“Swords into Plowshares” ~ Isaiah II:IV

Morning Worship
11 a.m.

“Tears We Cannot Stop: A Sermon To White America”
Rev. Bruce Southworth

My sermon title is the same as the title of Michael Eric Dyson’s most recent book. Dr. Dyson is a Professor of Sociology at Georgetown University, a NY Times contributor, and an ordained Baptist minister. Among his themes that I shall wrestle with are white privilege, white supremacy, and white innocence.
See you at Community!

Memorial Service – Celebrating the Life of Odella N. Washington
1 pm – Hall of Worship

Morning Worship
11 a.m.

“They Called Her Moses”
A Cantata by Robert De Cormier and Donald McKayle
Gerald A. Brown and Rev. Bruce Southworth

Harriet Tubman’s picture has been selected to appear on the twenty dollar bill, replacing Andrew Jackson. In recognition of this historic move, this morning the expanded choir will present a cantata based on the life of Harriet Tubman. The songs help to tell the story of the journey to freedom on the Underground Railroad, which prior to the end of the Civil War led thousands of slaves to the Free states and to Canada.
See you at Community!

The Community Church of New York Unitarian Universalist
Web: Visit our website at www.ccny.org – Visit in person at 40 East 35th Street
Cable TV – Sundays at 8:30 pm: The Community Church’s Time Warner cable TV channel is 1997 (MNN3 -Manhattan Neighborhood Network Channel 3 – Spirit Channel); also broadcast on RCN channel 84 and FIOS channel 35. Link for Live Streaming Information: http://www.mnn.org/live/3-spiritchannel.
Our Mission: TO GROW AS A CARING, JUSTICE-MAKING, ANTI-RACIST, DIVERSE, SPIRITUAL COMMUNITY
LIFESPAN RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

“There are only two ways to live your life. One is as though nothing is a miracle. The other is as though everything is a miracle.”

— Albert Einstein

The lesson was miracle and awe. One Sunday we spoke about what a miracle might be. Everyone was stumped, then I mentioned the: Universe, sun, stars, earth, seasons, snowflakes, fingerprints, childbirth, breathing, thinking, love, a beating heart, our senses, growing, healing, a flower pushing through an asphalt road. I heard a unanimous, "Ahhhh, yes". It was as if we woke up to the possibility that miracles don't have to be explained events.

This week Kevin Maxwell guided them to "stay awake" or to look with absolute attention and paint what one sees from memory or from a visual. Each chose an animal that was significant to them in some way to their lives. The artistic exercise of paying close attention will be revisited to encourage our own capacity for "direct experience of mystery and wonder.”

Last week as I was shoveling snow from my front steps I was reminded of that even though it was cold and icy, I "woke up" to the beauty and wonder of each delicate and unique snowflake.

Paz, Esther

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

SUNDAY—February 19
9:30 am Choir Rehearsal
11:00 am Worship Service
11:00 am Sunday School
12:15 pm Fellowship Hour

MONDAY—February 20
Presidents’ Day
Church Building Closed

WEDNESDAY—February 22
6:30 pm Board of Trustees

SUNDAY—February 26
9:30 am Choir Rehearsal
11:00 am Worship Service
11:00 am Sunday School
12:15 pm Fellowship Hour
12:45 pm Volunteer Choir Rehearsal

WEDNESDAY—March 1
6:30 pm Gallery35 Meeting

SUNDAY—March 5
Women’s Sunday
Rev. Nikki Williams

SUNDAY—March 12
Rev. Bruce Southouth will preach.

THOSE WHO ALSO MINISTER — FEBRUARY 19

Pulpit Flowers—Given by Delores Browne in loving memory of her mother, Harriet Green
Usher/Greeters—George Martin, Head Usher
Anna-Lisa Hafgren

Membership Table—Louise Brown
Hospitality—Leslie McKenzie

THOSE WHO ALSO MINISTER — FEBRUARY 26

Pulpit Flowers—Given by Abigail S. Bernhardt
Usher/Greeters—Doug Anderson, Head Usher
George Martin

Bookstall—Ken Wachtell
Hospitality—Melinda Schroeder
Neil Blonstein

February Shelter Coordinator—Bruce Foster 212-685-8716
Shelter volunteers always welcome.
MINISTER’S CORNER – “Love Saves Us”

“The kind of beauty I want most is the hard-to-get kind that comes from within – strength, courage, dignity.”

Ruby Dee

“Absurdity is king but love saves us....”
Albert Camus (in A. MacLeish’s RIDERS ON THE EARTH)

Once upon a time, I invited myself for a visit with Archibald MacLeish (1892-1982). He was a renowned 20th century public servant, professor, and author. As an essayist, poet, and playwright, he had won Pulitzer Prizes in poetry (twice) and drama (for J. B. – a modern update on the biblical figure Job). I was and am a fan.

I was delighted that he welcomed me to his farmhouse retirement home in rural Massachusetts, where we visited for a couple of hours in his study. His gifts of time and conversation were a great blessing, and my thanks to him were profuse.

Shortly afterward, he sent a gracious thank you note (another blessing in its poignancy and heart), plus copies of his volume of essays Riders on the Earth: Essays and Recollections. His wisdom and provocations go with me these many years.

On the wall of MacLeish’s study was a large framed photograph of the whole Earth rising above the moonscape (from one of the Apollo moon landings). In my personal “loose-leaf Bible” of spiritual writings is his title essay, which includes:

“To see the earth as we now see it, small and blue and beautiful in that eternal silence where it floats, is to see ourselves as riders on the earth together, brothers [and sisters] on that bright loveliness in the unending night – [sisters and] brothers who see now they are truly [sisters and] brothers.”

For me, this image of the Earth – “small and blue and beautiful” – is a potent, sustaining, and liberating religious symbol.

In these divisive times, such symbols are all the more important. Within this one is a challenge to radical individualism and arrogance and to tribalism.

Another poet that I embrace is Marge Piercy, and last Sunday I offered her invitation:

Some – the luckiest – can love themselves without narcissism just saying, Well I am this,
I could do better now and probably I will.
[“The Crooked Inheritance”]

In this spirit of Love’s inclusiveness, Nikki Giovanni writes

I am a mirror

I reflect the grace
Of my mother
The tenacity
Of my grandmother
The patience
Of my grandfather
The sweat
Of my great-grandmother
The hope
Of my great-grandfather
The songs
Of my ancestors
The prayers
Of those on the auction block
The bravery
Of those in middle passage

I reflect the strengths
Of my people
And for that alone
I am loved
(I Am A Mirror)

Life is a gift. Our days are brief.
People are precious. Caring counts ultimately
We need one another, and the world needs us.
Love saves us, if we work for justice.

Faithfully, Bruce
"The Spiritual State of the Union"
Sermon Brief – Sunday, January 22, 2017

... One of my guiding aspirations comes from the prophet Micah. “O Mortal, what is required of you, but to do justice, to love kindness, and to walk humbly…”

From the Christian epistle, Galatians: “the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control.”

Buddhism affirms Mindfulness and Compassion...

Islam, like other traditions, invokes the Golden Rule, “to do unto others as you would have them do to you.”

Too little of this is at hand....

Yet, blessings of spirit appear again, and again. A couple of weeks ago, as some Republicans sought to eliminate the Office of Congressional Ethics, an enormous public outcry caused the House to reverse itself.

So, think of the State of our Union with the hope these voices offer. While it is not unimportant who our President is and how he behaves, you and I know the more important matter: Who are we and how shall we behave?

... to make “America, America again.” (L. Hughes) For everyone... And Yes, we can. Our spiritual health includes

- silencing the cruelty of others,
- the daily acts of citizenship,
- keeping our faces toward change with free and bold spirits, and
- affirming our shared love of building bridges.

Surrounded by the seductions of consumerism, materialism, tribalism, and now the blood sport of political insults, with heightened misogyny, xenophobia, racism, and narcissism, I am strengthened by Howard Thurman, the preacher, mystic, teacher, and mentor to Dr. King, and friend of our church, who would affirm, “Everything is sustenance.”

How so? His grounding was powerful: “Life is alive.” New Life always awaits us as we embrace wellsprings of Spirit and Life: Generosity, Hospitality, Gratitude, and Solidarity (with thanks to Taquiena Boston). Yes, we can....

http://images.acswebnetworks.com/1/1791/12217TheSpiritualStateoftheUnionSermon.pdf

Rev. Bruce Southworth

http://images.acswebnetworks.com/1/1791/12217TheSpiritualStateoftheUnionSermon.pdf