

Extinguishing the Chalice: Fire—Release

Roar through my soul
Flame and fire and searing heat
Burn all my fears to ash
Now send your sparks up
On the breath of the wind
Up to the sun, moon and stars
Snaking paths
Roads for my spirit to follow

Sweet, sweet release *by Lois E. Van Leer*

Announcements

Postlude Please remain seated for the postlude. Please put your chair away if you are able and join us for drinks and conversation.

Dates to Remember...
January 2019

- Jan. 6** **Privilege and Prejudice** – Penny Blake
- Jan.13** **One Quakers Way to Clearness** – Rose Marie Cipryk
- Jan.16** **(Wed.) February Newsletter Submission Deadline**
– LesLee Turmel larganturmel@gmail.com
- Jan.18** **(Fri.) UCN Film Night** – 7:00 p.m. **“Wonder”**
- Jan.20** **Why It’s Important to Listen to People who Disagree** – Zachary R. Wood (YouTube)
- Jan.21** **(Mon.) Book Club** – 7:30 p.m. at Karen Stovell’s
- Jan.25** **(Fri.) Pub Night** – 6:00 - 8:00 p.m., China Emerald Buffet, 143 Hartzel Road
- Jan.27** **Bridge of Hope and UCN** – Rev. Doug Schulz

FRAGRANCE-FREE POLICY

The Unitarian Congregation of Niagara is a fragrance-free zone. Fragrance may be distressful and threaten the well-being of those around you. In order to make this a safe and welcoming environment for everyone who comes here, we ask that you refrain from wearing fragrances. Your understanding and co-operation is appreciated.

Unitarian Congregation of Niagara



Letting Go

– Karen Stovell

December 30, 2018

223 Church St., St. Catharines, Ontario
www.unitarian-stcatharines.org 905-687-8433

Lay Chaplains: 905-687-8433

laychaplainsucn@gmail.com

Doreen M. Peever Desmond Sequeira

Order of Service
Sunday, December 30, 2018

Service Leader: Karen Stovell
Musician: Theresa Pothier

Prelude

Welcome

People have always known that fire was special. Long, long ago, before people made matches or candles or even made houses, people knew that fire was special. There was the great fire in the sky, the sun, which made the earth warm and made night into day. And there were the smaller fires that people made, fires that cooked their food, and kept them warm, and brought them light.

People honoured the fires, because fire was special. Fire was more than human. Fire has power: it can create and it can destroy. It can bring light and it can burn. It can create and it can destroy. Fire can be wonderful, and fire can be terrible. We have to be careful with fire.

And so, people thought that fire was something sacred and holy. Some people even worshiped fire, and said that fire was a deity, like a goddess or a god. Other people said fire wasn't actually the deity, but just meant that the deity was there.

No matter what they believed, people all over the world gave fire a special place in their religions. They had fires in their homes, of course, to cook food and keep warm, and they also had sacred fires in their temples. They set sacred lamps on their altars. They lit sacred bonfires outside on the hilltops and in the groves. They placed sacred torches near the graves of those who died.

We still do this today. In Ottawa in front of the Parliament Buildings, burns an eternal flame that never goes out. In churches at Christmas time, many Christians light four candles on an Advent wreath. During the eight days of Hanukkah, Jews light the eight candles of the menorah. At Diwali, Hindus set small lamps all around the house.

And when Unitarian Universalists gather, we light a chalice. This is our sacred fire.

By Elizabeth Harding

Hymn: #1012 When I Am Frightened

Joys and Concerns

Responsive Reading:

Out of the flames of fear
We rise with courage of our deepest convictions
to stand for justice, inclusion and peace

*Out of the flames of scrutiny
We rise to proclaim our faith
With hope to heal a fractured and hurting world*

Out of the flames of doubt
We rise to embrace the mystery, wonder and awe
of all there is and all that is yet to be

*Out of the flames of hate
We rise with the force of love
Love that celebrates our shared humanity*

Out of the flames we rise by Sara Eileen LaWall

Offertory

Ritual: Letting Go of the Year Behind Us

Hymn: #1028 Fire of Commitment

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