

Transcript 11/22/2020 "The Hard Work of Healing"

00:06

[Music]

01:24

do

01:26

[Music]

01:29

[Applause]

01:35

[Music]

01:52

do

01:57

[Music]

03:02

welcome to the unitarian universalist

03:04

church of utica

03:06

i'm paul tenerowicz the president of the

03:08

board of the church

03:10

whether you're visiting for the first

03:12

time you've been a member for many years

03:14

you're welcome here

03:16

whatever faith you have known if any

03:18

you're welcome here

03:20

whoever you are and whoever you love you

03:23

are welcome here

03:25

we are invited to bring our whole selves

03:27

to this worship service

03:29

our doubts as well as our convictions

03:33

the pain and joy we have known our

03:35

longing for connection and understanding

03:38

every part of you is welcome here

03:41

if you are signing in today for the

03:42

first time we're glad you have joined us

03:44

and hope you will stay for informal

03:46

conversation

03:47

in breakout groups after the service

03:51

we have an announce one announcement

03:53

today

03:55

reverend aaron will be holding three

03:57

more farewells sharing circles the week

03:59

of november 30th

04:00

these circles use a format similar to

04:03

small groups

04:04

members who attend the two circles

04:06

already held

04:07

found it useful to help share openly

04:10

about their feelings around reverend
04:11
aaron leaving
04:12
you'll find sign up links in the
04:14
newsletter
04:16
let us open our hearts and minds to the
04:18
experience of community
04:20
and the wisdom of love
04:31
[Music]
05:03
may i be filled with loving kindness
05:12
may i be
05:15
well may i be
05:19
filled with kindness
05:25
[Music]
05:50
maybe
05:54
[Music]
06:04
is
06:06
[Music]
06:28
may we be kindness
06:49
[Music]
07:29
welcome you who come
07:33

in need of healing you who are
07:36
confused or have been betrayed
07:41
welcome with your problems and your pain
07:46
welcome to your joys
07:50
and your wonderings welcome your need to
07:53
hope your longing
07:55
for assurance instead of
07:58
answers here may you find safety
08:02
for your questions instead of promises
08:07
may you find community for your
08:10
struggles
08:12
people with hands and hearts to join you
08:16
in engaging the challenges and changes
08:19
of our day
08:21
come let us worship together
08:26
please remain muted and join in singing
08:28
our hymn of the month
08:30
meditation on breathing when i breathe
08:33
in
08:36
i'll breathe in peace when i breathe out
08:42

i'll breathe out love when i breathe in

08:47

i'll breathe in

08:53

i'll peace out love when i breathe in

08:59

i'll breathe in peace when i breathe out

09:04

i'll breathe out love

09:13

[Music]

09:18

when i breathe

09:22

[Music]

09:29

[Music]

09:33

i'll breathe in

09:36

[Music]

09:42

[Music]

09:44

i'll breathe

09:55

[Music]

10:02

oh

10:04

[Music]

10:15

when i breathe in

10:19

i'll breathe in peace when i breathe out

10:24

i'll breathe out love

10:27

[Music]

10:30

joy and grief health and sickness
10:35
light and darkness peace and anger
10:38
life and death wholeness and brokenness
10:43
we each bring all of these here
10:46
to this sanctuary of unity in diversity
10:50
for this one hour of this one day
10:54
and pour them out commingling
10:58
the oil of our lives to become
11:02
the flame of this chalice
11:07
the symbol of our shared living faith
11:17
we are going to welcome new members
11:20
to our congregation right now
11:25
here in the unitarian universalist
11:28
church of utica
11:29
we nurture spiritual community honor
11:32
diversity
11:33
and advocate for social justice part of
11:37
nurturing spiritual community
11:39
is that we invite visitors into our
11:42
midst
11:42

with open arms learning about their

11:45

lives

11:46

hopes and dreams and helping them to

11:49

consider

11:50

how they may be enriched in our midst

11:53

everyone is welcome here to worship with

11:56

us

11:57

to join us in conversation and

11:59

hospitality

12:01

to engage in the work of discovering

12:03

what is true

12:04

and right in life together

12:08

and our community also recognizes

12:12

the commitment of formal membership

12:16

all of those people throughout our

12:18

history dating back

12:20

to 1825 who have signed the membership

12:24

book

12:24

have done so out of a desire to publicly

12:28

affiliate with this church

12:32

membership demonstrates a strong
12:34
commitment not only to unitarian
12:36
universalism and
12:38
the mission of our congregation but also
12:41
to the work of continuing our community
12:44
members promise to contribute in many
12:47
ways
12:48
to make this church happen
12:51
we exist due to the dedication
12:55
of our members
13:00
our spiritual community requires of its
13:02
members a dedication
13:03
not only to their own spiritual growth
13:06
but to the support of everyone else
13:08
in their spiritual path members care for
13:11
one another and promise to nurture the
13:13
relationships that are community
13:16
respecting one another tending to one
13:18
another's needs and changing behaviors
13:20
to restore
13:21

broken relationships only in this sense

13:24

of deep caring may we help one another's

13:26

souls flourish

13:28

fully understanding the meaning of

13:30

membership the following people

13:31

have met the requirements of our bylaws

13:33

for membership

13:34

and expressed deep i'm sorry

13:38

and expressed their desire to formally

13:40

join this church

13:42

alex jackson and dan oliva doty

13:49

new members we are so glad

13:53

to have you here with us and that you

13:56

have chosen this community

13:58

of fellow seekers to travel with you on

14:01

your life journeys

14:04

will you accept our gifts of fellowship

14:08

discovery and service will you

14:11

offer us your unique presence and gifts

14:15

will you add your name to the long

14:18

history

14:19

of unitarian universalist people who

14:22

spread

14:23

hope with our living faith will you

14:26

engage with

14:27

us as we seek to create a community

14:30

and a world dedicated to love and

14:33

justice

14:35

we will i will

14:41

i will ask the congregation to

14:45

remain muted and still ready to visibly

14:47

express

14:48

your agreement to the questions i'm

14:50

about to ask

14:51

congregation will you welcome these new

14:55

members with the warmth

14:56

and comfort of your fellowship will you

14:59

seek

14:59

to add your strengths and talents to the

15:02

new gifts they bring to us

15:05

will you share our triumphs and our
15:07
struggles as our community
15:10
grows and changes
15:14
yes
15:18
thank you new members for dedicating
15:21
yourselves to our church
15:24
thank you existing membership for
15:26
welcoming these new members
15:28
into your midst in closing i share with
15:32
you these words
15:33
from elizabeth lerner mcclay as
15:36
drops of rain that find each other and
15:39
build
15:40
to become a track a rivulet a stream
15:43
a river a sea so are we drawn together
15:48
so are we fortunate to find
15:51
each other so are we bound
15:54
together on this shared passage toward
15:58
an
15:58
unknown ocean and eternity
16:01

and i encourage everyone to remain muted

16:04

and show your joy in welcoming our new

16:07

members

16:13

welcome we're so glad to have you with

16:16

us

16:17

and stephanie will share with us a story

16:20

for together time

16:23

hi everyone welcome to together time

16:26

today we

16:27

are joyfully saying welcome to our new

16:30

members

16:31

and we're saying thanks for sticking

16:33

around to our members who have been here

16:35

for a while

16:37

and we're starting to say goodbye and

16:40

we'll miss you to reverend aaron so i

16:43

chose a story today

16:44

that's for all of us it's called you

16:47

matter

16:48

and it's by christian robinson

16:59

the small stuff too small to see

17:05

those who swim with the tide

17:09

and those who don't

17:13

the first to go and the last

17:16

you matter

17:21

when everyone thinks you're a

17:24

pest

17:28

when something is just out

17:32

of reach

17:37

when everyone is too

17:40

busy to help

17:44

you matter

17:48

if you fall down

17:53

if you have to start all over

17:58

again

18:00

even if you are really gassy

18:04

you matter

18:10

sometimes home is far away

18:18

sometimes someone you love

18:21

says goodbye

18:27

sometimes you feel lost and alone

18:32

but you matter

18:38

old and young

18:43

the first to go and the last

18:50

the small stuff too small

18:53

to see

18:59

you matter

19:05

and that's the end

19:08

so for whoever's listening out there you

19:11

matter

19:13

until next time i'll see you later

19:15

bye-bye

19:17

and now we recognize members

19:21

who have been with us and joined in the

19:24

past

19:26

joining a church is not a decision

19:29

made lightly it is to enter into

19:33

solemn covenant with the church

19:35

community

19:36

and our unitarian universalist faith

19:38

tradition

19:40

beyond signing the book members dedicate

19:42

themselves to contribute to the ongoing

19:45

presence and health of the church

19:47

through pledging volunteering leading

19:50

and

19:50

forming strong relationships with other

19:52

members

19:54

today we recognize the dedication of

19:57

being a member

19:58

and staying with that membership over

20:01

time

20:02

we recognize the potential of members

20:05

who have more recently joined

20:07

and the hopes that their commitment

20:09

remains strong

20:10

over many years to come and we recognize

20:14

those members who have persevered with

20:16

the church

20:17

over many years please imagine

20:20

each person listed coming forward before
20:23
the congregation
20:25
and being handed a rose katie spyers the
20:28
chair of the membership team
20:30
and paul tanerowicz president of the
20:32
board will help me lead
20:34
our recognition
20:38
we recognize members who are celebrating
20:41
10 years of membership
20:43
anne bridges daniel bridges
20:47
ann carey paul head
20:50
mary mcgill robert and robert whitney
20:55
this red rose is a symbol of the color
20:57
and life that you have received from
20:59
and brought to this community over the
21:01
years and represents our gratitude for
21:03
your dedication
21:07
thank you for opening your mind to new
21:10
ideas
21:11
opening your heart to compassion and
21:14

your soul to growth for so many years
21:17
thank you for staying through the hard
21:20
times
21:21
and working to strengthen the place you
21:23
love
21:24
even when this church has disappointed
21:28
you
21:33
we celebrate with you the deep
21:36
friendships
21:38
you have grown here over the years
21:40
worship potlucks
21:41
small group discussions holiday
21:43
celebrations social action events
21:46
and social hours
21:51
we recognize members celebrating one
21:54
year of membership
21:56
branwin drew carol gable jules heller
22:01
barbara linsley alexandra willis
22:04
roz kearney casey coleman
22:08
jared thorpe john hartman anna joffrey
22:13

and john parsons we give you a white
22:16
rose a blank canvas
22:18
ready to be filled with the color and
22:20
life you will receive from
22:21
and bring to this community over the
22:23
years we give you this rose
22:26
with our hope that you will dedicate
22:27
yourselves to this church for many years
22:29
to come
22:32
thank you for beginning this journey
22:34
with us
22:36
for opening your minds to new ideas your
22:39
hearts to compassion
22:41
and your souls to growth may
22:44
you stay through the hard times working
22:47
to strengthen the place you love
22:49
even when this church disappoints you
22:55
we will celebrate with you the deep
22:58
friendships you will grow here
23:00
over the years worship potlucks small
23:03

group discussions holiday celebrations

23:06

social action events and social hours

23:09

we celebrate your commitment to our

23:12

beloved community

23:14

may we continue to join with you as

23:17

together

23:18

we nurture spiritual community honor

23:21

diversity

23:22

and advocate for social justice

23:25

and i ask everyone once again let us

23:28

show

23:28

our joy for the members of our

23:30

congregation

23:31

join me in the spirit of meditation

23:35

let the difficulties of the weak

23:38

take their sabbath now their brief

23:42

and simple rest let the worries of the

23:46

weak

23:47

lay their heft gently onto the dark

23:50

earth

23:51

below this carpeted floor which can bear

23:54

them with greater ease than any one of

23:57

us

23:57

can by ourselves

24:00

let the tangle of feelings the pull and

24:04

push of these last seven days

24:07

sit still for a minute

24:11

stop writhing in my heart and move no

24:14

more than a buddha at rest under a tree

24:19

let there be stillness in my heart for a

24:22

moment

24:23

the balance point between breathing in

24:26

and breathing out like the pause of a

24:29

dancer between

24:31

between moments of music

24:35

let the breathing in this space be free

24:39

and flowing let pulses trance a slower

24:43

rhythm in the wrist

24:45

let the coming silence be like hands

24:48

pulling back a curtain revealing the

24:52

table

24:52

set with the feast of life which is

24:55

present here

24:56

and now and has been the whole while

25:01

present to those who give up living

25:04

in either the past or the future

25:26

so

25:31

[Music]

25:57

[Applause]

25:58

[Music]

26:05

our first reading is by nancy shaffer

26:11

how shall we mend you sweet soul

26:15

what shall we use and how is it in the

26:19

first

26:19

place you've come to be torn

26:22

come sit come tell me

26:26

we will find a way to mend you

26:30

i would offer you so much sweet soul

26:34

this banana sliced in rounds of palest

26:37

yellow

26:37

atop hot cereal or these raisins
26:41
scattered through it if you'd rather
26:44
would offer cellos in the background
26:47
singing
26:48
melodies vivaldi heard and wrote for us
26:51
to keep
26:53
would hold out to you everything colored
26:56
blue or lavender or light green
26:59
all of this i would offer you sweet soul
27:03
all of it or any piece of it might mend
27:06
you
27:08
i would offer you sweet soul this chair
27:11
by the window
27:13
this sunlight on the floor and the cat
27:15
asleep in it
27:18
i would offer you my silence my presence
27:22
all this love i have and my
27:25
sorrow you've become torn
27:28
how shall we mend you sweet soul
27:32
with these i think gently
27:35

we can begin we will mend you with a

27:39

rocking chair

27:41

some raisins a cat

27:44

a field of lavender beginning now to

27:46

bloom

27:48

we will mend you with songs remembered

27:50

entirely

27:52

the first time they are ever heard

27:55

we will mend you with pieces of your own

27:58

sweet

27:58

self sweet soul and what you've taught

28:03

from the very beginning

28:15

i have a second reading for us

28:18

from black woman author and activist

28:22

adrian marie brown

28:26

last weekend i cried in front of people

28:30

i suspected it would happen i was

28:33

teaching a semantics course and was

28:35

being vulnerable

28:36

in front of the class it wasn't

28:40

just a few tears it's the kind of crying
28:43
where you feel
28:44
ugly and want to be smaller and picked
28:47
up by someone
28:48
who has the answers and will carry you
28:51
back
28:52
to some time before you knew adult
28:56
suffering
28:58
yesterday i was driving from one home to
29:01
another
29:02
and in a pause between two songs
29:05
more tears came suddenly
29:09
strong enough that i pulled off at the
29:11
next exit
29:13
my tears almost always come at the sharp
29:17
point of a singular true thought
29:21
this person is gone i was thoughtless
29:25
someone scared my nibbling and i wasn't
29:27
there
29:29
why is my species suicidal
29:32

i miss my grandparents
29:36
later i drove through the storm and
29:38
finally for the first time
29:40
since crying in front of people
29:43
felt just right lightning
29:46
shot down bright fingers trying to
29:49
scorch the earth
29:51
thunder clapped and undulated overhead
29:54
saying wrong way wrong way
29:57
turn around and the rain was so
30:00
abundant i saw
30:04
how you can't rush the rain
30:07
can't rush a storm
30:11
i've been trying to rush through my
30:13
amazing life
30:14
my own transitions rushing to share
30:18
everything i learn rushing to be
30:20
everywhere at once leaving no
30:22
time for big messy
30:26
beautiful storms for my rage
30:29

my overwhelm my celebration
30:34
tears are another way the body
30:37
takes time slows things down
30:44
there ends our reading
30:49
let's work on healing our souls
30:56
when i talk about healing souls healing
31:00
the very
31:01
centers of our beings i acknowledge that
31:04
it is based on an assumption
31:06
that our souls have been wounded
31:10
torn i am assuming
31:13
that everyone listening will resonate
31:15
with the experience of a torn
31:18
soul i assume
31:22
and i believe rightly so that every
31:25
person has lived heartache
31:28
has been spoken to or treated in ways
31:31
intended to
31:32
wound or that wounded despite good
31:36
intentions i assume
31:40

that everyone's soul has known loss
31:43
of some kind
31:46
you have known pain
31:50
in your soul
31:53
and at the same time
31:56
i assume that everyone is a
32:00
full whole person
32:04
complete just the way you are
32:10
the apple is both red and sweet
32:15
light is both a wave and a particle
32:19
you are both whole
32:22
and in need of healing
32:26
it is true in the deepest sense that
32:28
pushes
32:29
beyond any possibility of contradiction
32:35
you are blessed whole
32:39
and enough and
32:43
your soul needs to heal
32:48
so we ask nancy schaefer's question
32:53
how shall we mend you sweet
32:56

soul
32:59
i've uplifted both schaefer's poem about
33:02
mending
33:03
and brown's reflection on crying
33:06
because healing souls like healing
33:09
bodies
33:10
doesn't come with a cure-all
33:14
the answer as to so many things to
33:17
how shall we mend you sweet soul
33:22
depends i've made a list however
33:26
of some things that are probably true
33:29
most of the time maybe not all of the
33:33
time
33:35
maybe not for all people
33:38
but maybe your soul will nod
33:41
within your being maybe
33:46
one we can't
33:49
assume that souls heal
33:52
all by themselves i have learned
33:56
that if i don't add some neosporin and
33:59

the bandage

34:00

the cut will take forever to heal

34:03

it will probably look gross and when it

34:06

finally does heal it's going to leave a

34:08

scar

34:10

that's me i know some people heal

34:13

without any effort but

34:14

i have to bandage it it's a thing

34:18

the worse the wound the more care it's

34:21

going to take

34:24

why do we act as if the wounds to our

34:27

souls will heal without

34:31

any attention from us then

34:35

why do we teach our children that hurt

34:37

feelings

34:38

and the pain of loss should simply be

34:41

stuffed away

34:42

as if they don't exist

34:46

the wounds to our souls the centers of

34:50

our being are just as real

34:54

as the slip of a knife while cooking
34:57
when we do not
34:58
care for them they fester under the
35:01
surface they get
35:02
gross and they leave scars
35:07
so practice wounded soul first
35:10
aid when something painful happens
35:15
acknowledge it create
35:19
space and time for your soul
35:22
to cry out and tell it
35:25
that the wounds are real but that they
35:29
can heal
35:31
apply warm compresses of love
35:34
and attention let your soul
35:38
rest in comfort
35:41
let it feel what it needs to feel
35:45
don't ask it to do more than it can in
35:48
the moment
35:50
bandage your soul with memories
35:53
of being safe and naming all who love
35:57

you
36:00
remember to change those bandages
36:02
regularly
36:06
two healing happens
36:10
with help
36:14
several years ago my mother-in-law had a
36:18
hip replacement
36:20
and of course the responsible
36:23
medical care providers would only send
36:26
her home
36:27
if someone would be there to help take
36:30
care of her
36:32
because after you've had your hip
36:35
replaced
36:36
you can't take care of the wound and all
36:38
of your needs
36:40
all by yourself
36:43
and i remember several weeks after
36:46
going over to her home to pick her up
36:49
to take her for a pedicure since she
36:51

couldn't do her own nails

36:53

and helping her tie her shoes

36:57

because she'd had a hip replacement and

36:59

she physically couldn't bend that far

37:03

she needed the help and i see that there

37:06

is no question

37:08

that nancy shaffer believes that mending

37:11

a soul

37:12

is not achieved alone she asks over and

37:16

over again

37:18

how shall we mend you

37:21

what shall we use

37:25

i know for myself that too often i

37:28

retreat

37:29

within when my soul takes damage

37:32

or when it is reminded of an old wound

37:36

i want to just hide from everything

37:39

curl up under my weighted blanket and

37:41

pretend that it's not

37:43

real that the world doesn't exist

37:46

and i just fold in under myself
37:50
but i can't heal in that place
37:54
i can nurse the wound but i can't
37:56
nurture
37:57
the healing that
38:01
can be done with the love of the people
38:04
around me
38:06
that can be done with the love of the
38:09
animals i keep in my home
38:11
even if the cat doesn't express it very
38:13
well
38:14
that is done by having good
38:18
conversations with the people
38:22
that are important to me with the people
38:26
that are in my church community with me
38:30
to call my beloved colleagues and i
38:33
encourage you to remember
38:36
that when you need help healing your
38:38
soul
38:39
which i think is more often than we like
38:43

to believe that the people who love you
38:48
will take care of you
38:51
and when someone else reaches out to you
38:53
that their soul
38:54
needs healing you can be present
38:58
to them
39:01
three call in the power of
39:05
nature just as we don't
39:09
heal well all by ourselves we don't heal
39:12
well locked inside of buildings even if
39:16
that is where we seek to hide
39:19
everything of nature has some aspect of
39:22
healing in it
39:23
as it calls us into the moment
39:27
to our very depths adrian marie brown
39:31
found this in a storm and i often have
39:35
to
39:36
a moment of the earth's great power
39:40
breaking my soul open the rain
39:43
washing the pain away
39:47

the tears come with the raindrops and

39:49

the raw power of the lightning

39:52

makes me feel small and insignificant

39:55

at the same time i feel as though

39:59

it is at my fingertips powerful and

40:02

powerless

40:03

at the same time i have what i need

40:07

to humbly stitch myself back

40:10

together healing moments come

40:14

from the sunshine and the wind the

40:16

presence of plants and the smell

40:19

of fall leaves we are part of this world

40:24

and all of the human busyness

40:27

does not matter when

40:30

we are touching nature when we have the

40:34

space

40:35

the space to slow down space to pay

40:38

attention to our own

40:40

needs space to simply be

40:44

to feel what needs to be felt

40:48

this is a space in which we can heal
40:53
when we're touching nature
40:57
when we feel connected to everything
41:00
that is more powerful greater than us
41:04
even in the presence of a tiny insect
41:08
or bud on a tree go outside
41:13
even in the bitterness of winter
41:17
and seek the healing of your soul
41:21
four you already have
41:25
everything you need
41:30
souls are not like the wellness industry
41:37
the industry that asks us to spend more
41:39
and more money
41:41
on trying to help our body be
41:44
as best it can be with supplements and
41:47
vitamins
41:48
and the next exercise craves
41:52
our souls have everything they need
41:56
to mend right here
42:00
and right now
42:05

nancy shafer writes we will mend you
42:10
with pieces of your own sweet self
42:14
sweet soul
42:18
we will mend you with pieces of your own
42:21
sweet self sweet soul
42:26
it's already there everything you need
42:30
is all ready there
42:36
in the love of the people who surround
42:39
you
42:40
in the space that you can make for your
42:43
soul
42:46
and i bless your efforts
42:49
to heal to be whole
42:54
and to need to heal at the same time and
42:57
to attend
42:58
to those wounds
43:02
i bless that work this congregation
43:06
is with you in doing that work
43:10
for truly you are loved
43:14
and you are not alone
43:18

may it be so and not men
43:25
please remain muted and join in
43:28
singing and i really encourage you to
43:30
actually sing along nobody else can hear
43:34
are him how could anyone
43:43
[Music]
43:51
how could anyone
43:56
[Music]
44:04
is a miracle how deeply you
44:07
are connected to my soul
44:12
oh could anyone
44:16
tell you you were anything less
44:23
[Music]
44:34
is
44:37
[Music]
44:49
please join in the words for
44:51
extinguishing our chalice
44:55
we extinguish this flame but not
44:58
the light of truth the warmth of
45:01
community
45:02

or the fire of commitment these we carry

45:06

in our hearts

45:07

until we meet again

45:14

let our lives be a prayer

45:18

that waters dry souls

45:22

men's broken hearts

45:25

refuses to be terrorized

45:28

seeks this world's beauty

45:31

and carries us through its storms

45:36

go in peace

45:49

[Music]

45:51

i'll be your candle on the

45:55

[Music]

45:59

will water burn

46:02

i know you're lost and drifting

46:06

but the clouds are lifting

46:09

don't give up you'll have somewhere to

46:15

[Music]

46:22

till every wave is warm and bright

46:27

my soul is there beside you

46:31

let this candle guide you

46:34

soon you'll see a golden stream of light

46:45

[Music]

46:47

don't let the stormy darkness pull

46:50

you down i'll paint a ray

46:55

[Music]

47:01

[Music]

47:02

lighted by

47:11

i'll be your candle on the

47:14

water

47:17

this flame inside of me will grow

47:22

keep holding on you'll make it

47:26

here's my hand so take it

47:29

look for me reaching out to show

47:34

as sure

47:39

i'll never let you go

47:52

i'll never let you

47:55

[Music]

48:04

go

48:07

[Music]

48:17

you