

## *Memorial Day Remembrance*

*A Worship Service by the REV. JEFF BRIERE*

*Unitarian Universalist Church of Chattanooga*

*May 29, 2011*

Good morning and welcome to the Unitarian Universalist Church of Chattanooga. My name is Jeff Briere and I am the minister of this church. Let's begin with Hymn 396, "I Know This Rose Will Open." This is a round, so we'll do our regular round thing with it. Kate plays the melody so we remember it, then we sing it once all together, then break into three groups and we'll sing it three times as a round. Watch the section leader in front of you for direction.

### *HYMN 396, I Know This Rose Will Open*

I know this rose will open  
I know my fears will drift away  
I know my soul will unfurl its wings  
I know this rose will open

### *GREETINGS*

**MINISTER. Thanks so much** for joining us in worship today. We hope you find the service rewarding and that you leave here inspired and uplifted. And thank you so much for helping to create a reverent atmosphere during *Connections*.

If you have a particular **joy or sorrow** or something you'd like added to the prayer of the people, please clearly write it on an index card and drop it in the basket back there. You may sign it or not, as you wish.

I need to bring a couple of things to your attention. First, after the service today, we will **re-dedicate the Memorial Garden**. Every

year, we use water collected at our Water Communion to re-dedicate the garden. Please gather at the front door about ten minutes after the service and we'll walk down together.

Noted guitarist and UU hymn composer **Jim Scott** creates a Circle of Sound right here on Sunday, June 5<sup>th</sup> at 6 pm. He wrote "Gather the Spirit, No. 347 in our hymnal. For the concert, a donation of \$10 would be appreciated, and that's a bargain, I can assure you. Prior to the concert, Jim will lead a 2-hour guitar workshop, so tell all your guitar-picking friends. See Sandy Kurtz for more information and to register for the workshop.

On the following Saturday morning, June 11<sup>th</sup>, we will sponsor a workshop on **Wrapping Up Your Life**. It's not as bad as it sounds, really. There are some very important issues you should address before the end of your life, and now, when you can think straight, is the time to do it. I'm talking about wills, living wills, healthcare power of attorney, Do Not Resuscitate Orders and other considerations that will make your exit as graceful and stress-free as possible. That's Saturday at 9:30, June 11. There's a registration roster on the door next to the kitchen.

Please check out these two events and others in **the complete listing of announcements** included with the bulletin. The best way to find out what's happening around here is to sign up for a weekly e-mail. To do that, please see Chris in the office.

The children have been rehearsing with Kay McCurdy since January and have taught her everything she knows about music and bell-ringing. Today they are pleased to present "Circle of Life" from *The Lion King*. This song was chosen especially for today as it expresses a truth; that we all live in a cycle of life and death.

### *PRELUDE: Circle of Life*

LIGHTING THE CHALICE

Pam, Bart & Avery Johnson, would you light our chalice, please?  
This is a responsive reading, your words are in italics.

From the loneliness of troubled times, we come  
*To discover that we are not alone.*

Into the dwelling place of togetherness, we come  
*To collect remnants of hope.*

From fear that all is lost, we come  
*To discover what will save us.*

Into the comfort of each other's arms, we come  
*To feel the strength that has not yet vanished.*

From darkness, we come  
*To wait until our eyes begin to see.*

Into the refuge of fading dreams, we come  
*To remove illusions and focus new visions.*

From despair that walks alone, we come  
*To travel together.*

Into the dwelling place of generations, we come  
*To pledge allegiance to being peace  
and doing justice.*

*STORY: Making Pearls*

Do you know what these are? Right. Pearls. They're beautiful,  
aren't they?

Who can tell me where pearls come from? That's right—pearls come  
from oysters, which live in the ocean. You ever seen an oyster?  
Here's a picture of an oyster. We're looking at the flat side; the  
bottom side is shaped more like a cup.

But you don't find single oysters. You find them in what are called  
oyster bars or beds. Here's one at low tide. Oysters live in colonies  
and they suck in the sea water, eat what they like and spit out the rest.  
In that way, they filter the water, making it cleaner.

This is the way we usually see oysters. These are oysters on the  
half-shell and I love them. You pop them open with a special knife  
like this. This knife has a fat handle, so your wrist can generate a lot  
of torque, and the tip is bent just a little. The knife is designed to  
make opening the oysters easier. And you eat them with a spicy  
sauce and soda crackers.

Do you know how oysters make pearls?

I'll tell you the story, but first let me ask you—have any of you ever  
gotten something in your eye, like a grain of sand? Hurts, right?  
Very uncomfortable. So what happens when you get something in  
your eye? What do your eyes do when you get a grain of sand in  
them? That's right—they form tears to try to wash the sand out and  
get rid of it.

Well, oysters do something very similar.

When an oyster gets a grain of sand inside his shell, it is  
uncomfortable, just like in your eye. So the oyster excretes a soft,  
shiny, pearly white substance to cover the grain of sand so it won't  
be so rough and irritating. The oyster puts on one layer after another  
of this substance working against the irritant until finally, you  
guessed it—a beautiful white pearl is made. Sometimes, more than  
one, like this. This oyster made several pearls.

You know, it is sort of that way with you and me. We can make something beautiful with our lives, every part of our lives. It takes some work, but it's worth it.

History shows us that humans create some of the most beautiful things after some kind of trouble or great challenge.

No one has a perfect life free of trouble. Everyone has some sort of irritant, like a grain of sand in an oyster. Everyone faces a challenge sooner or later. So when trouble or disappointment comes your way, when you get a life-irritant, remember the oyster, which takes the trouble and turns it into something beautiful.

Thanks for listening to my story about pearls, and remember that you can make a pearl out of the troubles in your life. You can go to your classes now.

*CHILDREN'S RECEPTIONAL*

We hold you in our love  
as you go, as you go  
May your heart  
be at peace as you go.

To nurture the spark  
of your precious life  
We hold you in our love  
as you go.

*OFFERTORY*

*Sergei Rachmaninoff: Romance*

Anyone here know the name Birgit Nilsson? She was a Swedish soprano celebrated for her Wagnerian interpretations. She died in 2005. Here she is as Lady Macbeth. *C'est formidable, n'est-ce pas?*

Formidable, no? Here's another, more flattering photo of her.

She did not get along with Herbert Von Karajan, the director of the Vienna Staatsoper. Once she was negotiating a contract with von Karajan, when a string of pearls she was wearing broke and scattered all over the floor. Von Karajan and several others who were present got down on their knees to search for the pearls. "We must find everyone of them," von Karajan said. "These are the expensive pearls that Miss Nilsson buys with her high fees from the Metropolitan."

"No," Miss Nilsson replied. "These are just imitation ones, which I buy with my low fees from the Vienna Opera."

When Nilsson started singing *Aida* at the Met, soprano Zinka Milanov was miffed; *Aida* had been her role. After one performance in which Nilsson was singing, Milanov stole a Rolls Royce Nilsson had hired for after the performance. When asked about this afterwards, Milanov said, "If Madame Nilsson takes my roles, I must take her Rolls."

Other directors noticed she was prickly at best. Rudolph Bing was once asked if Nilsson was difficult to work with. "On the contrary," said Bing, "she's very easy to work with. You put enough money in, and beautiful sounds come out."

We'll collect the morning offering now for the support ministry of this church, and we're very easy to work with. You just put enough money in and...well, please be generous when the plate comes your way. If you have a pledge payment, please mark it as such. As always, the Wood-Wilhoit Memorial Food Bank is happy to accept your donations of non-perishable food and household items for the Community Kitchen. The collection basket for that is by the front door. If you wish to light a personal candle of joy or sorrow, you may step up here and Mary Hunter will assist you.



Eternal Spirit of life and love, we are profoundly thankful for the blessings we experience today. Would that we recognize our blessings every day and remember to be thankful for them.

Christina—and Jesse—please lead us in our Hymn of Thanksgiving.

*HYMN OF THANKSGIVING*

Oh, we give thanks, for this precious day,  
For all gathered here, and those far away,  
For this time we share, with love and care,  
Oh, we give thanks, for this precious day.

*ORISON*

*Dona Nobis Pacem. Give Us Peace. Dona Nobis Pacem.*

Several years ago, on a Sunday near Veteran's Day, the congregation wrote the names of their family members who served in the Armed Forces on streamers of white ribbon. Maddie Kertay took the ribbon and paired it with streamers of purple ribbon and photos of the veterans and made the Veteran's Memorial for that alcove right over there. We installed it the following Memorial Day. I urge you to visit it and if you wish to add a veteran's name or photo, please let me know.

Stephen Spender was an Englishman, born in 1909. He wrote the poem that is mounted on the wall next to the Veterans Memorial. We put the poem there on the wall because it seemed to reflect something important about Memorial Day. Spender recalls writing the poem when he was about 21 and in those days, he said, his thoughts drifted toward Beethoven, Sergei Eisenstein and D.H. Lawrence. That poem is my prayer on this Memorial Day.

I think continually of those who were truly great.

Who, from the womb, remembered the soul's history  
Through corridors of light where the hours are suns  
Endless and singing. Whose lovely ambition  
Was that their lips, still touched with fire,  
Should tell of the Spirit clothed from head to foot in song.  
And who hoarded from the Spring branches  
The desires falling across their bodies like blossoms.

What is precious is never to forget  
The essential delight of the blood drawn from ageless springs  
Breaking through rocks in worlds before our earth.  
Never to deny its pleasure in the morning simple light  
Nor its grave evening demand for love.  
Never to allow gradually the traffic to smother  
With noise and fog the flowering of the spirit.

Near the snow, near the sun, in the highest fields  
See how these names are fêted by the waving grass  
And by the streamers of white cloud  
And whispers of wind in the listening sky.  
The names of those who in their lives fought for life  
Who wore at their hearts the fire's center.  
Born of the sun they traveled a short while towards the sun,  
And left the vivid air singed with their honor.

Thou, which are everywhere,  
Many are your names.  
May we always feel your presence,  
May your wisdom guide us,  
In our deeds as well as in our dreams.  
May we have what sustains our body and soul;  
Lead us first to forgive the mistakes of others  
Even as we hope our own mistakes will soon be forgiven.  
May we resist the temptation of the quick and easy,  
And be delivered from that which demeans and destroys life.  
May we live purposefully and joyfully

in every moment, in every encounter,  
now, and in the time to come.

During this time of silence let us hold close to our hearts those who  
strive everyday to make the world a better place, but let us never  
forget those who suffer the fallout of war.

*Dona Nobis Pacem. Give Us Peace. Dona Nobis Pacem.*

RESPONSE

When our heart is in a holy place  
When our heart is in a holy place  
We are blessed with love and amazing grace  
When our heart is in a holy place

HERE

Here may no one be altogether a stranger,  
no honesty of thought ignored,  
no depth of feeling dismissed,  
no life belittled, and no life shut out.

Here may clarity of mind and heart  
be humbly treasured,  
brought to bear toward word and person.

Here may fellowship be treasured most of all  
and paths to sustain and renew it  
be sought and found.

Here may growth of spirit be our purpose;  
such understanding as shall lead us  
to make the world a better place.

SERMON: *Dear Remembrance*

Tomorrow is Memorial Day. Used to be May 30<sup>th</sup>, but Congress  
created three-day-weekends in 1971 and moved Memorial Day to  
the last Monday in May. Ever since the end of the Civil War, it was  
known as Decoration Day, and was a time to recall the sacrifices  
made by veterans of the armed services. In recent years, it has  
become a three-day party, a time for auto races, picnics, fireworks,  
shopping trips, patriotic displays and the official start of the summer  
season.

Many people in veterans organizations want the holiday to return to  
its traditional date of May 30. The VFW published this message in  
2002: *Changing the date merely to create a three-day-weekend has  
undermined the very meaning of the day. No doubt, this contributed  
to the public's nonchalant observance of Memorial Day.*

Moving the holiday back to May 30<sup>th</sup> won't happen, I believe.  
Three-day-weekends are way too popular. And if you don't know  
already what people have done with Memorial Day, here are a few  
images I collected from the Internet.

*[Images]*

You know, when you have a three-day-weekend, it's hard to keep  
people from celebrating. So although I think it's a bit unseemly, I  
can understand the picnics, the fireworks and the general party  
atmosphere. I mean, who wants to spend the day thinking about all  
the service men and women who died while on duty? That could get  
depressing. Nonetheless, I think it's important to remember the dead.  
I think that's part of life.

Although the VFW wants Memorial Day to be strictly about those  
who served in the armed forces, it's not shocking to me that this  
holiday morphed into a general homage to all those who died. That  
seems like a natural thing that people would do.

Some people served, some did not. All people live and die. It's not inappropriate to recall all those who died. So in the Orison today, my prayer was offered for the those who died in service to their country, but now, let us recall others who perhaps did not serve.

A few years ago, David Eagleman, a neuroscientist, wrote *Sum, 40 Tales from the Afterlives*. There are forty chapters in the book, each about 300 to 400 words, and each describing a possible afterlife. In one afterlife, you relive all your experiences in carefully categorized groups: you sleep 30 years straight, spend 200 days in the shower, and so forth. In another, you can be whatever you want, including a horse that forgets its original humanity. There are afterlives where you meet God, in one a God who endlessly reads Frankenstein, lamenting the tragic lot of creators.

My favorite afterlife in the book is this:

There are three deaths. The first is when the body ceases to function. The second is when the body is consigned to the grave. The third is that moment, sometime in the future, when your name is spoken for the last time.

So you wait in this huge lobby until the third death. There are long tables with coffee, tea, and cookies; you can help yourself. There are people here from all around the world, and with a little effort you can strike up convivial small talk.

Just be aware that your conversation may be interrupted at any moment by the Callers, who broadcast your name to indicate that there will never again be another remembrance of you by anyone on Earth. When your friend's name is called, she slumps, face like a shattered and reglued plate, saddened even though the Callers tell her kindly that she's off to a better place. No one knows where that better place is or what it offers, because no one exiting through that door has returned to tell us. Tragically, many people leave just as their loved ones arrive, since the loved ones were the only ones doing the

remembering. We all wag our heads at that typical timing.

The whole place looks like an infinite airport waiting area.

Not everyone is sad when the Callers enter the room and shout out the next list of names. On the contrary, some people beg and plead, prostrating themselves at the Callers' feet. These are generally the folks who have been here a long time—too long—especially those who are remembered for unfair reasons.

For example, the farmer who drowned in a small river two hundred years ago. Now his farm is the site of a small college, and the tour guides each week tell his story. So he's stuck and he's miserable. The more his story is told, the more the details drift. He is utterly alienated from his name; it is no longer identical with him but continues to bind.

And that is the curse of this room: since we live in the heads of those who remember us, we lose control of our legacy and become who they want us to be.

That reading comes from *Sum, 40 Tales from the Afterlives*, by David Eagleman. And I think there is something to that little story. Something in there is true, in a very real way. When we remember those who died, they are still alive in our memory, still with us.

The danger is, of course, that we will remember people the way we want to remember them. I suppose that's inevitable, though. We don't remember someone's faults. They are conveniently overlooked. Just look at how conservatives remember Ronald Reagan and how liberals remember the Kennedys.

So let us remember with reverence, if not with total accuracy these people:

Dottie Antman died May 11<sup>th</sup>. She was a member of this church and

a memorial service for her will be Friday.

Leah James died February 5<sup>th</sup>. She was a member of this church. She worked first as a historian and later in social services. She was the Executive Director of Family Service Agency of Chattanooga for 22 years.

Jeanne Young died October 30<sup>th</sup>, last year. She was not a member of this church, but she attended services every week and made regular contributions.

Ray Solomon died August 12<sup>th</sup>, last year. He was one of the founding members of this church. He operated a camera store and helped people develop their photographic skills. He later ran a financial services agency.

I want to mention two people whom I have been unable to mention during this service because I was on sabbatical last Memorial Day.

Nancy Lane Wright died April 21<sup>st</sup>, last year. She was a member of this church. She was an award-winning director and founder of the Dance-Theatre Workshop in Chattanooga. She is remembered for her inspiration and energy.

Bob Kimbro died September 17, 2009. He was not a member of this church, but his wife was and he attended services occasionally. Bob was very involved in local Chattanooga theaters as an actor. He began his career in radio, which gave Bob and me lots to talk about.

Iris Welborn, Jim's mother died just last Sunday. She was a loving wife, mother, grandmother, great-grandmother and friend. She was not a member of this church, but Jim is.

People die every day, but we rarely take notice. That's what this service is all about. In the past year, several people died whom I think we should remember. And since the original meaning of

Memorial Day is to recognize the service members who died in the line of duty, I want to start with Sergeant Wiedorfer.

A brave man died this year. Paul J. Wiedorfer died last Tuesday. I doubt that any of us ever knew him. He was living in Baltimore when he enlisted in the army during World War II. On December 25, 1944, he was serving as a private in Company G, 318<sup>th</sup> Infantry Regiment, 80<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division. On that Christmas Day, near Chaumont, Belgium, Wiedorfer charged alone across 150 yards of open ground and destroyed two German machine gun emplacements. He was subsequently promoted to staff sergeant and, on June 12, 1945, issued the Medal of Honor for his actions during the battle.

The citation reads, in part *Private Wiedorfer, realizing that the platoon advance could not continue until two enemy machine gun nests were destroyed, voluntarily charged alone across the slippery open ground with no protecting cover of any kind. Running in a crouched position, under a hail of enemy fire, he slipped and fell in the snow, but quickly rose and continued forward with the enemy concentrating automatic and small-arms fire on him as he advanced. Miraculously escaping injury, Pvt. Wiedorfer reached a point some 10 yards from the first machine gun emplacement and hurled a hand grenade into it. With his rifle he killed the remaining Germans, and, without hesitation, wheeled to the right and attacked the second emplacement. One of the enemy was wounded by his fire and the other 6 immediately surrendered.*

In 2006, he was quoted in the Baltimore Sun about his Medal of Honor. He said, "Wouldn't it be wonderful if the Medal of Honor didn't exist because there were no wars and we could all live in peace? And that the only way to spell war was love? Wouldn't that be wonderful?"

A bad man died this year. Al Qaeda leader Osama bin Laden, who was on the FBI Most Wanted list since 1999, and was the mastermind behind the 9/11 attacks was killed by US military personnel at a

secret compound in Pakistan on May 1, 2011.

A devoted mother died this year. Singer/songwriter Phoebe Snow died April 26 at the age of 60. During her career in the mid-70's she graced the cover of Rolling Stone magazine and was nominated for a Grammy. She stepped back from the spotlight when her daughter, Valerie Rose Laub, was born in 1975. Valerie Rose was severely brain-injured, but Phoebe Snow resolved not to institutionalize her, and she cared for her daughter at home until Valerie died on March 18, 2007 at the age of 31. Snow's efforts to care for Valerie nearly ended her career.

An innovative man died this year. Dot Records founder Randy Wood died on April 9. He began the practice of having white singers such as Pat Boone cover rhythm and blues hits by black artists and he is credited with helping black musicians break into the commercial mainstream.

A pioneer died this year. Geraldine Ferraro, the Democratic congresswoman who became the first woman on a major party presidential ticket in 1984, died on March 26.

A healthy man died this year. Fitness guru Jack LaLanne died on January 23 from respiratory failure due to pneumonia. He is known for saying, "Anything is possible and you can make it happen."

The last member of a family died this year. David Nelson, the elder son of Ozzie and Harriet Nelson, died January 11. Nelson and his family played fictionalized versions of themselves on radio and TV in "The Adventures of Ozzie and Harriet." Ozzie died in 1975, Rick in 1985, and Harriet in 1994.

An innocent or unlucky man died this year. Federal Judge John Roll died January 8. He was gunned down by Jared Lee Loughner in Tucson along with five other innocent or unlucky people.

A lucky man died last year. Tsutomu Yamaguchi survived the bombing of Hiroshima. Following the bombing he was taken to a hospital in Nagasaki, where he then survived another atomic bombing. He died on December 4.

A director died this year. Peter Yates died January 2 after a long illness. He directed "Bullitt," "The Deep," and my Hollywood debut, "Breaking Away." Here he is with Steve McQueen. He didn't work this closely with me.

A brave woman died last year. Elizabeth Edwards, the wife of former presidential candidate John Edwards, died December 7, following a long battle with cancer.

A mother died last year. Barbara Billingsley, who played June Cleaver in the television series "Leave it to Beaver" died October 16.

A legend died last year. Joan Sutherland died October 10, following a series of health issues. Dubbed "La Stupenda" by her Italian fans, she is one of the most celebrated opera singers of all time.

A marathon man died last year. Robert Byrd, a Democrat from West Virginia, served in the senate for more than 50 years, longer than anyone else. He died on June 28. Deceased U.S. Sen. Robert Byrd will be remembered by lots of things: His love for dogs and hyperbole, his ability to funnel federal dollars into make-work jobs in his native West Virginia, his loathing of balanced budgets and for having joined the Ku Klux Klan as a young man.

A very tall humanitarian died last year. Manute Bol was mostly known for being 7 feet, 7 inches tall. The man standing next to him is Charles Barkley, who is 6 feet, 6 inches. Manute Bol was probably the best shot-blocker who ever played basketball. But he was also a humanitarian. He spent much of the money he made during his ten year career supporting various causes related to his war-ravaged nation of birth, Sudan. He frequently visited Sudanese refugee camps,

where he was treated like royalty. He first played basketball at 16 and learned English at 21. He missed more shots than you would guess, he was a poor rebounder and made a lot of turnovers. When he made a mistake, he would say, “My bad.” Now everyone says “My bad.” instead of “My fault.”

Many other people died in the last year and years before. These were some that caught my attention. Now it’s your turn. When I stop speaking, I’ll wait a couple minutes. Please feel free to fill this space with the name of someone dear to you who has died, either in the past year or beyond.

*[Two minutes]*

A good way to memorialize a beloved family member is to make arrangements to have his or her name put on the Memorial Plaque.

Did you know that we have a Memorial Plaque? It’s right back there, on the wall. Did you know we have a Memorial Garden? It’s right out here. The Memorial Garden Committee asked me to mention this during the service today and I guess this is a good a time to do that.

The Memorial Garden began in 1991 at the request of several members of the church. Plans were approved by the Board of Trustees and the congregation in 1992.

In addition to memorializing loved ones on the plaque, their ashes may be interred in the garden. Those whose ashes are interred in the garden are also recognized by individual nameplates on the garden wall. There are 31 names on the Memorial Plaque and the ashes of nine persons are interred in the Memorial Garden.

The Memorial Garden Committee oversees and maintains the garden and makes periodic reports on its activities and finances to the Board of Trustees. Martha Berry, Pat Mann, and Kay Spehar have served as members of the committee since its inception. Other members of

the committee are co-chairs George Helton and Monique Lewis, Marge Pasch, Skip Stevens and Charles Wright.

The Memorial Garden is funded solely from donations and from the enrollment fees for those who are memorialized on the plaque. The church supports the garden by providing water to irrigate the plants.

Additional information on the Memorial Garden can be found in the brochure, available in the Fellowship area, and by following a link website. A pictorial display of the Memorial Garden and its history is in the Fellowship area today and members of the committee are available to answer your questions and can provide assistance in planning for a death or when a death occurs.

You know, I don’t like thinking about my own death. But it’s gonna happen, I know. Right now, the prospect of my own death does not seem frightening, but I don’t feel it’s imminent. It may be tomorrow, I don’t know. So my saying that it’s not scary is kinda ill-informed.

Intellectually, I understand it. But emotionally, I don’t know. I hope that when it comes, it doesn’t drag on for months. Being assured of that would make me feel better, both now and then. I hope I have enough time to prepare, but not so much that I sit around twiddling my thumbs, waiting.

We tend to think of death as an end. But what if it’s a beginning?

In my backyard is a bluebird box that I attached to a pole. I can open one side to see what’s going on in the bird box. About six weeks ago, a couple of bluebirds decided to raise a family and so they went about doing just that; built a nest, laid a few eggs, fed the chicks when they hatched. Everyone’s gone now; I never saw the chicks fly, but they cleared out, that’s for sure. One day they were bringing bugs to the chicks, the next day, nobody home.

I got to thinking about the chick’s experience. All it has known in its

entire life is the inside of that box. All it knows is in that birdbox. It's dark, cramped, warm, smelly, and relatively safe. Every once in awhile, food appears. The chick spends its entire life in the box preparing; preparing to leave the box.

Then one day the chick steps out into the fresh air, the green grass, the blue sky and all the raucous sounds of life in my back yard. And flies; perhaps wobbly at first and not very far, but it flies.

What a change, I thought. But the chick, you know, if she's scared, you'd never know it. She just flaps her little wings and takes off, as if it were the most natural thing on earth.

What if death were like that?

All we know—all we know is life on this planet. It has been good and bad, glorious and abysmal. Sometimes cramped, warm sometimes, and relatively safe. We get to eat good food if we're lucky.

But death is something else altogether. When we die, will we step into another world? Will we just flap our little wings and take off, as if it were the most natural thing on earth?

Pam, Bart & Avery, would you please extinguish our chalice? Please read with me.

*EXTINGUISHING THE CHALICE*

We extinguish this flame,  
but not the light of its truth,  
the warmth of this community,  
nor the fire of our commitment.  
These we carry in our hearts  
and share with all the world.

*BENEDICTION*

My benediction today comes from Tim Rice.

From the day we arrive on the planet  
And blinking, step into the sun  
There's more to be seen than can ever be seen  
More to do than can ever be done

Some say eat or be eaten  
Some say live and let live  
But all are agreed as they join the stampede  
You should never take more than you give

Some of us fall by the wayside  
And some of us soar to the stars  
And some of us sail through our troubles  
And some have to live with the scars

There's far too much to take in here  
More to find than can ever be found  
But the sun rolling high through the sapphire sky  
Keeps great and small on the endless round

In the circle of life  
It's the wheel of fortune  
It's the leap of faith  
It's the band of hope  
Till we find our place  
On the path unwinding  
In the circle of life

*POSTLUDE*

*UNGAR: Ashokan Farewell*

It has become traditional around here to hear “Ashokan Farewell” during the Memorial Day Service. The first time we did it, Rich Dwyer played his harmonica, and we decided that had to be the definitive version. This year, Kate found a choral arrangement and she dumped the piano interlude and asked Rich to play.

Thank you for joining us in worship today. Your presence is very much appreciated. In about ten minutes, we’ll gather at the front door and walk down to the Memorial Garden for its annual re-dedication. After that, we can enjoy a time of fellowship with the best fair-trade coffee in southeastern Tennessee.

## *REDEDICATION OF THE MEMORIAL GARDEN*

In this place where memories live, we gather to honor those who were close to us, those who touched us, those who lived with us but now live within us. In life, we carried their love, and we carry it still. Although a memory is not a heavy burden, it is not always a joyous one. It is evidence of our living that we remember; partly in sorrow for our loss, partly in fear of our own death and partly in love of our common humanity.

We come now to rededicate this garden and ourselves to that which moves us; to those goals, ideals and dreams which guide our lives, which guided their lives and which infuse our memories with courage and love. Let the spirits invoked by our voices and actions rest easy and warm.

Water, like memory, cannot be destroyed, only changed in appearance. Water falls from clouds only to percolate up through the ground into rivers and evaporate into the sky to make more clouds. In time, our memory will fade and we won’t see our family and friends as clearly as we do now. However, the memory we have will inhabit other parts of our lives. One day, years from now we might see a dress like the one she wore or hear an expression that he used. And again memories will be stirred and feelings will surface. And we’ll remember.

Taking this water that we have brought from distant places, let us now nourish the earth and the plants in this garden so that they will be strong and grow. We wish them to be here for others who will come to remember.