

Transcript 11/15/2020 "Staying Rooted in Faith, Hope, and Love in a Time of Distraction and Change"

00:05

[Music]

00:56

do

01:22

[Music]

01:52

do

02:01

[Music]

02:55

[Music]

03:00

welcome to the unitarian universalist

03:02

church of utica

03:03

i'm ross kearney a member of the board

03:05

of trustees of this congregation

03:08

whether you are visiting for the first

03:09

time or have been a member for many

03:11

years you are welcome here

03:13

whatever faiths you have known if any

03:15

you are welcome here

03:17

whoever you are and whomever you love

03:19

you are welcome here

03:21

we are invited to bring our whole selves

03:24

to this worship service

03:25

our doubts as well as our convictions

03:28

the pain and joy we have known

03:30

our longing for connection and

03:32

understanding

03:33

every part of you is welcome here

03:36

if you are signing in for the first time

03:40

we are glad you have joined us and hope

03:42

you will stay for informal conversation

03:44

in breakout groups after the service

03:47

we have a few announcements today the

03:49

first is

03:51

please sign up to attend one of

03:54

five farewell sharing circles held over

03:56

the next few weeks

03:58

they offer a small group opportunity to

04:00

connect and say goodbye

04:02

in a meaningful way the links to

04:04

register

04:05

are in the newsletter secondly our

04:08

church is holding an event for the media

04:10

this afternoon

04:11

to celebrate the installation of our

04:13

banner our banner uplifts our support

04:16

for the work of black lives matter and

04:18

of the lgbtq

04:20

plus communities although we are keeping

04:23

the event very small in person to

04:25

prevent the spread of covid we can

04:27

you can watch live on the church

04:29

facebook page

04:30

it starts at two o'clock this afternoon

04:32

should be short and the video will

04:34

remain accessible

04:35

on facebook after the fact

04:39

let us open our hearts and minds to the

04:41

experience of community and the wisdom

04:43

of love

04:51

good morning my name is jules i am part

04:53

of the inclusion team of

04:56

this congregation and we wanted to let

04:58

you know the transgender day of

04:59

remembrance will be coming up this

05:01

coming friday november 20th

05:03

transgender day of remembrance is an

05:05

annual observation on november 20th that

05:08

honors the memory of the transgender

05:09

people whose lives were lost in acts of

05:12

anti-transgender violence

05:14

trans day of remembrance was started in

05:16

1999 by transgender advocate gwendolyn

05:18

ann smith

05:19

as a vigil to honor the memory of rita

05:22

hester a transgender woman who was

05:23

killed in 1998.

05:25

the vigil commemorated all the

05:27

transgender people lost to violence

05:29

since rita hester's death and began an

05:31

important tradition that has become the

05:33

annual transgender day of remembrance

05:36

this year the official monitoring counts

05:38
between 35
05:39
and 40 trans and gender non-conforming
05:42
people murdered in america
05:44
and a global count of 350.
05:47
it's important to know that these
05:48
heartbreaking numbers are likely low
05:50
due to the systemic tendency for hate
05:53
crimes to go unreported or misreported
05:55
in official documentation and media the
05:58
inclusion team of this church will put
06:00
links to more information
06:01
including this year's list of names in
06:03
this week's newsletter
06:04
as well as resources for those who need
06:06
them and places to donate money and
06:08
energy for those who can
06:10
remember that who you are all of you is
06:13
welcome here
06:14
and that you are loved
06:19
[Music]

06:47

you

06:48

[Music]

07:56

foreign

08:24

so

08:35

good morning thank you for inviting me

08:39

to join you

08:41

at utica again so nice to see everyone

08:44

i'm so grateful that we have such a tool

08:46

as zoom

08:47

that allows us to take time to join

08:49

together in a time of challenge in a

08:52

time of change

08:53

it's as if the universe knew we would

08:55

need such help

08:56

during these times i've used it to

08:59

connect to family friends work

09:01

as you have i'm sure to board meetings

09:04

hospitals have used various forms of

09:06

video chat to connect families to

09:07

inpatients

09:09

in a time of challenge look for the good

09:12

practice gratitude

09:14

with gratitude optimism becomes

09:17

sustainable

09:18

remember to say thank you every day and

09:22

i say thank you to all those who have

09:25

created this

09:26

zoom opportunity as well as all of you

09:28

who support it

09:30

in this spirit of gratitude we worship

09:33

together

09:35

and now we are going to have him number

09:38

1009

09:39

please join us singing on mute

09:43

when i breathe in

09:46

i'll breathe in peace when i breathe out

09:52

i'll breathe out love when i breathe in

09:57

i'll breathe in peace when i breathe out

10:03

i'll breathe out love when i breathe in

10:09

i'll breathe in peace when i breathe out

10:15

i'll breathe out love when i breathe in

10:20

i'll breathe in peace when i breathe out

10:26

i'll breathe out love when i breathe

10:33

[Music]

10:39

[Music]

10:43

i'll breathe in

10:46

[Music]

10:52

[Music]

10:54

i'll breathe

11:05

[Music]

11:12

oh

11:14

[Music]

11:26

when i breathe in

11:29

i'll breathe in peace when i breathe out

11:34

i'll breathe out love

11:37

[Music]

11:40

good morning our chalice lighting words

11:43

are by paul stephen doddenhoff

11:47

joy and grief health and sickness

11:51

light and darkness peace and anger

11:55

life and death wholeness

11:58

and brokenness we each bring all of

12:02

these

12:03

here to this space of unity

12:06

and diversity for this one

12:10

hour of this one day and pour them out

12:15

commingling the oil of our lives

12:18

to become the flame of this chalice

12:22

the symbol of our shared

12:26

living faith

12:32

good morning we have a wonderful

12:33

children's story that also of course

12:36

always applies to all of us

12:38

all the adults called be who you are so

12:41

i have to figure out how to hold this up

12:42

for you

12:45

by todd parr he says

12:49

be who you are

12:54

be old be young

12:58

be a different color

13:04

wear everything you need to be you

13:11

speak your language whatever that is

13:16

learn however it is that you learn

13:24

be proud of wherever it is you are from

13:29

be your own family

13:35

be whoever you are because that is who

13:38

you are

13:39

that is loved that is perfect whoever

13:42

you are

13:43

is perfect be silly

13:48

sometimes we have to be brave

13:57

dance play

14:00

learn read

14:05

discover

14:09

share your feelings don't keep them all

14:11

bottled up inside

14:13

find someone something a dog share your

14:16

feelings

14:18

here we have happy mad

14:22

sad silly scared

14:25

proud whatever those feelings are that

14:29

is be who you are

14:33

be who you are

14:39

try new things try tacos

14:42

pizza noodles try driving to work in a

14:46

different way

14:49

for adults be confident

14:53

in who you are who you are is perfect

14:57

stand up for yourself it's okay

15:05

be energetic

15:09

be peaceful do you especially now we

15:11

have time to do yoga

15:13

and quiet things

15:15

[Applause]

15:18

be the best you can be that's perfect

15:23

be whoever you are just

15:26

be who you are it doesn't matter

15:31

what color you are where you are from or

15:34

who's in your family

15:36

everyone needs to be loved always love

15:40

yourself and be who you

15:43

are the end

15:48

[Music]

15:52

please take a moment to sit quietly

15:55

and let these requests and your own

15:58

silent requests

16:00

fill the space

16:03

if you wish gently close your eyes

16:08

down out of your head and into your

16:10

heart space

16:13

fill that heart space with a loving

16:16

thought

16:18

or just feel the love that is there it

16:20

is always there

16:22

sometimes it needs a push by remembering

16:24

a moment when you felt love for another

16:27

or from another

16:31

this is a safe space

16:34

envision it as a warm light like the sun

16:38

in your heart space

16:41

now let that sunshine grow

16:46

let it fill your body

16:49

let it fill the room you are in

16:52

let it expand out and fill the building

16:54

that you are in

16:57

expand it outward let that loving

17:01

lovingness flow out to your neighborhood

17:05

let that lovingness flow to each one

17:08

here

17:10

let it flow to your family and all those

17:12

you care about

17:16

he's swimming he's swimming in light

17:21

take a moment to rest in that

17:26

it is always there for you

17:31

feel love it is always there

17:39

now bring it in and bring your awareness

17:45

back to our meeting

17:48

slowly open your eyes if they were

17:50

closed

17:52

take a deep breath

17:57

smile a smile makes the rest of you

17:59

smile

18:01

welcome back

18:26

so

18:40

my

18:42

[Music]

18:51

[Applause]

18:52

[Music]

19:00

my reading this morning is from the book

19:02

white fire

19:04

by the teacher named muji

19:08

mind presents options

19:12

heart offers recognition

19:15

mind imagines

19:18

heart reveals

19:21

mind strays heart

19:25

stays mind thinks

19:30

heart knows

19:33

mind is becoming art

19:37

is being mind introduces creature

19:40

comforts

19:42

heart introduces the creator

19:45

the divine

19:57

staying rooted in faith hope and love in

20:00

a time of distraction

20:02

and change how do we do that

20:07

each morning when i open my curtains i

20:10

greet a very large maple tree

20:12

in my front yard that inspired me for

20:15

this title

20:16

it stands quietly like a sentinel over

20:19

my house

20:21

it is the first of many thanks i offer

20:24

for my window in the beginning of my day

20:27

thank you to the trees thank you to the

20:30

earth

20:32

thank you to the wind the sun the sky

20:35

the moon

20:36

the winged ones the four-legged ones

20:40

the creepy crawlies the stone nation

20:43

all the plants is such an incredible

20:47

tapestry

20:48

outside my window it reminds me

20:52

this morning ritual was inspired by

20:55

discovering the hada nashani

20:57

thanksgiving prayer

20:58

it's a beautiful prayer they begin their

21:00

meetings

21:02

uh by reciting it and it thanks

21:05

everything it is so beautiful it sets

21:08

the tone

21:09

for my day as gratitude puts gratitude

21:12

into my roots

21:14

and when i acknowledge that place in me

21:17

my spirits are lifted

21:19

and i'm reminded of all the

21:20

connectedness of all things

21:24

the tree also reminds me of the seasons

21:28

and now i'm watching the leaves fall as

21:30

it prepares for winter

21:31

well i think they have already fallen it

21:34

is a reminder

21:35

of the cyclical nature of all things

21:38

every day the sun rises and every day

21:41

the sun sets we experience

21:44

cycles of hot weather and cold weather

21:47

wet weather

21:48

dry weather and if we keep it on that

21:50

level

21:51

very simple level one can see that our

21:54

happiness arises

21:55

when we like the current cycle oh it's

21:57

beautiful day out there

21:59

and we're sad miserable and even angry

22:00

when we do not oh it's raining

22:03

it can be that simple what controls our

22:06

happiness

22:08

our happiness comes and our happiness

22:10

goes

22:11

due to our perspective our plans

22:14

our wish yet if we step back and

22:17

remember the cycle

22:20

that it will pass we can have faith and

22:23

hope

22:23

and understanding that the weather we

22:25

like will come about

22:29

all the great teachings remind us to be

22:31

here now

22:35

not where we want it to be not where it

22:38

was yesterday

22:40

in that being in our roots in our heart

22:45

we accept whatever that weather is

22:47

without aversion

22:48

or inclination the tree does not yell at

22:52

the wind or the rain

22:54

it relies on its roots to hold it steady

22:58

whatever comes it is never

23:01

less blown about during a storm as we

23:03

are

23:05

the strength of roots is so important in

23:07
a storm
23:10
in the same way we need to be cognizant
23:13
of our own roots
23:15
what do we have faith about do we think
23:17
life is fair
23:18
unfair difficult easy
23:22
are we the pessimist or the optimist
23:25
my greatest teacher stressed over and
23:27
over to never stop looking
23:29
just two possibilities is it this or
23:31
that always look for that third option
23:35
wonderful example of this came across my
23:37
facebook page recently it said
23:40
my therapist set a glass of half a glass
23:42
of water in front of me and he asked me
23:44
was i an optimist or a pessimist so i
23:47
drank the water and told him i was a
23:48
problem solver
23:50
such a great example of looking outside
23:54
the this or that where we

23:55
so often become stuck never be boxed in
23:58
by your thinking
24:00
never stop looking for the third
24:01
possibility
24:03
that is how we grow our roots and the
24:06
deeper your roots
24:07
the greater the possibilities
24:11
meditation is a wonderful technique to
24:13
grow your roots it is about sinking into
24:16
your roots sinking into your heart
24:19
sinking into your soul whatever that is
24:21
for you
24:23
life is like the trees on the leaves on
24:25
the tree
24:26
that come and go as we sit quietly
24:30
as we did with our meditation we sink
24:33
into the roots of our being
24:36
into our own soul the irish poet john
24:40
o'donnell wrote all holiness
24:43
is about learning to hear the voice of

24:46

your own soul

24:48

it is always there and the more deeply

24:50

you learn to listen

24:52

the greater surprises and discoveries

24:54

that will unfold

24:56

to enter into the gentleness of your own

24:58

soul

25:00

changes the tone and quality of your

25:02

life

25:03

your life is no longer consumed by

25:05

hunger for the next event

25:07

the next experience or the next

25:09

achievement

25:11

you learn to come down from the

25:12

treadmill and walk

25:14

on the earth with this pandemic many

25:18

have stepped down

25:19

from the treadmill treadmill of life

25:22

run here go there pick up this to a

25:25

quieter time

25:27

yet some still resist leaving that

25:30

treadmill

25:32

so at home there cleaning closets

25:34

learning new languages keeping busy

25:36

and not really taking advantage of this

25:38

beautiful opportunity to be quiet

25:40

to connect to sink into their inner

25:43

roots

25:45

remaining deep in yourself the

25:48

distractions and change in the world

25:49

cause less

25:50

and less disharmony lest agitation

25:53

anxiety fear we are not perfect we climb

25:57

the tree to see what's happening go look

25:59

see what's happening out there i like to

26:01

look facebook twitter

26:03

i shake my head i rail at the wind then

26:06

i remember my tree

26:07

i don't live there i don't stay up in

26:09

the leaves

26:11

there is from a spiritual point of view

26:13

no profit in it

26:16

this storm of life has truly shaken us

26:18

in our roots

26:20

yet it brings a gift of waking us from

26:22

our slumber

26:24

our autopilot i know if you've ever

26:27

heard me speak before i always get to

26:29

autopilot we don't like

26:30

we want to be on autopilot we don't want

26:32

to have to think about what we're doing

26:34

or plan what we're doing we don't have

26:35

to feel

26:36

we do the same thing over and over the

26:39

same way

26:42

suddenly someone changes the rules and

26:44

look at how angry some people become

26:47

they just want to go back to autopilot

26:48

how soon can i go back to autopilot it's

26:52

uncomfortable to be on autopilot

26:54
to redesign your day to move in the
26:56
moment
26:58
and what's even worse we don't know how
27:00
long it will last
27:02
so how do we get through it look for
27:06
words of wisdom
27:08
look for the love of family and friends
27:10
in your life
27:12
find a reason for hope
27:16
hope is something we must nurture to see
27:18
a light at the end of the tunnel we
27:19
discover patience
27:22
we encourage ourselves and each other to
27:24
keep moving to their highest good
27:27
to be their best self regardless of what
27:30
wind blows
27:32
and have faith
27:35
i love this description by a physicist
27:37
about faith
27:40
edward teller he says when you get to

27:42

the end of all the light you know

27:45

and it's time to step into the darkness

27:47

of what you don't know

27:49

faith is knowing that one of two things

27:52

shall happen

27:53

either you will be given something solid

27:55

to stand on

27:56

or you will be taught how to fly

28:02

in the current political landscape i

28:05

found hope

28:05

and faith in the words of that great

28:08

teacher mahatma gandhi he said

28:10

when i despair i remember that all

28:13

through history

28:15

the ways of truth and love have always

28:17

won

28:19

the ways of truth and love have always

28:21

won

28:23

there have been tyrants and for a time

28:25

sometimes they seemed invincible but in

28:27

the end

28:27

they always fall always

28:32

mahatma gandhi gandhiji he is such a

28:34

great example of strong roots

28:37

all the atrocities of the british in

28:39

india failed to turn him away

28:42

from what he saw as his duty to pursue

28:44

freedom

28:45

he felt this duty deep in his roots

28:49

he reminds us of cycles we hold on

28:53

do everything we can to help and know

28:56

that this will end

28:58

surely there is a cost be ready to pick

29:02

up the pieces

29:03

of people and things that are broken in

29:05

that awful process

29:07

lift others when you can accept help for

29:11

yourself

29:12

the trick is not to lose oneself on the

29:14

down cycle

29:16
but to remember that the upcycle will
29:18
come it will come
29:22
often in suicide cases what we discover
29:26
is that people thought it would never
29:27
change it would never get better
29:30
we are cyclical we are you know in
29:32
cycles in this place
29:34
it does come it does go
29:38
when you lose yourself perhaps in anger
29:40
anxiety blame
29:42
take a moment to sit with it try not to
29:45
be
29:45
a reactor let that wave pass over you
29:49
watch it don't own it let it go
29:54
find what button it pushes in you
29:57
i will sometimes consider what if
29:59
someone else said those same words to me
30:02
how would it feel how would i react try
30:06
it with different persons
30:07
you respect so if

30:10
my mom calls me stupid i think well i've
30:12
just got to work harder
30:14
if somebody i don't like calls me stupid
30:17
then i get really mad at that person
30:19
so if we hear in different voices the
30:21
same exact words
30:23
stop and look at what buttons in you are
30:26
being pushed
30:28
a colleague from one spirit calls it wtf
30:32
now i know what you think what wtf means
30:35
what the
30:37
she transforms it to welcoming
30:41
the feelings welcoming the feelings
30:45
so when you hear yourself thinking what
30:47
the
30:48
switch over to welcoming the feelings
30:52
what am i feeling and why am i feeling
30:54
that what button was pushed
30:57
don't own them can you just pass watch
31:00
them pass through like a cloud

31:02
going by in the blue sky you watch it
31:04
come
31:05
oh here comes somebody who's saying i'm
31:06
angry oh there it goes
31:08
i'm not angry anymore here comes a
31:10
thought
31:12
i'm sad i'm letting go of that thought
31:14
comes and goes
31:16
sometimes it's too much and we shut down
31:19
and that's perfectly okay
31:21
we don't want to acknowledge the feeling
31:22
of anger or grief we block it or let
31:25
let it control the response it's okay
31:28
when you're ready let it come let it go
31:32
be gentle on yourself
31:35
help others let others help you stay
31:38
in your roots each time you remember to
31:42
let it go your roots are strengthened
31:43
and you are more prepared for the next
31:45
time

31:47

and there will be a next time but do not

31:50

beat yourself up if you missed that wave

31:52

in my community we had a saying

31:54

sometimes you eat the bear

31:56

and sometimes the bear eats you

32:00

move on there will be more opportunities

32:02

to practice

32:04

be ready for it do what you can forgive

32:06

yourself quickly

32:09

and in that moment after that wave

32:12

passes over

32:14

ask it what it came to teach you is

32:17

there something you need to understand

32:19

is there something you need to do

32:22

if you're sinking in sinking into your

32:25

roots

32:27

you can see more clearly when that

32:29

passes

32:30

new insights come by not reacting

32:33

it's not about being a doormat

32:36

but choosing when you react and where

32:39

you

32:40

are reacting from from your roots of

32:42

faith

32:43

your roots of hope your roots of love

32:47

instead of just being reactive to every

32:50

wind that blows

32:52

what good can come if you're acting out

32:54

of anger

32:56

what good can come when you can't see

32:58

straight

33:01

sometimes there is nothing you can do

33:03

but let it rain

33:05

and wait for the sunshine it will come

33:08

the cycle passes rest in your roots

33:13

act from your roots for those who

33:16

studied martial arts you probably

33:18

see the parallel if you're all up in

33:20

here

33:22

up in your head your opponent can easily

33:24

tip you over

33:25

sink into your roots take those

33:28

roots of peace of connectedness

33:31

wholeness

33:32

this is in you but you must make time to

33:35

sink into it from time to time

33:37

to rest there to prepare to be ready

33:41

for when those storms come act from your

33:44

roots

33:45

help others when you can let others help

33:48

you

33:49

emanate your love into the world much

33:51

like we did in that meditation

33:53

march peacefully be who you

33:56

are seed the world around you

34:00

with your heart and your peaceful

34:02

actions not with your anger

34:04

and anxiety always look for

34:07

opportunities to grow your roots

34:09

your steady as she goes especially

34:12

during a down cycle then when the

34:14

upcycle comes you are ready

34:16

for something new we never return to the

34:19

old it always changes

34:22

that's what a storm is for to create

34:24

change

34:25

to create growth the universe never

34:29

stands still and whenever you touch you

34:32

change

34:33

and all that change changes you

34:37

let that change come from your roots

34:41

renee brown reminds us we are being

34:43

given the opportunity

34:45

to stitch a new garment one that fits

34:48

all of humanity and nature

34:51

we have been in winter and are the

34:53

midwives bringing in a new spring

34:56

remember even in spring it sometimes

34:59

still snows

35:01

be patient be hopeful

35:04

let what comes sprout from our acts of

35:07

faith

35:07

hope and love and not anger fear and

35:09

blame

35:11

each act becomes a seed for new

35:13

beginnings

35:15

be hopeful for a new beginning be

35:18

grateful

35:18

for each opportunity each relationship

35:22

have faith good will come be loving

35:26

in the journey blessed be

35:29

amen

35:42

when our heart is in a holy

35:46

place when our heart is in a holy

35:51

place we are

35:53

blessed with love and amazing grace

35:58

when our heart is in a holy place

36:03

when we trust the wisdom in

36:06

each of us every color

36:10

every kind

36:13

and we see our faces in each other's

36:18

eyes then our heart is in a holy

36:24

place when our heart

36:27

is in a holy place

36:31

when our heart is in a holy place

36:36

we are blessed with love and amazing

36:40

grace when our heart is in a holy

36:44

place when we tell our story from

36:49

deep inside and we listen with a loving

36:54

mind

36:56

and we hear our voices in

37:00

each other's words

37:03

then our heart is in a holy place

37:08

when our heart is in a holy

37:12

place when our heart is in a

37:16

holy place

37:19

we are blessed with love and amazing

37:23

grace

37:24

when our heart is in the holy

37:28

place when we share the silence of

37:32
sacred space
37:34
and
37:40
and we feel the power in each other's
37:44
faith
37:46
then our heart is in a holy place
37:51
when our heart is in a holy place when
37:57
our heart is in a holy
38:00
place we are blessed with love
38:04
and amazing grace when our heart is in a
38:09
holy
38:11
place when our heart is in a holy
38:22
we extinguish our chalice with these
38:25
words
38:26
we extinguish this flame but not the
38:29
light of truth
38:30
the warmth of community or the fire of
38:33
commitment
38:34
these we carry in our hearts until we
38:37
meet again
38:39
may dawn find you awake and alert

38:43

approaching your new day with dreams

38:46

possibilities

38:47

and promises may evening find you

38:50

gracious

38:51

and fulfilled may you go into the night

38:54

blessed sheltered and protected

38:57

may your soul console and renew you

39:03

amen

39:03

[Music]

39:06

may it be so

39:15

[Music]

40:36

do

40:45

[Music]

41:51

you