

Unitarian Universalist Society of Sacramento

Sunday, June 2, 2024, in person and online

Czech Unitarian Flower Communion

Circle Service

Story of the Flower Communion

Born in 1870 in the Czech land of Bohemia, Norbert Capek was brought up Catholic. At 18, apprenticed to a successful tailor in Vienna, Norbert discovered the Baptists and became a minister. Then he founded churches from Ukraine to Budapest. Yet, slowly, his faith became more and more liberal. He left Bohemia under government threat and accepted a call to serve a Baptist church in New York City. In 1919, he left it. He wrote in his diary: "I cannot be a Baptist anymore, even in compromise. The fire of new desires, new worlds, is burning inside me." Norbert and his wife, Májka Capek, joined a Unitarian church in New Jersey in 1921 because their children liked its religious education program—and liked the other kids.

Two years later, the Capeks went home to newly independent Czechoslovakia. Norbert founded a Unitarian church and called it the Prague Liberal Religious Fellowship. In just 20 years, it grew to 3,200 members. In 1923, he asked his congregants to bring a flower to church—from their gardens, the field, or the roadside. He invited each person to place their flower in a vase, and he blessed them. Following the service, each person took home a different flower from the vase.

Capek was a visionary minister with a bold church, thinking beyond its doors. Capek spoke out against the Nazi occupation. For this, the Gestapo arrested him in 1942 and sent him to a concentration camp. He held a ceremony with his fellow prisoners, finding whatever flowers they could among the weeds of the camp. Capek died in the camp, but his courage and commitment have been passed on to us.

His wife, Májka, brought the flower ceremony to the Unitarian Church in Cambridge, Mass., in 1940. Today's ritual is not a historical reenactment, but an affirmation of our continuity with the generations of struggle for liberty. This flower ceremony is lovely, but it's not a diversion from ugly reality. Its gentle fierceness proclaims that in the worst of times, there is always the light of beauty. We are here not to recall something that happened before, but to remember something that continues to happen. In this ritual of beauty, out of our varied individualities, we create a unity.

Hymn

We Are One

-Rev. Suzelle Lynch, arr. Ruben Piirainen

Words of Welcome

Music for Centering

Flower Prelude

-Ruben Piirainen

Chalice Lighting

Joys and Sorrows, Prayer, and Silence

Gift of Music

Free

-Kelvyn Koning

Reading

Dandelions

-Jen Rehbein

Shared Offering

for Opening Doors

Every Sunday we give half of the offering donations to a not-for-profit agency.

Donate by text at 916-619-0903, online at uuss.org/donate, or by check to UUSS.

Offertory

Imagine

-John Lennon

Spoken Response

May generosity bless our world,
and may gratitude nourish our spirits.

Homily

Blessing

Hymn #305

De Colores

Extinguishing the Chalice

We extinguish this flame, but we carry the light, love,
and commitment of this gathering into the days to come.

Benediction

SERVING IN WORSHIP TODAY

Rev. Dr. Roger Jones
Ministerial Intern Rosemary Dodd
Worship Associates Andy Cramer ~ Karen Sparrow
Religious Education Coordinator Crystal fountain
UUSS Choir ~ Music Director Anthony Tavianini
Pianist Irina Tchantceva
Altar Design Terrie Taylor
Chalice Lighters Emily Moran-Vogt and daughter Lorena

WELCOME TO GUESTS & NEWCOMERS!

Please complete a Newcomer Card to receive follow-up information and *Our Weekly Message* by email at uuss.org/newcomers or at the Welcome Table in the hall.

Find our Weekly Calendar at uuss.org/bluesheets/

Assisted listening devices are in the rear or in the Welcome Hall.

Our induction-loop system connects to a T-coil hearing aid.

Restrooms are out the sanctuary doors to the left. A single-person restroom is in the hallway to the right of the Library/Bookstore.

Rev. Lucy Bunch returns from sabbatical next Sunday!

OUR CONGREGATION'S MISSION STATEMENT

We come together to deepen our lives
and to be a force for healing in the world.

UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST SOCIETY OF SACRAMENTO

WWW.UUSS.ORG

2425 SIERRA BLVD. SACRAMENTO, CA 95825
(916) 483-9283



**The Unitarian Flower Communion:
Meditation on a Single Blossom**
10:30 a.m., Sunday, June 2, 2024

Unitarian Universalist Society
ESTABLISHED IN SACRAMENTO IN 1868

2425 Sierra Boulevard
Sacramento, CA 95825 (916) 483-9283
E-mail: office@uuss.org www.uuss.org