



# *Soul Matters*

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## Living Love Through The Practice of **Trust**



Worship Resources  
March 2025

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## About Online Permissions, Multi-Platform Support & Referencing Resources

**Online Permissions:** We support multi-platform worship by researching material that is permissioned for online use. We identify the online-permissioned piece we find with an asterisk by the title of the suggested resource. We also add a “permission source” note that explains the source of that online permission.

**A Reminder About Partial Texts and *Pointing not Publishing*:** To honor legal and relational standards, we do not include the full pieces of authors’ works unless we’ve received explicit permission to do so. We want all users to understand that these worship packets are *research* packets not *publications*, which means we focus on *pointing* to where you can find fair use and publicly available pieces, rather than on *publishing* original writings and full resources. Our main service to subscribers is theme-based *curation* and *research*, done in the service of saving professionals and lay leaders time.

**A Note About Author Titles:** Many of the authors we refer to are ministers. Some ministers prefer to be credited with their title “Rev.”, others don’t, and still others are fine either way. Our practice is to follow whatever practice was used in the source material we reference.

# Calendar Connections

View our full-year calendar [HERE](#)

## March 2025

Click on the hyperlinked names of each event for more information or inspiration.

### Interfaith

- [Ash Wednesday](#) (Christian) - March 5, 2025 (more [here](#))
- [Lent](#) (Christian) - March 5 - April 17, 2025
- [Purim](#) begins (Jewish) - March 13-14, 2025 (more [here](#) & [here](#))
- [Holi](#) (Hindu) - March 14, 2025 (more [here](#) and [here](#))
- [Ostara](#)/ Spring or the Vernal Equinox (Pagan/Wiccan) - March 20 (more [here](#))
- [Ramadan](#) (Islam) - Evening of Feb 28/day of March 1 - 30, 2025 (more [here](#) and [here](#))
- [Eid al Fitr](#) -end of Ramadan (Islam) - March 30, 2025 (more [here](#))
- [The Annunciation](#) (Christian) - March 25

### Unitarian Universalist

- [James Reeb](#) dies (1965) - March 11 (more [here](#) and [here](#).)
- [Susan B. Anthony's](#) Death - March 13
- [Climate Justice](#) Month - March 22 to April 22
- [Viola Liuzzo](#) dies (1965) - March 25
- *Stewardship Season (in some congregations)*

### National & Cultural

- [Women's History Month](#)
- [Irish American Heritage Month](#)
- [Peace Corps Established](#) - March 1 (1961)
- Mardi Gras - March 4, 2025 (falls the day before Ash Wednesday)
- [Season for Nonviolence](#) - Jan. 30 - April 4
- [Dred Scott Case](#) - March 6 (1857)
- [International Women's Day](#) - March 8 (more [here](#))
- [Harriet Tubman Day](#) - March 10
- [St. Patrick's Day](#) - March 17
- [World Water Day](#) - March 22
- Archbishop [Oscar Romero](#) dies - March 24 (1980)
- Selma–Montgomery March (1965) - [March 7](#) (first) [March 9](#) (second) & [March 21-25](#) (third)
- Death of [Ida B. Wells](#) - March 25 (1931)
- [International Transgender Day of Visibility](#) - March 31 (more [here](#))

### For Fun and On the Fringe

- [National Day of Unplugging](#) - first Friday of March / Mar. 2
- [Pi Day](#) - March 14
- Everything You Think is Wrong [Day](#) - March 15
- [Tolkien Reading Day](#) - March 25

# Chalice Lightings & Opening Words

## **The Blessings of Trust \***

*Rev. Scott Tayler*

[Permission Secured by Soul Matters](#)

We gather today to receive the blessings of trust.  
May the relationships in this room remind us we do not have to depend only on ourselves.  
May the quiet we share help us hear and renew our faith in that still small voice inside.  
May the music sung inspire us to hold tight to the restorative rhythms of the world.  
May the words offered remind us that we too have a voice, one that must be trusted and shared.  
With our hearts open, let us begin.

## **Know This \***

*Chad A. Snyder*

[Permission Secured by Soul Matters](#)

We truly know far less than we think we do  
But let us know this much:  
We are not alone  
In our joy, in our loss  
In our quiet, daily, blessedly ordinary moments  
We are not alone  
A small truth, maybe, in a vast and rapid world  
But let us hold that truth, and trust it  
As we hold and trust the joys, the sorrows, and moments  
Shared in this space we make holy

## **A Sturdy Flame \***

*Rev. Julianne Lepp*

[Permission Secured by Soul Matters](#)

*On trusting we can heal a nation divided and filled with mistrust*

We light this chalice with hope, a sturdy flame we nurture in these difficult times.  
We light this chalice with the heart of compassion for a nation divided by politics and strife.  
We light this chalice knowing that it will take all of us to repair this world we live in.  
May we find rest, compassion and the hope that we need to nurture ourselves and each other.  
May this sturdy light remind us of the people we can be, and the difference we can make in the world together.

## **The Longing for Something More\***

*Rev. Gretchen Haley*

[Permission secured by Soul Matters](#)

The shadowed silhouettes of two people holding their hands together to form a heart.  
Every little thing that breaks your heart  
Is welcome here  
We'll make a space for it  
Give it its due time and praise  
for the wanting it represents  
the longing for something more,  
some healing hope that remains not yet  
We promise no magic  
no making it all better  
But offer only this circle of trust  
This human community that remembers  
Though imperfectly that sings and prays  
though sometimes awkwardly  
This gathering that loves, though not yet enough  
We're still practicing  
After all,  
still learning,  
still in need of help and partners  
Still becoming able  
to receive  
all this beauty and all these gifts  
we each bring  
Come, let us worship together.

**We Will Be Renewed \***

*Pat Uribe-Lichty*

Full piece at

<https://www.uua.org/worship/words/chalice-lighting/we-will-be-renewed>

...We come together bringing all of who we are,  
Trusting that in gathering we will be renewed  
And that together we can create  
the world we long for.

**Trust Must Be Rekindled \***

*Rev. Scott Tayler*

[Permission Secured by Soul Matters](#)

We gather today to hear the call of trust.  
Though our hearts have been bruised  
by broken promises and dreams deferred,  
may we listen again for that longing to repair,  
and be repaired,  
that hunger to start anew.  
Like this flame, trust is something that needs  
rekindled  
again and again.  
May today spark the fire of a new match.

**Hoping, Trusting for So Many Things \***

*Katie Kandarian-Morris*

Full piece at

<https://www.uua.org/worship/words/opening/hoping-trusting-so-many-things>  
[Permission Source](#)

Here we have come into this sacred space—  
quieter now with our readiness  
Hushed voices, hoping, trusting for so many things...

**With Faith to Face Our Challenges \***

*Rev. Gary Kowalski*

Full piece at

<https://www.uua.org/worship/words/reading/5844.shtml>  
[Permission Source](#)

With hope to trust tomorrow,  
We accept this day as the gift it is...

# Meditations Prayers & Blessings

## **This act of faith... \***

*Rev. Gretchen Haley*

[Permission secured by Soul Matters](#)

What's going to happen?  
Will everything be ok?  
What can I do?  
In these days we find ourselves  
too often  
Stuck with these questions on repeat  
What's going to happen? / Will everything be ok?  
/What can I do?  
We grasp at signs and markers, articles of news and  
analysis  
Facebook memes and forwarded emails  
As if the new zodiac  
Capable of forecasting all that life may yet bring our  
way  
As if we could prepare  
As if life had ever made any promises of making  
sense, or turning out the way we'd thought  
As if we are not also actors in this still unfolding  
story  
For this hour we gather  
To surrender to the mystery  
To release ourselves from the needing to know  
The yearning to have it all already figured out  
And also the burden of believing we either have all  
the control, or none  
Here in our song and our silence  
Our stories and our sharing  
We make space for a new breath, a new healing, a  
new possibility  
To take root  
That is courage  
forged in the fire of our coming together  
and  
felt in the spirit that comes alive in this act of faith:  
that we believe still, a new world is possible  
That we are creating it, already, here, and now

## **In Our Circle Again\***

*Rev. Shari Woodbury*

[Permission secured by Soul Matters and on our  
UUA's Worship Web](#)

*On trusting the possible and reaching it together*

Here we are  
in our circle again.  
A circle of vision  
and reflection,  
A forum for deciding  
and empowering.

Here we are  
at the base of another bridge,  
another space spanning  
the shores of today and tomorrow.  
Beckoning us to cross the chasm,  
one day at a time.

Here we are  
gathered again at the cusp  
of the future,  
at the boundary  
that holds community together.

We are here,  
in a circle of love and trust,  
brought to this moment  
by a series of choices and promises...  
by hope and gratitude...  
by our own shadows, faced  
and befriended.

With a servant's heart,  
with a leader's listening,  
with a parent's love, truer  
than all our inner trembling,  
let us model the health we seek for all  
and lean into community.

Somewhere out there,  
all we dream is possible.  
Somewhere in here,  
we are sowing the seeds.

### **Giver of Being and Freedom \***

*Rev. George Kimmich Beach*

Full meditation found at

<https://www.uua.org/worship/words/meditation/giver-of-being>

[Permission Source](#)

Because we live with mystery, we trust that which is deeper than we know—which touches our hearts—which steadies us and rekindles our spirits—which, finally, in faith, may be named the love that has laid hold upon us, and will not let us go...

### **trust the people**

*adrienne maree brown*

Full piece at

<https://adriennemareebrown.net/2019/07/01/trust-the-people-2/>

trust the people who move towards you and already feel like home.  
trust the people to let you rest...  
trust the people who revel in pleasure after hard work.  
trust the people who see and hold your heart...  
trust the people and you will become trustworthy...

### **A Lament Based on Psalm 56\***

*Dr. David Breeden*

[Permission Secured by Soul Matters](#)

Of human wrangling  
there is no end.  
Endless struggles engulf us.  
Where do we find hope?  
    There is trust in words  
    that have been spoken.  
    Despite all the words  
    that have been hurled,  
    we find meaning,  
    talking with each other.  
We weep until the pillow is soaked.  
The air swallows all our tears.  
Our solace is our words to each other.  
    We trust in our striving.  
    We trust in each other.  
    We join in striving;  
    we join in trusting.

### **Psalm 23 for This Moment \***

*Rev. Kevin Tarsa*

Full piece at

<https://www.uua.org/worship/words/affirmation/psalm-23-moment>

[Permission Source](#)

Just when the weight of the world I inhabit  
threatens to drop me in place  
and press my hope down into the ground beneath  
me  
Love invites me to rest for a gentle while...  
sets me once again on its tender and demanding  
path...  
I know... I know  
that all will be well...

### **Prayer**

*Rev. Marta I Valentin*

Found in [Falling into the Sky](#), UUA worship resource  
& Soul Matters "[Common Shelf](#)" Book

...Spirit of this World and Beyond  
we strive to keep conscious  
our interconnections,  
our interdependence,  
our trust in one another as human *being*...  
In truth and with compassion  
for we know  
that what we send out to the universe  
is what will return. . .

### **Something Constant Drawing Near \***

*Bob Smith*

[Permission Secured by Soul Matters](#)

March is a mentor we must learn to trust—  
The greening threshold of the ancient year  
When soil revives and skies abruptly clear,  
Seeds struggle into sunlight, as they must.  
We feel within ourselves that upward thrust,  
That sense of something constant drawing near,  
Something whose steadiness allays our fear,  
Its gifts ubiquitous but not discussed.  
How confidently spring makes promises  
The Steller's jays seem certain it will keep;  
This season means exactly what it says.  
Our eyes turn skyward yet our roots go deep;  
What lies ahead is anybody's guess,  
But, for the moment, we are done with sleep.

**Trust, Thomas R. Smit**

Full poem found at

<https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poems/50109/trust-56d22ce3845d0>

...The package left with the disreputable-looking clerk, the check gulped by the night deposit, the envelope passed by dozens of strangers— all show up at their intended destinations. The theft that could have happened doesn't...

And sometimes *you* sense how faithfully your life is delivered, even though you can't read the address.

**We light this flame as an act of faith... \***

*Rev. Scott Tayler*

[Permission secured by Soul Matters](#)

We gather again, with joy and gratitude,  
but also with pieces and parts that are  
worn out and worn down,  
wanting, once again, to trust,  
to believe  
that hope is not as fragile as it sometimes seems,  
that division is not as deep as it sometimes appears.  
And so we light this flame as an act of faith,  
a reminder  
a redeclaration  
a rekindling  
of the trust  
that darkness can't ever shut out the light,  
that kindness is more powerful than we know,  
that humility and accountability allow us to change,  
that together we can most certainly bend the arc of  
this miraculous universe  
toward beauty,  
toward justice  
toward love.

**Poem/Reading - Beyond Sight, Rosemerry Wahtola**

**Trommer**

Full piece at

<https://ahundredfallingveils.com/2024/08/26/beyond-sight/>

All night  
it went on like this.  
I'd be walking and then  
I'd be flying and then  
I'd be falling and then  
I'd be caught, until finally,  
by morning, we couldn't say  
that it wasn't disconcerting,  
but we could say I  
had become more fluent  
in this strange upheaval.  
We could say I  
had begun to trust  
the same hand that tossed me  
would catch me...



# Music

## Suggestions For March 2025 - “The Practice of Trust” from Soul Matters Music Resources Coordinator, [Adam O’Dell](#)

*“The best way to find out if you can trust somebody is to trust them.”*  
- Ernest Hemmingway

I started my job at First Unitarian Church of Chicago in January of 2022. It was the height of the Omicron wave of the COVID-19 pandemic. At any given time, I was one of three people in the building. Our interim minister was handling the spoken word. I played music. The board president at the time ran the camera and Zoom room. As the three people in the building, we had quite a bit to handle. The church’s membership was dwindling even before the pandemic began, we had some soul searching to do on a congregational level as we sought to call a settled minister, and there was urgency among the leadership to rebuild.

Coming into that, I took a lot upon myself. Three years in, after the pandemic had waned and the church began to grow again, I had a problem... I was in charge of too many things. I had become the Music Director, the AV technician, the knower of building things, the liaison between the church and our renters... the list goes on. This past December, a family emergency made it clear to me that I need to rebalance my life, and while I was planning on how I would handle this family emergency, I received a call from a congregant about a renter who didn’t like a particular table in one of our spaces. I told myself “I can’t care about the table anymore.” I am the Director of Music, after all. Somebody else better equipped to care about the table should be caring about the table!

I will openly admit that I’ve given too much credence to the phrase “if you want something done right, do it yourself.” If I’m actually the expert, sure, that makes sense, but I can admit that I’m *not* an expert more often than I am. My accidental hero complex had me unwilling to delegate. I had congregants coming up to me asking “is there anything I can do to help?” which, as we all know, is among the Top 5 best things someone can ask you in a church setting... and yet I frequently took things upon myself.

Looking back, it’s almost funny to me that I had such trust issues. I conduct the choir, after all, which is perhaps one of the best examples of a trusting community in a church setting. We all rely on each other to prepare our parts, to pay attention, to listen, blend, emote... the folks in my choir are also some of the most active, helpful people outside of the choir as well. As I’ve learned to trust people more, they have rewarded my trust with dedication, pride, and kindness. They’ve built something more stable, more beautiful, and more meaningful than I ever could have done by myself. I am thankful for them every day, for their trust in me, and for helping me to put trust in them.

May it be so for all of us.

**Adam**

## Hymns

#	Title	Style Notes	Singability		Permissions
15	The Lone, Wild Bird	Simple, Melodic, Shape Note	5	H/R/SL	Public Domain
18	What Wondrous Love	Haunting, Shape Note	5	H/SL	Music: Public Domain Lyrics: UUA Permissions Granted Alt Harmony: One License
20	Be Thou My Vision	Traditional, Uplifting	5	H/SL	Permissions Granted Harmony: One License
67	We Sing Now Together (v. 1, 3, 4)	Traditional, Simple	5	H/SL	UUA Permissions Granted
83	Winds Be Still	Meditative, Soaring, Traditional	4	H/SL	UUA Permissions Granted
95	There Is More Love Somewhere	Spiritual, Centering	5	R/SL	Public Domain
101	Abide with Me	Traditional, Comforting	5	H	Public Domain
108	My Life Flows On in Endless Song	Folk, Comforting	5	SL	Public Domain
128	For All That Is Our Life	Comforting, Pop	4	SL	Music: UUA Permissions Granted Lyrics: Public Domain
131	Love Will Guide Us	Rocking, Sweet	5	H/SL	Permissions Granted
146	Soon the Day Will Arrive	Hebrew, Hopeful, Joyful	4	H/SL	Public Domain
149	Lift Every Voice and Sing	Boisterous, Uplifting	4	H/SL	Public Domain
344	A Promise through the Ages Rings	Hopeful, Traditional	3	H/SL	See note
	permission granted if written credit is given as follows: "Lyrics by Alicia S. Carpenter, © 1983; used with permission of the Estate of Alicia Carpenter."				
346	Come, Sing a Song with Me	Folksy, Welcoming, In the Round	4	SL	Permissions granted
347	Gather the Spirit	Contemporary, Rocking, Uplifting	3	SL	Make a donation via <a href="#">Jim Scott's Website</a>
358	Rank by Rank Again We Stand	Procession, Uplifting	3	H/SL	Permissions Granted
396	I Know This Rose Will Open	Simple, Comfort, In the Round	3	SL	Permissions Granted
402	From You I Receive	Simple, Folk	4	R/SL	Permissions Granted
406	Let Us Break Bread Together	Prayerful, Christian, Spiritual	5	H/R/SL	Public Domain
1002	Comfort Me	Meditative, Comforting	4	SL	Permissions Granted
1008	When Our Heart Is in a Holy Place	Upbeat, Groovy, Centering	4	SL	Permissions Granted

1012	When I Am Frightened	Lullaby, Warm, Comforting	4	H/SL	Words & Music: Donate to Heritage UU Church in Cincinnati, choir or children's music program
1020	Woyaya	Folk, Simple, Calming	4	H/SL	One License or CCS
1021	Lean on Me	Support, Covenant, R&B/Soul	5	R/SL	CCS
1045	There Is a Balm in Gilead	Spiritual, Lamenting, Comfort	4	SL	Music and Lyrics: Public Domain Arrangement: One License

### Singability Score Key

All congregations are different, but this score is intended to provide basic, subjective guidance on hymn selection and leadership, especially for hymns you or the congregation are less familiar with.

5 - Very Easy	4 - Easy	3 - Average	2 - Hard	1 - Very Hard	H	R	SL
Little to no help needed	Weak singers may need help (usually because of range)	Average singers may need some help	Guidance recommended	Best for soloist or small group	Use <b>Hymnal</b>	Teach by <b>Rote</b>	Use <b>Song Leader</b>

### Permissions Key

Hymns where the permissions column is highlighted in GREEN typically do NOT require additional copyright for the average UU congregation.		
Hymns labeled "Public Domain" require no licensing or other further action to use for in-person worship, live streaming, or online recording/archiving.	Hymns labeled "UUA Permissions Granted" may be used for in-person worship, live streaming, and online recording/archiving, assuming you have legally obtained copies of the UU hymnals.	Hymns labeled "Permissions Granted" may be used for in-person worship, live streaming, and online recording/archive. The copyright owner may request an additional donation.
Hymns where the permissions column is highlighted in YELLOW require a copyright license, typically One License or CCS. It is your responsibility to obtain the appropriate license for in person worship, live streaming, and/or online recording/archiving.		Hymns where the permissions column is highlighted in RED require separate copyright permissions for use. Information for securing the copyright will be made available in this packet, but it is your responsibility to obtain permission from the holder.

For more information on permissions and licensing, please consult the [UUA Hymn and Reading Permissions](#).

### Choral/Vocal Suggestions

Title	Composer	Voicing	Style Notes
<a href="#">I Believe</a>	Mark Miller	SATB, SSA	Ballad, Contemporary
<a href="#">I Will Be Your Standing Stone</a>	Melanie DeMore	Flexible, Rote	Simple, Reassuring, Rote
<a href="#">Be Like the Bird</a>	Abbie Betnis	5-part canon	Haunting, Melodic
<a href="#">I Am Willing</a>	Holly Near	SATB	Uplifting, Contemporary
<a href="#">Trust the Seeds</a>	Elizabeth Alexander	SATB	Comforting, a cappella
<a href="#">The Peace of Wild Things</a>	Jake Runestad	SATB	Spacious, Calming, Expansive

## Instrumental Suggestions

Title	Composer	Instrumentation	Style Notes
<a href="#">The Lone Wild Bird</a>	P.F. Tillen	Solo piano	Simple, Melodic, Flowing
<a href="#">Be Thou My Vision</a>	Anne Britt	Solo piano	Tender, Expansive
<a href="#">Be Thou My Vision</a>	Andrew Unsworth	Organ	Flowing, Romantic
<a href="#">Exhale</a>	Alexis Ffrench	Solo piano	Tender, Pop, Rhythmic
<a href="#">Secret and Glass Gardens</a>	Jennifer Higdon	Solo piano	Transcendental, Sweeping

## Music for Online Worship

These [videos from our UUA](#) may be used in online and recorded worship services by Unitarian Universalist congregations. The music that follows does not require additional permission for online use. However, be sure to provide full attribution to the composers and lyricists on your screens, not just verbally, for each piece that you incorporate into worship.

These videos are intended to lighten the burdens imposed by online worship. They should not be used to justify decreasing the wages or positions of professional music staff.

- ["Filled with Loving Kindness," \(Vimeo\)](#) a version of the Buddhist Metta (lovingkindness) prayer, as taught, sung, and accompanied by Mark David Buckles. "May I (\*you, we, all) be filled with loving kindness; may I\* be well. May I\* be peaceful and at ease; and may I\* be happy."
- ["The Lone Wild Bird" \(GoogleDrive\)](#) (#15 in *Singing the Living Tradition*; words by H.R. MacFayden, tune from William Walker's *Southern Harmony*, based on Harmony by Thomas Somerville.) Adapted & arranged by Nylea L. Butler-Moore. Video by the UU Virtual Singers of the Unitarian Church of Los Alamos, NM; Nylea Butler-Moore, Music Director; Rick Bolton, AV Engineer. If you use this video, please email Nylea at nyleab@uulosalamos.org. [Pay-what-you-can to the Unitarian Church of Los Alamos.](#)
- ["Abide with Me" \(Vimeo\)](#) (#101 in *Singing the Living Tradition*; music by William Henry Monk, verses 1-2 by Henry Francis Lyre, verse 3 by Rev. Erika Hewitt). Guitar and singing by [Lea Morris](#). [Pay-what-you-can to Lea.](#)
- ["Lead the Way" \(on trusting Love\) by Lea Morris.](#) Purchase info, music notation, chart & SATB choral arrangement: <https://www.thisislea.com/shop/p/leadthewaybandchoir>
- ["My Life Flows On in Endless Song" \(Vimeo\)](#) (#108 in *Singing the Living Tradition*; Quaker text paired with melody written by American Baptist minister Robert Wadsworth Lowry). Piano and melodica by Michael Frye-Hunt; vocals by Dorothy Frye-Hunt.
- ["Spirit of Life" \(GoogleDrive\)](#) (#123 in *Singing the Living Tradition*; music and words by Carolyn McDade, harmony by Grace Lewis-McLaren.) Choral arrangement by Nylea L. Butler-Moore. Video by the UU Virtual Singers of the Unitarian Church of Los Alamos, NM; Nylea Butler-Moore, Music Director; Rick Bolton, AV Engineer. If you use this video, please email Nylea at nyleab@uulosalamos.org. [Pay-what-you-can to the Unitarian Church of Los Alamos.](#)

- ["Come, Sing a Song with Me" \(YouTube\)](#) as an animal puppet video (#346 in *Singing the Living Tradition*; music and words by Carolyn McDade). Created by MaryJane Wagner for an intergenerational service.
- ["Open My Heart" \(YouTube\)](#) (words & music by Henry S. Flurry; #1013 in *Singing the Journey*). Performed by Susan T. Mashiyama. If you use this song, [please share that info with Henry Flurry](#) as a form of connection and affirmation.
- ["Woyaya" \(YouTube\)](#) (words & music by Loughy Amoa, Solomon Amarfio, Robert M. Bailey, Roy Bedeau, Francis T. Osei, Whendell K. Richardson, and Mac Tontoh; #1020 in *Singing the Journey*). Created by Paul Thompson (Music Director at the UU Church of the Palouse, Moscow ID). Please make a pay-what-you-can [donation](#).
- ["Lean on Me \(MP4\)"](#) (words & music by Bill Withers; #1021 in *Singing the Journey*). Created by the Minnesota Valley UU Fellowship.
- ["Count on Me" \(YouTube\)](#) by Bruno Mars, covered by musicians from First Unitarian Brooklyn Choir; Adam Podd, Director of Music. Adam's PayPal ID: adampodd@gmail.com/Venmo: @adampodd. *This is an ASCAP song, requiring a WorshipCast or other applicable license.*

## Contemporary Suggestions

*If you are streaming your services/are hybrid, please note that all copyright permissions are your responsibility to obtain*

- "A Matter of Trust" by Billy Joel
- "Count on Me" by Bruno Mars
- "You've Got a Friend" by Carole King
- "Stand by Me" by Ben E. King
- "Bridge Over Troubled Water" by Simon and Garfunkel
- "True Colors" by Cyndi Lauper

*Important Note: The artists listed above generally are the performers of the works and not always/necessarily the songwriters, please do your due diligence in seeking out crediting info. Many of the above songs can be found on JWPepper, MusicNotes.com and the Chords/Tabs for most of the above can be found here:*

[Ultimate Guitar - Ukulele Chords/Tabs - Free to Transpose - Chordify](#)

*Another Note About Contemporary Music: For our small group packets, we put together a contemporary music playlist for each month. While these playlists are designed as personal musical meditations on the themes, some of the songs on these playlists could be used in worship.*

*You can explore these playlists on our website, by clicking [HERE](#).*

## Music From the AUUMM Online Database

The wonderful leadership of the AUUMM (Association for UU Music Ministries) have added our monthly themes to the AUUMM music database. It's a great way to get music suggestions from UUs all around the country. If you're still looking for more options, this is a great resource! Here is the link to the database:

<https://www.auumm.org/page/database>

## Soul Matters Music Leader Support

*In addition to monthly music suggestions in our worship packets, we support subscribing music leaders with a monthly brainstorm call and Facebook group:*

### **Monthly Online Musicians' Brainstorming Group**

On the **second Tuesday of every month at 2pm ET/1pm CT/noon MT/11am PT**, Soul Matters musicians meet for an hour-long Zoom call to share additional music ideas and help each other with advanced planning. The discussions focus on music for 2 and 3 months ahead to allow lead time for music purchase and rehearsals. **Recordings** of these monthly music brainstorming calls are available [HERE](#).

No need to sign up in advance, just join as you are able using this Zoom link:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/5857099120>

### **Soul Matters Music Leader Support Facebook Group**

We also have a Soul Matters Musicians Facebook group. This is for on-going sharing among Soul Matters musicians, as well as a place where we share announcements about packets, new music resources and music-related webinars. Click [HERE](#) to view and join.

# Stories For All Ages

## Wisdom Tales

*(Versions adapted for easier telling are found in our March Soul Matters upper elementary packets)*

- [The Little Engine That Could](#)
- [The Empty Pot](#)
- [Lost in the Desert](#)
- [The Broken Pot](#) on "Kintsugi" and Golden Repair
- [The Lion and the Mouse](#)

## Story Books

- **The Koala Who Could by Rachel Bright**  
Book: [Here](#)  
Read-Aloud: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VcdVsRfUbjk>
- **I Can Do Hard Things by Gabi Garcia**  
Book: [Here](#)  
Read-Aloud: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=retSVzIJmcQ>
- **The Promise: The Island of Commitment by Suzy Liebermann**  
Book: [Here](#)
- **Making Promises, Making Covenants**  
Story found here: <https://www.uua.org/re/tapestry/children/welcome/session2/118157.shtml>
- **Dolphin's Big Leap by Kimberly Weinberger**  
Book: [Here](#)  
Read-Aloud: [https://www.youtube.com/results?search\\_query=the+little+dolphin%27s+leap+of+faith+read+aloud](https://www.youtube.com/results?search_query=the+little+dolphin%27s+leap+of+faith+read+aloud)
- **Giraffes Can't Dance by Giles Andreae**  
Book: [Here](#)  
Read-Aloud: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1a2Smau\\_Dk](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1a2Smau_Dk)
- **The Berenstain Bears and the Truth by Stan and Jan Berenstain**  
Book: [Here](#)  
Read-Aloud: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4Zqtn9vx6mI>
- **I'm Sorry by Sam McBratney**  
Book: [Here](#)  
Read Aloud: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=J08K8jbe60M>
- **The Magical Yet by Angela DiTerlizzi (Author), Lorena Alvarez (Ill.)**  
Book: [HERE](#)  
Video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=c-owlWJcDXY>

# Sermon Seeds

## *Angles, Ideas & Twists To Get Your Sermon Started!*

Don't forget to explore our small group packet for additional sermon seeds. It contains quotes and poems to enhance your sermon, as well as numerous sermon angles in the questions and the spiritual exercises.

**Permissions Notes:** In addition to the pieces we've noted as permissioned for online use (marked with an asterisk\*), you can use the fair use sized quotes and fair use sized portions of longer pieces in your sermons/services. Pay attention to the hyperlinks we include within titles and authors' names; these hyperlinks provide the source material and direction for you to hunt down permissions on your own.

## On Religious Trust - Faith

### Quote - [Alan Lightman](#)

Faith is the willingness to give ourselves over, at times, to things we do not fully understand.

### Quote - [Rev. Chris Jimmerson](#)

We are a faith without creed. We do not have a proscribed set of beliefs we all share. And unlike our friends of some other faiths, some of us do not believe in some higher power, some being in which we can trust to take care of us and our world. So we root our faith, our trust, in a set of principles and values that we share.

### Reading - **Love Knows You, Rev. Barbara Merritt \***

Full piece found at <https://www.uua.org/worship/words/meditation/love-knows-you>  
[Permission Source](#)

In our prayers, we are "nestling in" with reality, adopting a stance that declares we trust what is "out there" and what is "inside." In moments of meditation we assume a certain confidence, a faith that what is, is ultimately friendly, capable of supporting our life... No matter what befalls, no matter what you become, Love awaits...

### Quote - [Marcus Borg](#)

The Hebrew word for faith in the Old Testament is *emoonah*. What makes that word interesting is that it's the sound that a baby donkey makes when it is calling for its mother. To appreciate that, you have to say *emoonah* so it sounds like that. If you want to hear the meaning of *emoonah*, you need to say it like braying. I sometimes think to myself, if you say it soft, it's almost like braying. The point being that faith in the Hebrew Bible is like a baby donkey calling out or crying for its mother. There's something kind of wonderful about that. There is an element...I don't know if you want to say of desperation in it or not, but there certainly is an element of confidence also that the cry will be heard.

### Quote - [Sharon Salzberg](#)

One of the meanings of "saddha," the word for faith in Pali, is hospitality. Faith is about opening up and making room for even the most painful experiences, the ones where we "take apart the chord" of our suffering to find notes of horror, desolation, and piercing fear. If I could be willing to make room for my aching numbness, and the river of grief it covered, allowing it, even trusting it, I would be acting in faith. Perhaps this is how suffering leads to faith. In times of great struggle, when there is nothing else to rely on and nowhere else to go, maybe it is the return to the moment that is the act of faith. From that point, openness to possibility can arise, willingness to see what will happen, patience, endeavor, strength, and courage. Moment by moment, we can find our way through.



**Quote - [Brene Brown](#)**

I thought faith would say, "I will take away the pain and the discomfort." But what it ended up saying is "I will sit with you in it."

**Quote - [Sharon Salzberg](#)**

Like a subliminal message being played under the predominant music, a sense of possibility, no matter how faint, drives a wedge between the suffering we may wake up with each day and the hopelessness that can try to move in with us on a permanent basis. It inspires us to envision a better life for ourselves. It is this glimmer of possibility that is the beginning of faith.

**Article - [The Shock of Faith: It's Nothing Like I Thought It Would Be, David Brooks](#)**

**Book - [Faith, Hope and Carnage, Nick Cave](#)**

Find a review at <https://www.themarginalian.org/2023/10/07/nick-cave-faith/>

## On Leaps of Faith

**Quote - Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.**

Faith is taking the first step even when you can't see the whole staircase.

**Reflection - [The Edge, Rev. David O Rankin](#)**

Full piece at <https://www.uua.org/worship/words/meditation/edge>

Everything worth doing in the world is a desperate gamble, a game of chance, where nothing is certain.

What is love? Is it not a wild and sublime speculation that can end in ecstasy or despair?

What is courage? Is it not a hazardous risk of fortune that can end in victory or defeat?

What is adventure? Is it not a blind leap in the dark that can end in joy or disaster?...

if I refuse to throw the dice, I am never really alive. I am then only flesh, baking in the sun on a middling plateau, with no view of the valley and no road to the peak.

**Quote - An inscription on the wall of a cellar in Cologne where a number of Jews hid themselves for the entire duration of the war.**

*Background on the quote found [here](#)*

*Full piece found [here](#)*

I believe in the sun even when it is not shining;

I believe in love even when feeling it not;

I believe in God even when he is silent.

# On Trusting Life

## Quote - [Jeanne Harrison Nieuweijarr](#)

God and life are to be trusted – not trusted to shield us from pain and loss and confusion, but trusted to sustain us through such passages, to provide us with all we need to endure till another day. If we can remain open and trusting, if we feel comfortable, we can see that all we need is here.

## Quote/Lyric/Song - [Mary Grigolia](#)

I know this rose will open. I know my fear will burn away. I know my soul will unfurl its wings.

*Related reflection* [HERE](#)

## Poem - First Lesson, Philip Booth

Full poem at <https://thedewdrop.org/2021/12/17/philip-booth-first-lesson/>

Lie back daughter...  
Spread your arms wide...  
and let go...  
lie gently and wide to the light-year  
stars, lie back, and the sea will hold you.

## Poem - Trust, Thomas R. Smit

Full poem found at <https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poems/50109/trust-56d22ce3845d0>

...The package left with the disreputable-looking  
clerk, the check gulped by the night deposit,  
the envelope passed by dozens of strangers—  
all show up at their intended destinations.  
The theft that could have happened doesn't...

And sometimes *you* sense how faithfully your life  
is delivered, even though you can't read the address.

## Poem/Reading - Beyond Sight, Rosemerry Wahtola Trommer

Full piece at <https://ahundredfallingveils.com/2024/08/26/beyond-sight/>

All night  
it went on like this.  
I'd be walking and then  
I'd be flying and then  
I'd be falling and then  
I'd be caught, until finally,  
by morning, we couldn't say  
that it wasn't disconcerting,  
but we could say I  
had become more fluent  
in this strange upheaval.  
We could say I  
had begun to trust  
the same hand that tossed me  
would catch me...

### Poem/Reading - Growing Trust, Rosemerry Wahtola Trommer

Full piece at <https://ahundredfallingveils.com/2021/12/08/growing-trust/>

Now since I've tasted trust in life  
why would I ever  
slip again into armor?...  
But I have fallen in love with life  
at a time when that might seem impossible,  
and this strange fact alone  
seems enough to remind me  
to ditch the armor,  
to cast wide my arms,  
to unsheath my heart...

### Reflection - Somehow I'm Always Held, Jeff Foster

Full reading at <http://www.awakin.org/read/view.php?tid=2306>

There were times when I thought I'd never make it, times when my dreams had been shattered so thoroughly I couldn't imagine how life could ever go on. Yet it went on, and [so]... I have come to trust life completely, trust even the times when I forget how to trust at all, trust that life doesn't always go according to plan, because there is no plan... somehow I am always held, in a way I cannot explain and do not want to. I may be crushed yet again before too long, I may experience further seemingly insurmountable challenges and heartbreaks, but somehow I am always held...

### Reading/Reflection - [Mark Nepo](#)

It was years ago, but I remember it clearly. I was walking along the shore of a lake in the middle of the day, and there in the sun, a good ten yards out, was a duck curled into itself, asleep. With its slick tufted head tucked into its body, it bobbed peacefully in the lapping of the water. This little scene undid me, for here was an ultimate lesson in trust. Without any intent or knowledge of itself, this little duck, asleep in the womb of the world, was a deep and wordless teacher.

It was obvious that the duck would wake and swim its little patterns on the water, but this little creature's ability to let go so completely allowed its time on Earth to be filled and saturated—if just for a few minutes—with a depth of peace that only surrender can open us to.

Only rarely have I let go this completely, yet those moments of total surrender have thoroughly changed my life. When struck with cancer, I somehow fell from the ledge of my fear and entered the operating room like this little duck. It was the threshold to the other side. When lonely and afraid to reach out, I have somehow collapsed repeatedly into the ocean of another's love, and it has cleansed my weary heart. And in my search now for wisdom to live by, I stumble at times and surrender what I think I know, so completely, that I find myself adrift in a deeper way that is neither wise nor unwise, but simply life-affirming.

### Quote - [Rev. Doug Taylor](#)

While at Pendle Hill, Palmer opened up to his anxiety and talked with others about it. Whenever he did this he would be offered a response that is fairly typical among Quakers: "The way will open, proceed as the way opens." It is a statement of trust, of faith! It says, 'relax, be patient with yourself, and trust that the next step will become clear.' "Proceed as a way opens."

### Quote/Essay/Reading - [Lisa Olivera](#)

...The days get shorter, night grows long;  
I turn toward medicine of song.

The wide unknown reveals itself;  
I turn toward trust within myself.

The rage, it burns up from within.  
I turn toward guidance from my kin.

The ache is tender to the touch;  
I turn toward breath when it's too much...

...I am reminded of the medicine that exists everywhere: in the crisp air on a neighborhood walk. In the voice of a beloved friend. In the willingness to stay with complexity. In the nourishment of a daily herbal infusion. In self-forgiveness. In the texture of a flower petal. In watching the unfolding sunset with awe. In asking for help. In true rest. In stepping into the unknown with not only surrender, but deep trust. In holding both fear and possibility with open palms, letting all of life touch each of them, knowing both are so wildly real. In letting what I have to offer be enough, even when it is so far from being everything. In a single breath. In trying again.

And when what I notice starts to feel overwhelming, scary, difficult, grief-filled, heartbreaking... I can feel it and ask what I might need to turn toward. I can listen to and trust my grandmother's wisdom when I am not sure how to access my own. I can call on guidance from beyond myself. We all can.

### Story - **I Gave Them Death**, Rev. Vanessa Rush Southern

Found in [Miles of Dream](#), a UUA worship resource & Soul Matters "[Common Shelf](#)" Book

. . . I am realizing that I can't take much of this with me. I can pack up my books, but the rest I leave behind. The love I gave, the wisdom we acquired, the fingerprints I left on this place, and its people are so intangible. The most important things we do with our lives we cannot pack and carry. All that we love most we will eventually have to release and trust to the universe. . .

### Quote - [Brian Doyle](#)

All you can do is face the world with quiet grace and hope you make a sliver of difference. Humility does not mean self-abnegation, lassitude, detachment; it's more a calm recognition that you must trust in that which does not make sense, that which is unreasonable, illogical, silly, ridiculous, crazy by the measure of most of our culture. You must trust that you being the best possible you matters somehow. That trying to be an honest and tender parent will echo for centuries through your tribe. That doing your chosen work with creativity and diligence will shiver people far beyond your ken. That being an attentive and generous friend and citizen will prevent a thread or two of the social fabric from unraveling. And you must do all of this with the certain knowledge that you will never get proper credit for it, and in fact the vast majority of things you do right will go utterly unremarked... This is what I know: that the small is huge, that the tiny is vast.

# On Trusting the Process of Waiting

## Quote/Essay - [T. De Los Reyes](#)

Waiting is often seen as an obstacle, something to be endured. But I have come to see it as a gift that allows us to deepen our understanding, to connect more fully with our work and with ourselves.

If you find yourself waiting—whether for inspiration, for the right words, or for a response—let it be a part of your process, a part of your practice. Trust that in the waiting, there is growth, there is understanding, there is grace.

## Poem - Wait, Galway Kinnell

Full poem at <http://www.ayearofbeinghere.com/2014/10/galway-kinnell-wait.html>

Wait, for now.

Distrust everything, if you have to.

But trust the hours. Haven't they  
carried you everywhere, up to now?

Personal events will become interesting again.

Hair will become interesting.

Pain will become interesting.

Buds that open out of season will become lovely again...

## Sermon - Waiting as an Act of Faith, Rev. Jen Crow

<https://www.questformeaning.org/spiritual-themes/waiting-as-an-act-of-faith/>

# On Trusting Uncertainty & the Groundlessness Beneath Our Feet

## Quote - [Rev. Cameron Trimble](#)

What if we trusted that the Divine is already at work, weaving beauty even in the uncertainties? What if we trusted that transformation doesn't happen all at once but step by step, day by day?

This transformation does not wait for perfect conditions. It begins in the messiness of the present moment. It begins with people like us—worried, inspired and sometimes unsure—but willing to take one step forward.

## Quote - Martha Nussbaum

To be a good human being is to have a kind of openness to the world, an ability to trust uncertain things beyond your own control, that can lead you to be shattered in very extreme circumstances for which you were not to blame. That says something very important about the condition of the ethical life: that it is based on a trust in the uncertain and on a willingness to be exposed; it's based on being more like a plant than like a jewel, something rather fragile, but whose very particular beauty is inseparable from that fragility.

## Quote - [Alan Watts](#)

To have faith is to trust yourself to the water. When you swim you don't grab hold of the water, because if you do you will sink and drown. Instead you relax, and float.

## Quote - Madeleine L'Engle

It's a good thing to have all the props pulled out from under us occasionally. It gives us some sense of what is rock under our feet, and what is sand.

### Poem - What Silence Said, Julia Fehrenbacher

Full poem at <https://www.poemhunter.com/poem/what-silence-said/>

This is what silence said to me today:  
Trust what you can't see. Move forward  
despite the wobbly groundlessness  
of I don't know. Breathe, love, create, show up...  
it's all  
a doorway—a hand leading you back  
to grace.

### Quote - Pema Chodron

As I look out of my eyes at the world, I see that a lot of us are just running around in circles pretending that there's ground where there actually isn't any ground. And that somehow, if we could learn to not be afraid of groundlessness, not be afraid of insecurity and uncertainty, it would be calling on an inner strength that would allow us to be open and free and loving and compassionate in any situation. But as long as we keep trying to scramble to get ground under our feet and avoid this uneasy feeling of groundlessness and insecurity and uncertainty and ambiguity and paradox, any of that, then the wars will continue.

## On Trusting the Future & the Long Arc of the Universe

### Quote - [Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.](#)

We shall overcome because the arc of the moral universe is long but it bends toward justice.

### Quote - [Rev. Theodore Parker](#), UU minister

I do not pretend to understand the moral universe. The arc is a long one. My eye reaches but little ways. I cannot calculate the curve and complete the figure by experience of sight. I can divine it by conscience. And from what I see I am sure it bends toward justice.

*Related reflection on Parker's version [here](#)*

### Quote - Rev. Raphael Warnock

Dr. King said the arc of the moral universe is long, but it bends toward justice. It's our job to keep bending the arc.

### Quote - [President Barack Obama](#)

Progress is bumpy. It always has been. But because of dreamers and innovators and strivers and activists, progress has been this nation's hallmark. I'm fond of quoting Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., who said, 'The arc of the moral universe is long, but it bends toward justice.' I believe that. But I also believe that the arc of our nation, the arc of our world, does not bend toward justice, or freedom, or equality, or prosperity on its own. It depends on us, on the choices we make, particularly at certain inflection points in history; particularly when big changes are happening and everything seems up for grabs.

### UU Sermons on this Angle

[The Very Long Arc](#), Rev. Shawn Newton

[The Moral Arc's Messy Middle](#), Rev. Molly Housh Gordon

# On Trusting Ourselves

## Quote - [Author Unknown](#)

A bird sitting on a tree is never afraid of the branch breaking, because her trust is not in the branch but in her own wings.

## Reflection - **How to Trust That You'll Be Okay No Matter What, Leslie Ralph**

Full reflection at <https://tinybuddha.com/blog/trust-youll-okay-no-matter/>

You don't need to see the details to trust that you'll figure them out when the time is right, and... you don't need to know exactly how every piece will play out to know what the most important pieces are... I'm not saying, "Let's all throw caution to the wind from now until forever." Make plans, yes, but there's no need to obsess over the details if the details aren't clear... go ahead, daydream, plan, manifest, make a vision board, or whatever calls to you. Just remember to begin from living and breathing the truth: that you will find a way to be okay no matter what.

I have no idea where I'll be working five years from now, what our house will look like, what we'll do on the weekends, if I'll have lost the baby weight, or if I'll dye my greys, *but I do trust myself to make the call when the time is right*. I don't know all the when's, where's, or even how's, but I do know how I want to feel and what I hold nearest to my heart...

## Quote - **C. JoyBell C.**

I have come to accept the feeling of not knowing where I am going. And I have trained myself to love it. Because it is only when we are suspended in mid-air with no landing in sight, that we force our wings to unravel and alas begin our flight. And as we fly, we still may not know where we are going to. But the miracle is in the unfolding of the wings. You may not know where you're going, but you know that so long as you spread your wings, the winds will carry you.

## Quote - [Sharon Salzberg](#)

To offer our hearts in faith means recognizing that our hearts are worth something, that we ourselves, in our deepest and truest nature, are of value."

## Poem - **The Edge of Doubt, Albert Huffstickler**

Full poem found at <http://www.ayearofbeinghere.com/2015/09/albert-huffstickler-edge-of-doubt.html>

There is always  
that edge of doubt.  
Trust it.  
That's where  
the new things come from...  
where the first light breaks.

## Article - **Why You Can Not Trust Yourself?**

<https://markmanson.net/trust>

# On Trusting Your Gut

**Podcast - Daniel Kahneman on The Importance of Trusting Your Intuition but Delaying It**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LT40PZyXWyg> starts at minute 19:15

**Discussion - Strategic decisions: When can you trust your gut?**

<https://www.mckinsey.com/capabilities/strategy-and-corporate-finance/our-insights/strategic-decisions-when-can-you-trust-your-gut>

“It depends on what you mean by “trust.” If you mean, “My gut feeling is telling me this; therefore I can act on it and I don’t have to worry,” we say you should never trust your gut...”

**Book - Thinking, Fast and Slow, Daniel Kahneman**

Review found [HERE](#)

Overview found [HERE](#)

**Book - The Invisible Gorilla: How Our Intuitions Deceive Us, Christopher Chabris and Daniel Simons**

Review: <https://brettmilam.com/2024/08/20/book-review-the-invisible-gorilla-how-our-intuitions-deceive-us/>

# On Trusting Others

**Quote - [Parker Palmer](#)**

If we are willing to embrace the challenge of becoming whole, we cannot embrace it alone—at least, not for long: we need trustworthy relationships to sustain us, tenacious communities of support, to sustain the journey toward an undivided life.

**Reflection - trust the people, adrienne maree brown**

<https://adriennemareebrown.net/2019/07/01/trust-the-people-2/>

**Video - The Anatomy of Trust, Brené Brown**

<https://brenebrown.com/videos/anatomy-trust-video/>

Trust is built in the small moments not the grand gestures!

**Quote - Walter Anderson**

We’re never so vulnerable than when we trust someone. But paradoxically, if we cannot trust, neither can we find love or joy.

**Quote - Frank Crane**

You may be deceived if you trust too much, but you will live in torment if you don’t trust enough.

**Quote - Ralph Waldo Emerson**

Trust people and they will be true to you; treat them greatly and they will show themselves great.

**Quote - [Charles Feltman](#)**

Trust is choosing to risk making something you value vulnerable to another person’s actions. Distrust [is when] what is important to me is not safe with a person in this situation or in any situation.



**Book - The Science of Trust: Emotional Attunement for Couples, John M. Gottman**

<https://www.amazon.com/Science-Trust-Emotional-Attunement-Couples-ebook/dp/B005459RHI>

Article about the book: <https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/the-older-dad/201303/do-i-trust-you-anymore>

**Research - from [Hidden Brain](#)**

"We'd like to believe that our opinions of other people have nothing to do with how much money they make, but [new research](#) suggests otherwise. In a study that looked at the link between trust and household wealth, researchers found that wealthier people are usually more trusting. But they're also seen as more trustworthy by others. "This culturally widespread negative stereotyping of poorer individuals may contribute to observed patterns of interpersonal trust," the study concludes. In other words, it's not just that wealth makes rich people seem more trustworthy. It's that poverty comes with a stereotype that makes poor people seem less trustworthy— which, of course, only adds another layer to the challenges created by poverty."

**Quote - [adrienne maree brown](#)**

How fast you can move is determined by how much trust you have. And people won't trust you unless you are vulnerable with them.

**Quote - [Deana Ayers](#)**

The success of our organizing depends on relationships that allow for trust, vulnerability and rest. Ignoring the importance of these aspects leaves behind those with the least time, energy, and capacity. We have to embrace the truth that trust, vulnerability, rest, and care don't slow down the work, they help us move at a sustainable pace for everyone in our movements.

**Various Resources - [Claudia Rankine On Trusting Each Other Enough to Have Hard Conversations about Race](#)**

On Being Interview: [How Can I Say This So We Can Stay in This Car Together?](#)

Book - Just Us:

- <https://www.newyorker.com/books/page-turner/the-misspent-insights-of-claudia-rankines-just-us>
- <https://cpl.org/the-art-of-speaking-up-claudia-rankine-delivers-inkubator-keynote/>
- <https://lithub.com/on-the-path-to-understanding-a-conversation-with-claudia-rankine/>

**Story/Reflection - [Heroism at the BART Station](#), Rev. Vanessa Rush Southern**

Found in [Miles of Dream](#), a UUA worship resource & Soul Matters "[Common Shelf](#)" Book

...So, my heroic cousin was on to some hero's secret when he saved a life that day. "All I did was listen and do what the man asked," my cousin says, surprised still by how it all worked out. "All I did was trust that the guy knew what he needed and try and get it to him." Maybe sometimes saving a life is that simple.

**Story/Reflection - [Decatur, Georgia Creeks](#), Atena O. Danner**

Found in [Incantations for Rest](#), UUA worship resource & Soul Matters "[Common Shelf](#)" Book

...How will these children learn to listen, to trust their senses, their instincts, their own heartbeats with mine pulsing loudly in their ears? There's no way but away from my side. Simple necessity. I succumb to this choice with my heart in my throat, testing this vein of faith: Trust that they can find their way over, trust them to make their way home.

# On Repairing Broken Trust

## Quote - [Marilynne Robinson](#)

It is trust that knits up the world...a stuff peculiarly liable to fraying and raveling.

## Quote - Warren Buffett

Trust is like the air we breathe – when it’s present, nobody really notices; when it’s absent, everybody notices.

## Article - **Bouncing Back from Betrayal: 4 Ways to Heal & Rebuild Trust**

<https://solv.co/blog/bouncing-back-from-betrayal-4-ways-to-heal--rebuild-trust>

## Reading/Prayer - **The Promise and the Practice: Repairing a Broken Trust, Rev. Connie Simon \***

Full piece found at <https://www.uua.org/worship/words/prayer/promise-and-practice-pastoral-prayer-1>  
[Permission Source](#)

Excerpt: “We gather in awareness of the opportunity before us... We have been given many chances before today to heal the wounds of the racism and oppression that have beset our denomination for many years and held us back from realizing the inherent worth and dignity of all Unitarian Universalists. We have made some progress, but we still have a long way to go.... We pray for resilience and determination... to make mistakes and to keep trying...”

## Quote - [Tara Owens](#)

Trusting another doesn’t mean believing that they will never hurt or fail you. Instead, it means believing that the other person doesn’t *want* to hurt or fail you—that they want to best for you, and that they genuinely care for you.

## Quote - [Martha Nussbaum](#)

Trust, by contrast, involves opening oneself to the possibility of betrayal, hence to a very deep form of harm. It means relaxing the self-protective strategies with which we usually go through life, attaching great importance to actions by the other over which one has little control. It means, then, living with a certain degree of helplessness.

## Poem - **Blessing for the Brokenhearted, Jan Richardson**

Full poem found at <http://paintedprayerbook.com/2014/02/10/a-blessing-for-the-brokenhearted/>

“Perhaps for now  
it can be enough  
to simply marvel  
at the mystery  
of how a heart  
so broken  
can go on beating...  
as if it trusts  
that its own  
persistent pulse  
is the rhythm  
of a blessing  
we cannot  
begin to fathom  
but will save us  
nonetheless.”

### **Video - How to Build and Re-build Trust, Frances Frei**

[https://www.ted.com/talks/frances\\_frei\\_how\\_to\\_build\\_and\\_rebuild\\_trust](https://www.ted.com/talks/frances_frei_how_to_build_and_rebuild_trust)

Now, trust, if we're going to rebuild it, we have to understand its component parts. The component parts of trust are super well understood. There are three things about trust. If you sense that I am being authentic, you are much more likely to trust me. If you sense that I have real rigor in my logic, you are far more likely to trust me. And if you believe that my empathy is directed towards you, you are far more likely to trust me. When all three of these things are working, we have great trust. But if any one of these three gets shaky, if any one of these three wobbles, trust is threatened.

### **Quote - Attribution unclear, some name Friedrich Nietzsche as the author**

I'm not upset that you lied to me, I'm upset that from now on I can't believe you.

### **Quote - Stephen King**

The trust of the innocent is the liar's most useful tool.

## **On Declining Trust in institutions and Our Public Life**

### **TED Talk - We've stopped trusting institutions and started trusting strangers, Rachel Botsman**

[https://www.ted.com/talks/rachel\\_botsman\\_we\\_ve\\_stopped\\_trusting\\_institutions\\_and\\_started\\_trusting\\_strangers?subtitle=en](https://www.ted.com/talks/rachel_botsman_we_ve_stopped_trusting_institutions_and_started_trusting_strangers?subtitle=en)

### **Reading/Interview - Is there hope for America's institutions?**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TVRvjsgW4Sc&t=602s>

The thing that really concerns me is the polarization in trust. It used to be that the level of trust was the same between Republicans and Democrats and so if an institution was distrusted, Democrats distrusted it and Republicans distrusted it, or if it was trusted, both partisan groups trusted it. Now it's a situation where for most groups, there's one group that trusts it and another group that distrusts it. So for the military, police, religion and big business, Republicans trust those institutions. Democrats do not. For labor, journalism, higher education, science and a bunch of others, it's Democrats who trust them. So we have this bifurcation, this polarization, this difference in levels of trust between the partisan groups... And this is worrisome because this is not an America that will stay together...

### **Essay - The next US civil war is already here – we just refuse to see it**

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2022/jan/04/next-us-civil-war-already-here-we-refuse-to-see-it>

## **On Mistrusting Our Political Opponents**

### **Article - We've Misunderstood Human Nature for 100 Years**

<https://www.nytimes.com/2024/12/22/opinion/human-nature-polarization-predator.html>

There is a glaring problem, however, with the widespread assumption that humans are predators by nature: It's wrong... Bearing in mind that our species is by nature more prey than predator is a good rule of thumb when interacting with people — and it could help soothe today's intense political animosity by increasing our sympathy for the other side. Just as you vote to protect yourself and your family, so do those who vote differently. The next time you feel angry at your political opponents, pause to think about how they might feel threatened.

**Book - Strangers in Their Own Land: Anger and Mourning on the American Right, Arlie Russell Hochschild**

<https://thenewpress.com/books/strangers-their-own-land>

Excerpt [here](#)

**Interview - Arlie Russell Hochschild on Stolen Pride and the Rise of the Right**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=f5a61xoHP04>

**Book - Outraged: Why We Fight About Morality and Politics and How to Find Common Ground**

<https://www.amazon.ca/dp/0593317432?tag=prhca-20>

A new perspective on the moral mind that rewrites our understanding of where moral judgments come from, and how we can overcome the mistrust and outrage that so often politically divide us.

Related podcast [here](#)

## On Trust found in UU History

Rev. Michelle Collins, [Soul Matters Worship Researcher](#)

The practice of trust has deep roots in UU history, particularly in the movement's emphasis on religious freedom and the democratic process. Early Unitarians and Universalists trusted individuals to seek truth for themselves, rejecting authoritarian creeds and doctrines. This trust was evident in the 1568 Edict of Torda, where King John Sigismund of Transylvania declared the first legal recognition of religious freedom, trusting in people's ability to choose their faith without coercion, and specified Unitarian tradition as one of the recognized religions.

Similarly, early Universalists trusted in the ultimate reconciliation of all souls, emphasizing the boundless love of God instead of fear or judgment. These theological and historical commitments to freedom and love reflect an enduring trust in human agency and in the divine.

Trust also shaped the governance and structure of Unitarian Universalist congregations, emphasizing the democratic process and shared leadership. From the Cambridge Platform of 1648, which affirmed the autonomy of each congregation, to the mid-20th-century merger of the Unitarian and Universalist traditions, the history of Unitarian Universalism demonstrates a consistent reliance on covenant and cooperation. By placing decision-making in the hands of members, UUism has consistently trusted individuals to discern the needs of their communities and to act in service of shared values. This historical emphasis on democratic participation highlights the practice of trust as central to both the governance and theology of Unitarian Universalism.

*A New Effort!*

## Interfaith Angles on Trust

We've begun exploring how new AI research tools can support our efforts to identify interfaith beliefs and practices related to our monthly themes. To that end, we've put together a list of interfaith perspectives/angles on this month's theme of trust. The goal is to provide you with concise information that will help you discern ideas and practice you want to explore in more depth.

Here's the link to our interfaith research on trust:

[https://docs.google.com/document/d/1E3dCb-K06K9h-Hyy6oCKSVU\\_tmQx0oxD6rqFxgr71bg/edit?usp=sharing](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1E3dCb-K06K9h-Hyy6oCKSVU_tmQx0oxD6rqFxgr71bg/edit?usp=sharing)

# Recommended Sermons

## Notes about these recommended sermons:

- **Permissions Secured:** All of the sermons below have received permission for your online use. Unless otherwise noted, they can be used/read in both live streaming and recorded services that are posted on YouTube or a podcast. **However, to be extra cautious and in good relationship, we ask that you reach out to the minister to let them know you are planning to use their sermon. Also be sure to ask if they have any particular requests or guidance for how to do that.**
- **An Important Note About Editing:** If you want to make changes to the sermon for brevity or context, **you must reach out to the preachers directly for such editing permission.** Contact information of each of the referenced preachers is listed after the list of sermons.
- **We mostly list written scripts:** In order not to undermine UU preachers who depend on live and online guest preaching income for their livelihood, we mainly focus on sharing sermon texts (and sometimes audio clips), but not videos. When, on occasion, we include a video sermon, it will be from congregations that share those as part of their mission.
- **Note about hiring preachers for online guest preaching:** All of the texts listed below can be used and *read* in your worship services for free. And, in some cases, the preachers of these sermons are glad to be hired to guest preach and give these sermons at your congregation either by zooming into your service or sending you a video recording of them giving it. When this is the case, there is a note under the sermon title/link with the preacher's contact information.

### Trusting Yourself, Rev. Dr. Sandra Fees

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/13yQXNz1QLbvR3efmkGMTyV62DuNcNqXS/edit?usp=sharing&oid=101245613595157190644&rtpof=true&sd=true>

“Rather than being about getting it right every time, what if trusting oneself has to do with the ability to bounce back, to be resilient, and to overcome a slip up or failure?... To trust oneself has to be based in something more than having a perfect track record. To trust oneself has to do with coming to believe that we will find a way to be okay even when we get it wrong. It has to do with having the courage to learn, to grow, and to trust again...”

*Note: Rev. Fees is available to offer this sermon as a video recording or by Zooming into your service as a virtual guest preacher for a fee. If you are interested, you can contact Rev. Fees at [sandrarfees@gmail.com](mailto:sandrarfees@gmail.com)*

### Surrender Like a Duck, Rev. Dr. Sandra Fees

[https://docs.google.com/document/d/1u4K\\_wgDCbA8if-5LMWikDf7t9agnBOdY/edit?usp=sharing&oid=101245613595157190644&rtpof=true&sd=true](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1u4K_wgDCbA8if-5LMWikDf7t9agnBOdY/edit?usp=sharing&oid=101245613595157190644&rtpof=true&sd=true)

“Change can make us feel so vulnerable. But change also means that things are still possible. Change creates opportunities – both good and bad. New beginnings emerge from past losses. As some dreams come to an end, the excitement of new ventures arises... The atrocities in the world call for compassion. Trust means realizing how to embrace these opportunities and make something of whatever situations confront us...”

*Note: Rev. Fees is available to offer this sermon as a video recording or by Zooming into your service as a virtual guest preacher for a fee. If you are interested, you can contact Rev. Fees at [sandrarfees@gmail.com](mailto:sandrarfees@gmail.com)*

### Trust: The Heart of Beloved Community, Rev. Angeline C. Jackson

[https://drive.google.com/file/d/1ZschcUOZuzJPYNw6VOIV\\_EkiixSKsCPP/view?usp=drive\\_link](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1ZschcUOZuzJPYNw6VOIV_EkiixSKsCPP/view?usp=drive_link)

“Like paper cuts to the soul...Each incident chipped away at the trust in the relationship until a final betrayal so profound shattered what little trust remained. I walked away and never looked back. I didn't wish them ill, but I never wanted to see them again. That experience taught me something crucial about trust - it's built in small moments of truth and destroyed in small moments of betrayal... [And] this story isn't just about romantic relationships. It's about any community where people need to trust each other...”

### **Buddhist Perspectives on Faith: Trusting the Light Within, Rev. Dr. Tess Baumberger**

[https://drive.google.com/file/d/1YA9V4g7WMhwcbRBUz1b\\_lNeV-RQOOBmz/view?usp=drive\\_link](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1YA9V4g7WMhwcbRBUz1b_lNeV-RQOOBmz/view?usp=drive_link)

“This is a comforting thought – that always as we move, even if we feel our path is taking us to the outer edges, even when we cannot see it, each step is actually taking us closer to the center, to the goal. With each step we “faithed,” placing our hearts upon that ideal and trusting in our own deepest experience, and the helping hands around us, to take us where we need to be. This understanding of faith is one I can embrace...”

### **Trust Me, Rev. Rod Richards**

[https://docs.google.com/document/d/1\\_SyHKXQSEdeR0yBj-g2DwzHaWTFUhdM/edit?usp=sharing&oid=101245613595157190644&rtpof=true&sd=true](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1_SyHKXQSEdeR0yBj-g2DwzHaWTFUhdM/edit?usp=sharing&oid=101245613595157190644&rtpof=true&sd=true)

“Covenant begins with extending trust and respect. It is not based on whether or not we can prove such trust is warranted for each individual. It is not based on the idea that we will each live out the covenant perfectly. It is based on the fact that, as members, we have all accepted our covenants as an articulation of our aspirations for how we wish to be together. It is based on the idea that trust is not created individually but instead is rooted in the idea that we are better together; that we create trust together...”

### **Embracing [& Trusting] the Sacred Threshold: The Gift of Liminal Space, Rev. D’Vorah Kelley**

[https://docs.google.com/document/d/17ANAlmW9v8mKwVUamjgAtSN0SRzJ5Ejk/edit?usp=drive\\_link&oid=101245613595157190644&rtpof=true&sd=true](https://docs.google.com/document/d/17ANAlmW9v8mKwVUamjgAtSN0SRzJ5Ejk/edit?usp=drive_link&oid=101245613595157190644&rtpof=true&sd=true)

“I’ve learned that it’s okay when I feel like I don’t know exactly where my path is taking me. To be honest, it can actually be quite exhilarating. I can take a deep breath and trust that I’m where I need to be, and that when I listen deeply enough, the right answers will come...”

### **Trusting in Abundance & Listening to the Seeds, Rev. Kaaren Anderson**

[https://docs.google.com/document/d/1gisyHJ4W8PvmvRCLj5EZETr3TWkDZfi6/edit?usp=drive\\_link&oid=101245613595157190644&rtpof=true&sd=true](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1gisyHJ4W8PvmvRCLj5EZETr3TWkDZfi6/edit?usp=drive_link&oid=101245613595157190644&rtpof=true&sd=true)

I have friends who are organic farmers. They ran a very successful regional organic/heirloom seed business for a decade. This summer, they shut it down. As in, they are done with the capitalistic, market economy and all it represents. They are now participating in the “gift economy.” Their journey taught me a lesson in understanding a trust that encompasses self, the earth, and one’s community, what might also be called a trust in abundance for us all.

*Note: Rev. Anderson is available to offer this sermon as a video recording or by Zooming into your service as a guest preacher for a fee. If you are interested, you can contact Rev. Anderson at [uurevkaaren@gmail.com](mailto:uurevkaaren@gmail.com)*

## **Featured Preacher Bios & Contact Information**

- Rev. Dr. Sandra Fees: [sandrarfees@gmail.com](mailto:sandrarfees@gmail.com)
- Rev Angeline C. Jackson: <https://uudavis.org/about-us-2/our-minister-and-staff/>
- Rev. Dr. Tess Baumberger: <https://www.uuessex.org/about-us/our-minister/>
- Rev. Rod Richards: [https://uuslo.org/staff\\_member/rod-richards](https://uuslo.org/staff_member/rod-richards)
- Rev. D’Vorah Kelley: [dvorahc.kelley@gmail.com](mailto:dvorahc.kelley@gmail.com)
- Rev. Kaaren Anderson: <https://fpbuu.org/rev-kaaren-anderson-interim-minister/>

# Closing & Chalice Extinguishing Words

## **In the Small Moments...\***

*Rev. Angeline C. Jackson*

[Permission Secured by Soul Matters](#)

May we remember that trust, like love, grows in small moments,  
In promises kept and confidences held,  
In boundaries respected and amends made,  
In showing up again and again.  
May we be brave enough to risk trust,  
Patient enough to build it slowly,  
And gentle with ourselves and others when it breaks.  
Amen.

## **What to Do in the Darkness**

*Marilyn McEntyre*

Full piece at

<http://www.ayearofbeinghere.com/2013/12/marilyn-mcentyre-what-to-do-in-darkness.html>

Go slowly...

Practice trust

Watch for dawn.

## **When Times Are Dark**

*Fred LaMotte*

Full piece found at

<https://lifeacousticandamplified.com/2018/10/>

When times are dark  
the way becomes clear.  
Trust in your breath.  
Rest in your heart.  
Bow to the stranger...

## **Wild Waters\***

*Chad A. Snyder*

[Permission Secured by Soul Matters](#)

These waters, they never stay calm  
Not for long  
Because they are teaming with the stuff of life  
The energy of our being washes over and around us  
Let us brace each other when we need to stand  
against those currents  
And let us hold hands when what we need  
Is to relax into the waves, riding them together

## **Go with Trust\***

*Rev. Scott Tayler*

[Permission secured by Soul Matters](#)

May we go out today  
with trust in the tenderness that so often arrives to  
hold us in our pain,  
with confidence in the courage that arises from  
within but is not fully our own doing,  
and with faith in the larger love that never ends and  
never lets us go.

## **A First Step Faith\***

**Rev. Scott Tayler**

*Based on the words of MLK: "Faith is taking the first step  
even when you can't see the whole staircase."*

[Permission secured by Soul Matters](#)

Go with faith,  
not the kind that is called to move mountains,  
but the quieter sort  
that calls us to take the first step  
even when the whole staircase sits beyond our  
view.  
As we stride toward the unseen  
may we notice that the way unfolds only as we risk  
traveling it.  
And may we remember and trust  
that none of these steps are ones we take alone.  
Amen

## Worship Leader Support

Join the Soul Matters Worship Leader Support Facebook Page:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/soulmatterssharingcircle/>

Join the Soul Matters Ministers' Support Facebook Page:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/719788338192570/>

**Attend one of our two monthly online ministers' brainstorming groups:**

First Tuesdays and First Thursdays of each month at 1pm eastern time  
with this zoom link: <https://zoom.us/j/5857099120>

**Attend our monthly online musicians' brainstorming group:**

On the second Tuesday of every month at 2pm eastern time  
with this zoom link: <https://zoom.us/j/5857099120>

## Inspiration

**Our Facebook Inspiration Page:**

<https://www.facebook.com/soulmatterssharingcircle/>

**Our Instagram Page:**

Find us as "soul\_matters\_circle"

**Music Playlists:**

Click [here](#) for links to the [Spotify playlists](#) for each month.

Click [here](#) to check out the [YouTube playlists](#).



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