

ORDER OF SERVICE

Sunday, April 7, 2013

Worship Theme for March: God's Bod

*Stand as you are willing and able.

Please remember to turn off cell phones and pagers before the service.

GATHERING MUSIC

The Free Spirit Band

WELCOME

Rev. Kathleen Rolenz & April Stoltz

Kathleen: Good morning and welcome to West Shore Unitarian Universalist Church; a home for the liberal religious faithful and free-thinkers for over 60 years. As Unitarian Universalists, we believe in diversity of thought, but are unified in our desire to serve needs greater than our own. Our hope is that as a result of your participation in this church, you nurture and develop your life's meaning and purpose.

April: I am April Stoltz, and I serve as Worship Associate. I'm proud of many aspects of this congregation's life; our full commitment to gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender and genderqueer persons; our acceptance of diversity of thought, word and deed, and our desire to become an anti-racist, anti-oppressive and multicultural congregation. We aren't perfect, but we keep trying.

Kathleen: If you are new to West Shore—maybe your first or second visit—would you be willing to raise your hand so that we can welcome you after the service this morning? Glad you're here. Stop by the Welcome Center, let us make you a name tag and let us give you a quick tour of the building to help orient you. **(9:30 service only)** Stay for coffee hour or attend the artist reception after this service. **(11:15 a.m.)** After today's service, you have a hard choice; go to lunch with the Legacy Society in the Chapel or stop by the Art Show opening reception in the Fireside Room.

April: There is a list of activities, including a church calendar in your order of service as well as on the church website.

Now is the time to settle in, settle down, stand up and join together in singing our opening hymn "#38 Morning Has Broken" words in your grey hymnal or on the wall behind us.

OPENING HYMN* MORNING HAS BROKEN

LIGHTING OF THE CHALICE , Chalice Lighter, 9:30 a.m.

, Chalice Lighter, 11:15 a.m.

As _____ lights the chalice, symbol of our free faith, please say with me the words found in your order of service or on the wall behind; the covenant we speak in honor of the two languages most often heard in the United States today:

Love is the spirit of this church
And service is its law.
This is our great covenant:
To dwell together in peace
To seek the truth in love
And to help one another.

El amor es el espíritu de esta iglesia,
y el servicio su ley.
Éste es nuestro magnífico convenio:
Vivir juntos en paz,
buscar la verdad en el amor,
y ayudarnos los unos a los otros.

INTRODUCTION TO THE THEME

You've probably noticed by now that each month we take on a religious, spiritual and sometimes secular theme that frames our worship services. Sometimes these themes are serious – like evil, or sin or death; and sometimes they are more playful, like the twilight zone or sacred texting-but the one thing all of these themes have in common, is an opportunity to consider their meaning in the larger context of our lives.

The theme for this month is “God’s Bod,” admittedly a risky theme to take on in a Unitarian Universalist Church for two reasons; first, there is no uniform belief in this congregation about God, so when I say God, the next question is “what do you mean by God?” And for some, the word God has no meaning at all—our atheist, agnostic, and humanist friends may profess no interest in this word or concept- focusing more on the here and now and what we can see, hear and touch. For others, the word God is laden with historical, Biblical, personal, helpful or maybe even hurtful and harmful meanings.

So, the first thing I want to do is to say that for this sermon series, when I talk about God’s body, I am using it as a great metaphor for the interdependent web of all existence. I mean that God’s body is not just the physical world in which we live, or the universe in which we are placed; but the interconnected web of relationship to which we are accountable. The second reason this month’s theme is a little risky is because, at least this Sunday, we’re going to be talking about bodies. Unitarian Universalism is known for its reasoned approach to faith, and as a result, we tend to favor the mind over the body. We don’t talk about our bodies, or sexuality, except in the fine sexuality curriculum known as *Our Whole Lives*. We have our own kind of mind/body split; ignoring the body, it’s beauty and its disappointments for the intellectual and the rational.

This morning’s service is about bodies; yours, mine and God’s – that network of relationships that holds us together, as a common people sharing a common body – that of our earth. Next Sunday, Wayne is going to look at another type of body – the cosmos – and explore what kind of companionship we can have with the body of the universe; and on April 21st, Earth Sunday, Kathy Strawser and I will examine through storytelling and song, the pieces and parts of our bodies that make up the whole world and our responsibility to the Earth’s body. We’ll also dedicate children that morning; blessing their minds, hearts, hands and bodies for their religious and spiritual growth.

So, to begin this morning, I invite you to participate in a visual meditation on bodies. As you watch the images, just notice your reaction to them. Do you feel pleasure? Comfort? Fear? Disgust? Just notice the feelings – then let them go. David Blazer and the Free Spirit band will accompany these images with music. Relax—let go –and appreciate the various expressions of the body.

MEDITATION ON BODIES

(5 MINUTES)

READING

GENESIS 1: 26-27 (The Message Translation)

God spoke: “Let us make human beings in our image, make them reflecting our nature

So they can be responsible for the fish in the sea, the birds in the air, the cattle,

And, yes, Earth itself, and every animal that moves on the face of Earth.”

God created human beings; God created them to reflect God’s nature.

He created them male and female.

God blessed them: “Prosper! Reproduce! Fill Earth! Take charge!

Be responsible for fish in the sea and birds in the air,

for every living thing that moves on the face of Earth.”

SERMON - PART I

God's Bod & Yours

Rev. Kathleen Rolenz

MUSIC

*My Body is a Cage
Free Spirit Band*

by Arcade Fire

My body is a cage
That keeps me from dancing with the one I love
But my mind holds the key

I'm standing on the stage Of fear and self-doubt
It's a hollow play But they'll clap anyway

My body is a cage That keeps me from dancing with the one I love
But my mind holds the key Standing next to me
My mind holds the key

I'm living in an age That calls darkness light
Though my language is dead Still the shapes fill my head

I'm living in an age Whose name I don't know
Though the fear keeps me moving Still my heart beats so slow

My body is a cage That keeps me from dancing with the one I love
But my mind holds the key

Standing next to me My mind holds the key

My body is a . . . My body is a cage
We take what we're given
Just because you've forgotten, doesn't mean you're forgiven

I'm living in an age Still turning in the night
But when I get to the doorway There's no one in sight

I'm living in an age Realizing I'm dancing
With the one I love But my mind holds the key

You're still next to me My mind holds the key
Set my spirit free Set my spirit free Set my body free
Set my body free Woo! Set my spirit free Set my body free
Oh, oh Oh, oh

OFFERING AND OFFERTORY

READING

God Took a Bath

Cynthia Rylant

God took a Bath.
With His clothes on,
His robe, to be specific.
Why did He do this?
He was shy, that's why.
A little self-conscious about His body.

God wasn't always this way.
He used to be free as a bird
Running stark naked everywhere.
He never thought about bodies at all.
Then these things started coming back to Him;
The whole misunderstanding with Adam and Eve.
Then circumcision.
Then talk talk talk about everybody being made in His image
Until He got afraid to look in a mirror.
Everybody had such
high expectations and now He was
a little insecure.
Could be He was flabby. Love handles on God
would have to be *huge!* So He kept His robe on.

SERMON – PART II

God's Bod & Yours

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Rev. Kathleen Rolenz, April Stoltz

CLOSING HYMN

With My Own Two Hands

Ben Harper

I can change the world with my own two hands
Make a better place with my own two hands
Make a kinder place with my own two hands
With my own two hands

I can make peace on earth with my own two hands
And I can clean up the earth with my own two hands
And I can reach out to you with my own two hands
With my own With my own two hands

I'm gonna make it a brighter place with my own two hands
I'm gonna make it a safer place with my own two hands (with my own)
I'm gonna help the human race with my own two hands (with my own two hands)

Now I can hold you with my own two hands
And I can comfort you with my own two hands
But you got to use - use your own two hands
Use your own use your own two hands

I'm gonna make it a brighter place - with my own
I'm gonna make it a safer place with my own two hands
I'm gonna help the human race with my own two hands
Oh- make it a brighter place with my own two hands

I can hold you with my own two hands
And I can comfort you with my own two hands
But you got—you've got to use
Use your own two hands, use your own, use your own two hands.

BENEDICTION

EXTINGUISHING OF THE CHALICE (UNISON)

We extinguish this chalice, but not the light of truth, the warmth of community or the fire of commitment. These we carry with us until we meet again.

POSTLUDE