you to join us in making sure that our history as Unitarian Universalist women is hidden from us no longer.

In that spirit, we invite you to travel with us through time, to hear voices of the past that inform each of the elements of the 1977 Women and Religion Resolution.

DEEP ROOTS OF THE WOMEN AND RELIGION RESOLUTION—RATIONALE

WHEREAS, A PRINCIPLE OF THE UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST ASSOCIATION IS TO "AFFIRM, DEFEND, AND PROMOTE THE SUPREME WORTH AND DIGNITY OF EVERY HUMAN PERSONALITY, AND THE USE OF THE DEMOCRATIC METHOD IN HUMAN RELATIONSHIPS";

In 1845, Unitarian Margaret Fuller wrote a book that changed the lives of many women of her time and of generations that followed. The book was called Woman in the Nineteenth Century. Hear the voice of Margaret Fuller:

We would have every path laid open to Woman as freely as to Man. Were this done, and a slight temporary fermentation allowed to subside, we should see crystallizations more pure and of more various beauty. We believe the divine energy would pervade nature to a degree unknown in the history of former ages, and that no discordant collision, but a ravishing harmony of the spheres, would ensue.

Yet, then and only then will mankind be ripe for this, when inward and outward freedom for Woman as much as for Man shall be acknowledged as a *right*, not yielded as a concession. As the friend of the negro assumes that one man cannot by right hold another in bondage, so should the friend of Woman assume that Man cannot by right hold another in restrictions on Woman. If the negro be a soul, if the woman be a soul, appared in flesh, to one Master only are they accountable. There is but one law for souls . . .

AND WHEREAS, GREAT STRIDES HAVE BEEN TAKEN TO AFFIRM THIS PRINCIPLE WITHIN OUR DENOMINATION;

In 1893, Universalist minister Augusta Chapin welcomed delegates to the world's first major international interfaith gathering, held in Chicago. Hear the voice of the Rev. Augusta Chapin:

The World's first Parliament of Religions could not have been called sooner and have gathered the religionists of all these lands together. We had to wait for the hour to strike, until the steamship, the railway and the telegraph had brought men together, leveled their walls of separation and made them acquainted with each other; until scholars had broken the way through the pathless wilderness of ignorance, superstition and falsehood, and compelled them to respect each other's honesty, devotion and intelligence. A hundred years ago the world was not ready for this parliament. Fifty years ago it could not have been convened, and had it been called but a single generation ago, one-half of the religious world could not have been directly represented. . . .

We are still at the dawn of this new era. Its grand possibilities are all before us, and its heights are ours to reach. We are assembled in this great parliament to look for the first time in each other's faces, and to speak to each other our best and truest words. I can only add my heartfelt word of greeting to those you already heard.

AND WHEREAS, SOME MODELS OF HUMAN RELATIONSHIP ARISING FROM RELIGIOUS MYTHS, HISTORICAL MATERIALS, AND OTHER TEACHINGS STILL CREATE AND PERPETUATE ATTITUDES THAT CAUSE WOMEN EVERYWHERE TO BE OVERLOOKED AND UNDERVALUED;

In 1895, Universalist minister Phebe Hanaford contributed her critique of Biblical texts to an important project called The Woman's Bible. Hear the voice of the Rev. Phebe Hanaford:

I believe . . . that women ought to demand that the Canon law, the Mosaic code, the Scriptures, prayer-books and liturgies be purged of all invidious distinctions of sex, of all false teaching as to woman's origin, character and destiny. I believe that the Bible needs explanation and comment on many statements therein which tend to degrade woman. . . .

The whole Mosaic law . . . seems based upon the idea that a woman is an irresponsible being; and that it is supposed each daughter will marry at some time, and thus be continually under the control of some male, the father or the husband. Unjust, arbitrary and debasing are such ideas, and the laws based upon them. Could the Infinite Father and Mother have given them to Moses? I think not.

AND WHEREAS, CHILDREN, YOUTH AND ADULTS INTERNALIZE AND ACT ON THESE CULTURAL MODELS, THERE BY TENDING TO LIMIT THEIR SENSE OF SELF-WORTH AND DIGNITY;

One of the earliest women to resist internalization of the cultural models in the Bible was Universalist Judith Sargent Murray. She wrote these reflections in a letter to a friend in 1777. Hear the voice of Judith Sargent Murray:

That Eve was indeed the weaker vessel, I boldly take upon me to deny—Nay, it should seem she was abundantly the stronger vessel since all the deep laid Art of the most subtle fiend that inhabited the infernal regions, was requisite to draw her from his allegiance, while Adam was overcome by the softer passions, merely by his attachment to a female—a fallen female—in whose cheek distemper flushing glowed and you know, my dear, that by resisting the aberrating Fair One, Adam would have given the highest proof of firmness.

Here we have, then, the rationale upon which the Women and Religion Resolution was based. Those who passed this resolution in 1977 knew that there was nothing to fear from strong women.

SONG "Hip Swinging a Safe Road"

Carolyn McDade, 1985

DEEP ROOTS OF THE WOMEN AND RELIGION RESOLUTION—ACTION

Having noted the reasons why a resolution on Women and Religion was needed, the next step was to propose actions to address the problems and change the system, not a minor challenge by any means.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED: THAT THE 1977 GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST ASSOCIATION CALLS UPON ALL UNITARIAN UNIVERSALISTS TO EXAMINE CAREFULLY THEIR OWN RELIGIOUS BELIEFS AND THE EXTENT TO WHICH THESE BELIEFS INFLUENCE SEX-ROLE STEREOTYPES WITHIN THEIR OWN FAMILIES;

In 1923, Unitarian Charlotte Perkins Gilman sought to redefine religion by putting women in the center. Her book, His Religion and Hers, outlines a whole new religious perspective using the metaphor of birth, rather than death or sacrifice, as the central symbol. Hear the voice of Charlotte Perkins Gilman:

Sweeping from our minds every misleading ancient legend, let us see clearly what has been happening on earth; where women come in, their special nature, power and purpose . . .

Now, if we can see the position of the normal human mother in her responsibility to human life, to human progress, there begins to appear some shining dawn of what the world may expect when she does her duty; some foreshadowing of her effect upon religion, and of the wide new hope which such changed religion would open to us. . . .

Thought of God aroused by birth leads along a different road, to a different conclusion. . . .

"Here is Life. It comes in installments, not all at once. The old ones die, the new ones come. They do not come ready-made; they are not finished, they have to be taken care of . . .

"I have taught my child all I knew. . . . Teaching is a help in living. Care and teaching make things better . . .

"What does it all? What is behind it all? Who is the first Mother, Teacher, Server, Maker? What Power under all this pouring flood of Life? . . . What Goodness to make Life so good, so full of growing joy? . . ."

Thus would the woman's mind have reached the thought of God. . . .

The new premises for our religious thought will inevitably lead to right conduct as the old premises have led to wrong. Where the older religions left life on earth neglected, the new will find its place of action here.

AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED: THAT THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY URGES THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF THE UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST ASSOCIATION TO ENCOURAGE THE UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST ASSOCIATION ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICERS AND STAFF, THE RELIGIOUS LEADERS WITHIN SOCIETIES, THE UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST THEOLOGICAL SCHOOLS, THE DIRECTORS OF RELATED ORGANIZATIONS, AND THE PLANNERS OF SEMINARS AND CONFERENCES TO MAKE EVERY EFFORT TO: (A) PUT TRADITIONAL ASSUMPTIONS AND LANGUAGE IN PERSPECTIVE, AND (B) AVOID SEXIST ASSUMPTIONS AND LANGUAGE IN THE FUTURE;

At one of the earliest Women's Rights Conventions, held in Akron, Ohio in 1851, Universalist Frances Dana Gage was chosen to preside. Hear the voice of Frances Dana Gage:

Where . . . did man get the authority that he now claims over one half of humanity? From what power the vested right to place woman—his partner, his companion, his helpmate in life—in an inferior position? Came it from nature? Nature made woman his superior when she made her his mother; his equal when she fitted her to hold the sacred position of wife. Does he draw his authority from God, from the language of holy writ? No! For it says that "Male and female created he *them*, and gave *them* dominion." Does he claim it under law of the land? Did woman meet with him in council and voluntarily give up all her claim to be her own lawmaker? Or did the majesty of might place this power in his hands? The power of the strong over the weak makes man the master! Yes, there, and there only, does he gain his authority. . . .

We fear not man as an enemy. He is our friend, our brother. Let woman speak for herself, and she will be heard. . . .

Oh, if all women could be impressed with the importance of their own action, and with one united voice, speak out in their own behalf, in behalf of humanity, they could create a revolution without armies, without bloodshed, that would do more to ameliorate the condition of mankind, to purify, elevate, ennoble humanity, than all that has been done by reformers in the last century.

AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED: THAT THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY URGES THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST ASSOCIATION TO SEND COPIES OF THIS RESOLUTION TO OTHER DENOMINATIONS EXAMINING SEXISM INHERENT IN RELIGIOUS LITERATURE AND INSTITUTIONS AND TO THE INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF LIBERAL RELIGIOUS WOMEN AND THE IARF (INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR RELIGIOUS FREEDOM);

Inspired by the World Parliament of Religions, the First American Congress of Liberal Religious Societies gathered in Chicago in 1894. Unitarian minister Caroline Bartlett Crane was invited to speak on the topic: "What Women Can Do in Uniting the Culture and Religious Forces of Society." Hear the voice of the Rev. Caroline Bartlett Crane:

I cannot find anywhere upon the program a question concerning what man can do to these ends. Now far be it from women to take advantage of the modesty of these gentlemen (who so kindly arranged the program without demanding their assistance) by exploiting the actual or possible achievements of women. . . .

A second scanning of the program suggests that our brothers are not, after all, unduly depressed concerning their importance. In an *American Congress of Free Religious Societies*, occupying three full days, it would not seem on second thought, that fifteen or twenty minutes given to woman [for] the pleasant and placating task of talking about [herself] for a few minutes before beginning the discussion of the subject for which the convention is called [gives undue prominence to women]—after which that one half of humanity has no part nor recognition whatever in this council for uniting the culture and religious forces of the world. . . . The ladies are permitted to give a reception in honor of the Congress, and to provide suitable refreshment for those who have gallantly and quite cheerfully borne the toils of thought and debate for them.

AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED: THAT THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY REQUESTS THE UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST ASSOCIATION (A) TO JOIN WITH THOSE WHO ARE ENCOURAGING OTHERS IN THE SOCIETY TO EXAMINE THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN RELIGIOUS AND CULTURAL ATTITUDES TOWARDS WOMEN, AND (B) TO SEND A REPRESENTATIVE AND RESOURCE MATERIALS TO ASSOCIATIONS APPROPRIATE TO FURTHERING THE ABOVE GOAL;

In 1914, Universalist minister and president of the interfaith Women's Ministerial Conference, Florence Kollock Crooker, wrote an article for the Sunday Post in answer to the question: "Why Women Ministers?" Hear the voice of the Rev. Florence Kollock Crooker:

The answer is plain: "For the same good reasons that there is a male ministry." . . .

But what special claim has this part of the feminist movement upon the consideration of society and why invade this historic field so completely and honorably occupied by men?

Because many women, like many men, have yielded to the high and holy aspirations to serve God and their fellowmen in the way they could best serve the Christian ministry.

Now [there are] many women ministers. Is their ministry acceptable?

The reply to this is geographical. Acceptable, yes, from the Mississippi Valley West to the Pacific coast.

Let New England speak for herself.

AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED: THAT THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY REQUESTS THE PRESIDENT OF THE UUA TO REPORT ANNUALLY ON PROGRESS IN IMPLEMENTING THIS RESOLUTION.

Another of the historic interfaith meetings in Chicago in 1893 was the World's Congress of Representative Women. African American women had to organize to ensure their right to speak in that forum. Unitarian Frances Watkins Harper challenged the gathering to take seriously "Woman's Political Future." Hear the voice of Frances Watkins Harper:

The tendency of the present age, with its restlessness, religious upheavals, failures, blunders, and crimes, is toward broader freedom, an increase of knowledge, the emancipation of thought, and a recognition of the brotherhood of man; in this movement woman, as a companion of man, must be a sharer. So close is the bond between man and woman that you can not raise one without lifting the other. The world can not move without woman's sharing in the movement, and to help give a right impetus to that movement is woman's highest privilege. . . .

O women of America! Into your hands God has pressed one of the sublimest opportunities that ever came into the hands of the women of any race or people. It is yours to create a healthy public sentiment; to demand justice, simple justice, as the right of every race; to brand with everlasting infamy the lawless and brutal cowardice that lynches, burns, and tortures your own countrymen. . . .

Let the hearts of the women of the world respond to the song of the herald angels of peace on earth . . . Let them throb as one heart unified by the grand and holy purpose of uplifting the human race, and humanity will breathe freer, and the world grow brighter. With such a purpose Eden would spring up in our path, and Paradise be around our way.

CEREMONY OF STONES

The Women and Religion Resolution called the Unitarian Universalist Association to action. What followed in the ensuing years has literally transformed our religious movement. These changes have given us hope for the future and allowed us to dream dreams that 20 years ago would have seemed impossible.

As we sing a song of hope, women will come forward to lay stones from the Arizona desert [or wherever the service is taking place] to symbolize some of the changes that now provide the basis for our continuing work toward equality and justice for all.

SONG "Come, Sing a Song with Me"

Carolyn McDade, 1976

[Begin by singing verse 1, then hum as the first two stones are laid in a circle around the chalice. Then sing verse 2, hum as two more stones are laid, etc. Conclude by repeating verse 1.]

LAYING THE STONES OF OUR TRANSFORMATION

★Establishing continental and district Women and Religion Committees and the Office of Women and Religion at the UUA

★Special gatherings of women—Grailville, Womanquest, and many UU Women’s Federation conferences

★Sexism Audit, “Checking Our Balance,” developed to help the UUA and other organizations understand the sexism inherent in their operations and see ways to change

★Creating hymnbook supplements with hymns and readings with gender-inclusive language, and eventually creating a whole new hymnbook

★New religious education programs, especially “Cakes for the Queen of Heaven” and Rise Up and Call Her Name”

★Impact on both ministry and lay leadership, as increasing numbers of women feel empowered to seek and achieve positions of responsibility

★Increasing awareness of the need to confront related oppressions of racism, homophobia, ableism, class elitism, and others

★Changing consciousness among individuals and organizations throughout the UUA, leading to the crafting of our current “Principles and Purposes,” and in particular to the inclusion of the 7th principle affirming “respect for the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part”

LIGHTING OUR WAY TO THE FUTURE

Although we have made great strides in the past 20 years, we know our work is not done. We invite you now to come forward to share your dreams and visions for the future, as you light candles to guide our way.

[Candle Lighting]

What stirs within us as work that is yet to be done keeps us alive and growing. Let us never forget the power of the words of hope and challenge we have shared here today. May these dreams and visions guide our way into the future.

RESPONSE “The Rest of Our Lives”

Carolyn McDade, 1988

CLOSING WORDS

150 years ago, our foremother Unitarian Maria Mitchell discovered a comet. She understood then what we have only recently been able to articulate in our 7th principle. As we close today's service, let us hear the voice of Maria Mitchell:

Small as is our whole system compared with the infinitude of creation,
Brief as is our life compared with the cycles of time,
We are so tethered to all by the beautiful dependencies of law,
That not only the sparrow's fall is felt to the uttermost bound
But the vibrations set in motion by the words that we utter
Reach through all space and the tremor is felt through all time.

Singing the Living Tradition #537, used by permission.

EXTINGUISHING THE CHALICE

May the light of this chalice of our shared religious commitments grow ever stronger in our hearts and minds. May the words we have uttered here today set in motion new vibrations to bring healing and justice to all life on earth. Amen. Blessed Be.

POSTLUDE "The Rest of Our Lives" (reprise)

Carolyn McDade

SOURCES

Unless otherwise noted, all of the quotations in this worship service can be found in the Unitarian Universalist hymnbook, Singing the Living Tradition, or in the forthcoming anthology, Standing Before Us: Universalist and Unitarian Women and Social Reform, which is currently in search of a publisher.

The music of Carolyn McDade may be ordered directly from the composer. "A Song of Woman" and "Call to Women" are recorded on "We Come With Our Voices" and published in Songs of Carolyn McDade. "Hip Swinging a Safe Road" is on "This Tough Spun Web." (Cassette and book available.) "Come Sing a Song with Me" is in the hymnbook and recorded on "Sister Carry On." (Cassette and book available.) "The Rest of Our Lives" is in Songs for Congregational Singing and recorded on "The Best of Struggles."

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