

Easter Day 2009 Service Hull Unitarian Church

Music to play in (if allowed to play CD) Artist: Balalaika (1994), *Rozhinkes Mit Mandlen*, Album: Romantic Jewish Songs, Night Club Music, Track 10, 03:21, Czech Republic: Multisonic.

Chalice Lighting

Easter, breaks out the light of the world!
We are led from darkness into light,
Breaking out and before us:
Help us to reflect on the light of love,
May we always find the light of holiness,
Guide us and light shine on our daily path.
We are children in this light,
Aglow and so forever praising
The Sun and Son of righteousness:
Forever.

Adapted from text in *Epiphany Praise*, Service Sheet, The Parish Church of St. Mary, Barton-on-Humber, Sunday 6 January 2008, 18:00.

Light the chalice

Hymn 209 'A World Transfigured' in *Hymns for Living* [CD 21 Hymns]
Blaenwern 87. 87. D; Lyrics: Jacob Trapp

Wonders still the world shall witness
Never known in days of old,
Never dreamed by ancient sages,
Howsoever free and bold.
Sons and daughters shall inherit
Wondrous arts to us unknown,
When the dawn of peace its splendour
Over all the world has thrown.

They shall rule with wingéd freedom
Worlds of health and human good,
Worlds of commerce, worlds of science,
All made one and understood.
They shall know a world transfigured,
Which our eyes but dimly see;
They shall make its towns and woodlands
Beautiful from sea to sea.

For a spirit then shall move them
We but vaguely apprehend -
Aims magnificent and holy,
Making joy and labour friend.
Then shall bloom in song and fragrance
Harmony of thought and deed,
Fruits of peace and love and justice -
Where today we plant the seed.

This Easter Day we have a [Prayer](#)

God of Light and Wisdom:
May we hold in trust
The questioning mind,
The searching heart,
The thirsting soul;
May we guard as sacred
The many different paths into you,
The Font of all Life;
May we be as ready to hear the good news
From your people of other denominations and faiths,
As we are to proclaim the gospel;
Through the healing Spirit of Christ. **Amen**

Kevin Genpo Thew Forrester, Bishop-elect in The Episcopal Church (2008), *The Word of God: Collect*; 20 January 2008 Year A, Second Sunday after Epiphany; St. Paul's Marquette, [Online], Available World Wide Web, URL: <http://www.standfirminfaith.com/media/20080120.pdf>. [Accessed: Tuesday April 07 2009, 17:11]

A Prayer of Penitence

We ask that what we have done wrong to God, to others and to ourselves, through negligence, weakness and deliberately, can be repaired. We express true sorrow and seek forgiveness so that we may walk in renewed life.

A Meditation and Prayer now as adapted from a Unitarian prayer book from 1917, *Seven Services for Public Worship*.

With hearts and minds open to the lessons of this Easter season, when all nature prophecies to humankind, let us rejoice in that which interprets and celebrates the triumph of life over death, of spiritual continuance through all outward change. Let us answer the manifold lessons around us with newness of life in ourselves, that so, casting off the works of darkness, we receive the light, led by hope, and can press forward with faithful service into the world.

O Holy Being beyond space and time, who is the vision of outpoured love, bring forth to us in our space at this time, that which is drawn out by the fountain of our sharing in Being. Assist us therefore to so overcome spiritual death, by sending forth in Spirit the transforming breath and waters of life, though which we and all the earth can sing praises of joy. Let such joyful spirit of shared Being enrich our hearts in that rising from death to life, in the manner of he who announced the truth that would, he said to his disciples, "declare to you the things that are to come", that "you will weep and mourn, but the world will rejoice; you will have pain, but your pain will turn into joy."

Heaven and earth are full of redeemed majesty. We had been in darkness and the shadow of death, and the light was very dim. Yet those obedient until death in that small light of service and sacrifice bear transforming witness of the brightest truth. We thus shall not die but live, for former things have passed away, and all things have become anew. Of the brilliant fullness may we now partake, for we shall no longer walk in the darkness. We receive the crown of Being, no more as strangers and exiles, but joining with the company of one heavenly household in high praise where the floodlit fountain of Being becomes our whole appearance: such could never have been left in the grave, but always must become the brightly lit pathway for true living.

See The British and Foreign Unitarian Association (1917), *Seven Services for Public Worship with Special Prayers and Thanksgivings*, new edition, Introduction by W. Copeland Bowie, London: The Lindsey Press, 46-49.

We give an Expression of Peace among ourselves and beyond:

On this day, peace come to us, and peace we offer to our inner selves and to the outer other. In our mind's eye, let us offer to our own self, our friends, our neighbours, those we encounter and may not like, and the unmet many, and the lifeworld, ongoing signs of peace: beginning here and now.

We say together The Lord's Prayer:

Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name.
Thy Kingdom come,
thy will be done,
on earth as it is in heaven
Give us this day our daily bread.
And forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those who trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom,
The power and the glory,
For ever and ever.
Amen.

As part of our devotions, we read and follow Psalms 114, *In Exitu Israel*.

WHEN Israel came out of Egypt, * and the house of Jacob from among the
strange people,
2 Judah was his sanctuary, * and Israel his dominion.
3 The sea saw that, and fled; * Jordan was driven back.
4 The mountains skipped like rams, * and the little hills like young sheep.
5 What aileth thee, O thou sea, that thou fleddest? * and thou Jordan, that
thou wast driven back?
6 Ye mountains, that ye skipped like rams? * and ye little hills, like young
sheep?
7 Tremble, thou earth, at the presence of the Lord: * at the presence of the
God of Jacob;
8 Who turned the hard rock into a standing water,* and the flint-stone into a
springing well.

Note, guidance: EMI Music Netherlands BV (2003), The Psalms of David, Choir of Kings College,
Cambridge, Sir David Willcocks, Sir Philip Ledger, originally recorded 1968, 1970, 1971, 1974, digitally
remastered 1989, two CDs, Netherlands: EMI, CD 1: track 20 (1969).

A Reading from the 'Gospel of Luke' Chapter 24, verses 13 to 31.

13 Now on that same day two of them were going to a village called Emmaus,

about seven miles from Jerusalem, 14 and talking with each other about all these things that had happened. 15 While they were talking and discussing, Jesus himself came near and went with them, 16 but their eyes were kept from recognizing him. 17 And he said to them, 'What are you discussing with each other while you walk along?' They stood still, looking sad. 18 Then one of them, whose name was Cleopas, answered him, 'Are you the only stranger in Jerusalem who does not know the things that have taken place there in these days?' 19 He asked them, 'What things?' They replied, 'The things about Jesus of Nazareth, who was a prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people, 20 and how our chief priests and leaders handed him over to be condemned to death and crucified him. 21 But we had hoped that he was the one to redeem Israel. Yes, and besides all this, it is now the third day since these things took place. 22 Moreover, some women of our group astounded us. They were at the tomb early this morning, 23 and when they did not find his body there, they came back and told us that they had indeed seen a vision of angels who said that he was alive. 24 Some of those who were with us went to the tomb and found it just as the women had said; but they did not see him.' 25 Then he said to them, 'Oh, how foolish you are, and how slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have declared! 26 Was it not necessary that the Messiah should suffer these things and then enter into his glory?' 27 Then beginning with Moses and all the prophets, he interpreted to them the things about himself in all the scriptures.

28 As they came near the village to which they were going, he walked ahead as if he were going on. 29 But they urged him strongly, saying, 'Stay with us, because it is almost evening and the day is now nearly over.' So he went in to stay with them. 30 When he was at the table with them, he took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to them. 31 Then their eyes were opened, and they recognized him; and he vanished from their sight.

Division of Christian Education of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the United States of America (1995, 1989), 'Luke 24: 13-31', *The New Revised Standard Version (Anglicized Edition)*, National Council of the Churches of Christ in the United States of America, [Online], Available World Wide Web, URL: <http://bible.oremus.org/?passage=Luke+24>. [Accessed: Tuesday April 07 2009, 17:27]

Now a Ceremony to the Past, Present and Future

For things that we have never seen, and have passed long before us, and yet make us who we are in all our emerged varieties, we light a candle to the distant past and our world that was still to come.

Light a candle at one end

For things that we have seen, but passed away in our sight, and yet have made us who we have become, and more able to be authentic, we light a candle to the past and our world in its making.

Light the candle next

For this time, and our condition of Being, of who we are, and of our potential, we light a candle to the present and our world of complex outworking.

Light the candle in the centre

For what shall surely yet flower, and will make us yet more complete, we light a candle to the coming future of our world coming to its glory.

Light the candle next

For what we will have finally, but in the outcome we shall never see, that makes our descendants in all their varieties greater than us, we light a candle to the far future of our world fulfilled.

Light the candle at the other end

A Meditation on the Three Great Days and the Easter Story.

Meeting: Jesus ate and drank with his friends in the Upper Room;

Waiting: Jesus was arrested;

Judging: Pilate asked about truth and washed his hands;

Weighted down: Jesus bore the wooden cross;

Loving: Mary's gaze was upon her son;

Helping: Simon shared the weight of the cross;

Caring: Veronica offered Jesus her veil;

Crying: the women wept for Jesus;

Struggling: for the third time Jesus stumbled;

Lonely: the soldiers took his clothes;

Suffering in love: Christ opened wide his arms;

Dying: he bowed his head and breathed his last;

Holding: they took him from the cross;

Leaving him: they laid him in the tomb;

And then...

Bursting out: Christ was other than in a tomb;

Meeting again: Christ ate and drank with his friends;

Surprising: Saul of Tarsus experienced Christ, and so did a crowd.

Adapted into a meditation from Withers, M., Pinchin, P. (1996), *Celebration: Resources for All-Age Eucharists*, Church Union, Gracewing Fowler Wright Books, 86.

Hymn 148 'The Miracle' in *Hymns for Living* [CD *We Will Sing for Them*]
Nundanketall C.M.; Lyrics: from Malvina Reynolds

O what a piece of work are we,
How marvellously wrought;
The quick contrivance of the hand,
The wonder of our thought.

Why need to look for miracles
Outside of nature's law?
Humanity we wonder at
With every breath we draw!

But give us room to move and grow,
But give our spirit play,
And we can make a world of light
Out of the common clay.

A Reading from the last chapter of *The Origin of Species* by Charles Darwin

It is interesting to contemplate an entangled bank, clothed with many plants of many kinds, with birds singing on the bushes, with various insects flitting about, and with worms crawling through the damp earth, and to reflect that these elaborately constructed forms, so different from each other, and dependent on each other in so complex a manner, have all been produced by laws acting around us. These laws, taken in the largest sense, being Growth with Reproduction; inheritance which is almost implied by reproduction; Variability from the indirect and direct action of the external conditions of life, and from use and disuse; a Ratio of Increase so high as to lead to a Struggle for Life, and as a consequence to Natural Selection, entailing Divergence of Character and the Extinction of less-improved forms. Thus, from the war of nature, from famine and death, the most exalted object which we are capable of conceiving, namely, the production of the higher animals, directly follows. There is grandeur in this view of life, with its several powers, having been originally breathed into a few forms or into one; and that, whilst this planet has gone cycling on according to the fixed law of gravity, from so simple a beginning endless forms most beautiful and most wonderful have been, and are being, evolved.

Darwin, C. (1994), *The Origin of Species by Means of Natural Selection or the Preservation of Favoured Races in the Struggle for Life*, sixth edition, London: Senate, 429, originally published 1872 in London by John Murray.

A short Reading from Hayden White, a historian who wrote an article 'The Fictions of Factual Representation' in which he addressed himself to Charles Darwin's arrangement of factual material in order that he could apply his analysis of Natural Selection, an arrangement that can be seen as a form of fiction-like narrative or story telling.

Historians remain under the same illusion that had siezed [Charles] Darwin, the illusion that a value-neutral description of the facts, prior to their interpretation or analysis, was possible. It was not the doctrine of natural selection advanced by Darwin that commended him to other students of natural history as the Copernicus of natural history. That doctrine had been known and elaborated long before Darwin advanced it in the Origin. What had been required was a redescription of the facts in a language [of varieties in unbroken continuity] that would sanction the application of them of the doctrine as the most adequate way of explaining them.

White, Hayden (1976), 'The Fictions of Factual Representation' in Fletcher, Angus (ed.), *The Literature of Fact*, Columbia University, 21-44, in Green, A., Troup, K. (1999), *The Houses of History: A Critical Reader in Twentieth Century History and Theory*, Manchester: Manchester University Press, 214-229, 228.

We now have some Intercessory Prayer

Let us pray for faith and the world, that all may be fulfilled. After each expression: 'Lord in your mercy', please say, if you wish, 'Hear our Prayer'.

We pray for the faiths and those in leadership who serve the people of faiths; we pray for the ministry in all its forms of Unitarian and Unitarian Universalist Churches around the world.

Lord in your mercy
[Hear our Prayer](#)

Let us pray for the world: for the equilibrium of this environment in this season. We pray for the places in human conflict and war, around the troubled continents of this world. Think of those places we hear about in the media, with tensions and troubles that seem unresolvable, and yet sometimes ways of peace and harmony can be found that melt the boundaries between the human tribes.

Lord in your mercy
Hear our Prayer

We pray for this country and this city and its environs. Let those who take up the responsibility of power enact it wisely and seek the common good. Let the whole community prosper and come together as one.

Lord in your mercy
Hear our Prayer

Let us pray for those in need and the sick. We pray for the underemployed and unemployed in economic need, for those in poverty and destitution; and we pray for those who are undergoing sickness in whatever form. You may know of people in need, and may want to offer their names silently as we pause a few moments.

Lord in your mercy
Hear our Prayer

We pray for those who have died, and those whose anniversaries fall about now. We pray in memory for those who were but are no longer with us, those whom we have known, and those about whom we can say have joined the Communion of Saints. We pause to bring them forward.

Merciful Lord
Accept these prayers.
Amen.

Based in part on the structure in Church of England (2000), 'Prayers of Intercession', *Common Worship: Services and Prayers for the Church of England*, London: Church House Publishing, e.g. 174.

A Meditation on a poem by John Clare, called *The Instinct Of Hope*.

Is there another world for this frail dust
To warm with life and be itself again?
Something about me daily speaks there must,
And why should instinct nourish hopes in vain?
'Tis nature's prophesy that such will be,
And everything seems struggling to explain
The close sealed volume of its mystery.
Time wandering onward keeps its usual pace
As seeming anxious of eternity,

To meet that calm and find a resting place.
E'en the small violet feels a future power
And waits each year renewing blooms to bring,
And surely man is no inferior flower
To die unworthy of a second spring?

Kövesi, Simon (2006), The John Clare Page: Poems, from Poems by John Clare, ed. Arthur Symons (London: Henry Frowe, 1908) and from The Rural Muse; Poems by John Clare, (London: Whittaker & co., 1835), [Online], Available World Wide Web, URL: <http://www.johnclare.info/poems.html#hope>. [11 December 2006, Accessed: Tuesday April 07 2009, 17:39]

Hymn 15 'For All that is Our Life' in *Hymns for Living* [CD 21 Hymns]
Old 120th 66. 66. 66; Lyrics: Bruce Findlow

For all that is our life
We sing our thanks and praise;
For all life is a gift
Which we are called to use
To build the common good
And make our own days glad.

For needs which others serve,
For services we give,
For work and its rewards,
For hours of rest and love:
We come with praise and thanks
For all that is our life.

For sorrow we must bear,
For failures, pain and loss,
For each new thing we learn,
For fearful hours that pass:
We come with praise and thanks
For all that is our life.

For all that is our life
We sing our thanks and praise;
For all life is a gift
Which we are called to use
To build the common good
And make our own days glad

Sermon

This morning at about 6 a.m. many churches around the country will have lit a bonfire outside the building, with people stood close-by holding candles, and then the people will have gone inside the church, and had a Eucharist or Holy Communion, and given again their baptismal promises to welcome in the Day of Resurrection, Easter Day.

All this follows the preparation of Lent, the drama of Holy Week and its Three Great Days. Maundy Thursday is the last full Holy Communion, which ends with the lights going off and no exit music, that also has a watch afterwards until midnight. Then comes worship on Good Friday, when some people take reserve communion, which, like some others, I have rejected because this involves churchgoers having, so to speak, two bites at one cherry.

Until this year I thus observed Easter as completely as anyone else, despite having a radical theology regarding God, the historical Jesus, and the Christ of faith; I've made a distinction between the spiritual pathway a liturgy provides, which is enriching to the soul, and theology, which we construct. That's a rather Buddhist approach to Christianity, which is to do the worship as a pathway and let the theology follow on.

But then, somehow, the plain meaning of the promises people make got to me, and a series of reflections meant that I now sit out of much of the drama of the service, and engage at a less active level.

My view of the Eucharist still an anthropological one of a gift-exchange, that is a passing of fairly worthless tokens involves a material cost to do it but comes with a spiritual benefit. The communal exchange of the tokens has the effect of renewing identity and binding the community together. Religion - Religio - means to bind. In the capitalist economy we should first have a covenant of trust and then a contract of exchange, of money tokens for specific goods and services which we value, but in the religious sphere the exchange is not specific but of an overview, and the exchange becomes that of a gift, not of a cost and profit but of a sacrifice and gift whose value could be unending.

The whole theology of Easter is also that of a sacrifice and a gift: a sacrifice and a gift said to exist in the crucifixion, and an outbursting of gift in the resurrection, a gift that allows the world to be redeemed.

And yet: is it... true? Clearly, to make a statement that one has a radical theology is to suggest that there is something insufficient about the non-radical - the orthodox - theologies. Let's face it, my explanation of the

Eucharist is hardly the most common one, being entirely humanist and this worldly, based as it is in the anthropology of collective human behaviour.

Three key myths come together in the Easter story. These are: the Jewish apocalyptic or last days belief, the dying and rising of gods and people, and the primal man. It can be said that Jesus and Paul shared the first two, and Paul emphasised the primal man myth.

Paul it was who emphasised that after Adam and sin, Christ is the other primal man who died for our sins and took them away. In those days it was often believed that sin, imagined in the presence of demons, was responsible for illness and even death itself. That's why Jesus cast out demons, so that he told the once ill and now healed to "go and sin no more" and be ready for the incoming Kingdom. Anyone sinless would not need to die. However Christ died, and in so doing it was Pauline theology that he took on our sins in a cosmic level gift-exchange, so that we do not have to die, so long as there is then a further exchange of our belief in him for him to be the saviour.

Of course we do still die, and indeed Paul was confronted with the reality of people still dying. So in later evangelical speak, this death is a different kind of death, now a spiritual death and therefore a spiritual ongoing life. But this spiritualising is a sleight of hand and does not reflect what Jesus thought he was doing: healing people of sin in the face of the end time, the apocalyptic, and preparation for entry into the coming paradise.

Even with this theology demythologised, so that Jesus gave his life in love for us all, depends on a cruel regime being in existence: for contrast, today you could hardly say we are saved by someone who is sentenced to receive an anti-social behaviour order. In fact the very concept of being saved is problematic in the language of today.

The fact that Jesus died is neither here nor there. What matters, presumably, is that someone is dedicated to the service they provide, and will do it sacrificially. Jesus can be one model for such service, but this is then not about something that happened once for all humankind. It is about something that must be repeated, and repeated again, by anyone. So they then say, "Ah yes but the resurrection." Have the resurrection and the theology does all come together: the sacrifice in the cross and the huge gift of God this resurrection represents. So what of it, this Easter morning?

The Anglican Archbishop of Canterbury, Rowan Williams, tells us that if the dead Jesus's bones were not reconstituted into a transformed body, then he, Rowan Williams, would not even be a priest and might not even be a

Christian. The trouble is, for such a view, that the brain of a dead human damages very quickly. The whole body rots incredibly fast: and the Romans anyway chucked crucified bodies into lime pits to make them rot even faster. Roman cruelty did not pause to facilitate Jews having their burial rites. You would never identify the bones of anyone after such disposal.

So I do not believe, and never have, that a restored, objective, self-conscious man rose after being dead, so that his bones were transformed into a manner that allowed him to walk through doors and walls, and to disappear at will. Anyone who works that one out can get a Nobel Prize in biology, physics, chemistry, the lot. It is anti-scientific, and also I will suggest that it is anti-historical. Historically speaking, the textual material is a primary source of the early Churches, and only secondary about any resurrection event. Indeed the material is theological, not historical.

The texts come from a time of a diverse, fast growing, expectant, Christianity. Convert Jews and then the Gentiles, some of whom had who'd once added their presence at monotheistic synagogues, were asking questions.

What holy rituals should we practice, now different from Judaism? How close is the very last day when we are liberated from the Romans and all human suffering, when God brings heaven to earth? If Jesus was the first of the resurrected - why did he appear to some, not others, and why does he no longer appear, and when is he coming back? Who or what is the legitimate leadership in the meantime?

The resurrection texts are about the authority and legitimacy of leaders and practices. The leaders were visited - met - by the resurrected Jesus, as was a congregation - 500 according to Paul, 120 according to Acts.

See what the Luke account, that I read, tells. They do not recognise Jesus as they walk. Jesus tells them his connection to the Hebrew prophets. He is asking if they get it, if they understand. Then they all arrive, and have a meal. Now, the Upper Room account had said that the bread and wine meal would not be celebrated until the Messiah and Kingdom had come. Here they were celebrating it. And suddenly they saw him. It's like we might say to someone, "Do you see - do you get it?" And what happens as soon as they get it? He disappears. Job done.

Now this is clearly a story. Though it borrows the form of an event, it differs from events by the fact of delayed recognition and its intended denouement. This is a justification of the celebration of the core ritual, the Eucharist: that its, the conditions for its celebration have been met.

Why is the Eucharist important to them? Because it is the love meal, derived out of Judaism, now different from the Jews, cut down to bread and wine essentials, that is still tasting the boundary between earth and heaven. It is the pure, heavenly, gift, and is the future hope.

So just as the rest of the gospels are biography-like, and are given as history-like, so the resurrection is events-like, but time and again the meaning is in the story, not in trying to turn it into history.

Yet the language is so historical, and the politics of the Church today is historicist, so that people like me fall off. I'm not making these promises.

Thus now I sit at the back and I make no over-visible protest. I'm aware that Emma Darwin, the wife of Charles Darwin and member of the Wedgwood-Darwin Unitarian dynasties, used to attend her parish church in Downe and at the creed she turned the whole family around to face the congregation. I don't go quite that far when I sit in silence at the creed. I also presently sit as the long Eucharistic liturgy takes place, and only join in with the Lord's Prayer half way through. Emma and Charles, of course, took the Eucharist, though it wasn't celebrated anything like as frequently as now: And Charles, despite his agnosticism, was also very involved in church affairs in the village, and he was the eyes of the far away incumbent over the parish curates.

It is the thought world so well expressed by Charles Darwin that determines how we think today. Given all that Darwin did not know, but has since been so powerfully discovered, this is the working theory that follows incontrovertible evidence. More than this, people think practically and in a common this-worldly fashion. We don't have to be theological or philosophical to think and assume a world that works, that delivers and is reliable.

What is the Darwinian view? It's that there is no guiding hand, of course, in the detail of natural selection. There is only a close environment in a particular place that favours one mutation or variation over another. Intensive environments lead to rapid change. Why is this? Because of death. It is through comparative disadvantage or death of the many that allows for transformative progress. It is an environment that allows the mutation of comparative advantage to come through. In any environment, complex interactions between ever more suited species establish themselves into an equilibrium. But this is a chaotic system and when a shift in the environment happens there can be mass death and, yet, even then, mutation causes new life to succeed. With mutations, each species arises and in more complex forms, and interacts with others in a manner of life and death.

It is only through death that the richness of life emerges. It is through death that, eventually, us - a self-conscious and language filled species - arose, that could develop its narrative myths of understanding. The Darwinian narrative has lots of potential myths to which it can relate and generate, but one clearly is that of dying and of a transformed rising.

What is a myth? It is not about an historic core, or does not have to be. It is simply an insight that returns and returns again. It is just a narrative that brings forward a truth of existence.

This dying and rising myth operates personally and collectively too. How often is there no choice but to go through a kind of sacrificial loss in order to, we hope, find a new future that is yet indelibly linked to that loss? Surely this is a key aspect of life experienced. Life is tragic, and life is an outburst of huge potential.

And I suggest that it is this way round: that the Christian dying and rising myth has its power because it relates to death and life itself and relates to the experience of living. It is about hope, isn't it, and about saying yes even when the darkness of a no is followed by yet another no and more. The religious task, I suggest, is to affirm this transitory world and our passing existence. We deal with the difficult and all that needs to die. But whatever needs to die, and whatever does die, there is always that hope on the other side that new life can be lived in its fulfilment, that we can in the end proclaim, as Friedrich Nietzsche once did, a renewing and resounding and transforming Yes to Life.

We take the Collection

Hymn 3 'Joy of Living' in Hymns for Living [CD We Will Sing for Them]
St. Theodulph 76. 76. D; Lyrics: Deane Starr

We sing the joy of living,
We sing the mystery,
Of knowledge, lore and science,
Of truth that is to be;
Of searching, doubting, testing,
Of deeper insights gained,
Of freedom claimed and honoured,
Of minds that are unchained.

We sing the joy of living,
We sing of harmony,
Of textures, sounds and colours,
To touch, to hear, to see;
Of order, rhythm, meaning,
Of chaos and of strife,
Of richness of sensation,
Of the creating life.

We sing the joy of living,
We sing of ecstasy,
Of warmth, of love, of passion,
Of flights of fantasy.
We sing of joy of living,
The dear, the known, the strange
The moving, pulsing, throbbing -
A universe of change.

Benediction

For evolved life and ourselves, for all that is and will be transformed, we give our heartfelt thanks, and the blessing of holy Being be upon us and all life today and evermore. Amen.

If allowed: End Music from The Brotherhood of St Gregory (no date), *The Gregorian Chant: 'Alleluia'*, anon, Track 6, GFS429, Going for a Song.

Hymn book throughout: General Assembly of Unitarian and Free Christian Churches, Knight S. H. (editor), Dawson, D. (music editor), (1985), *Hymns for Living*, London: The Lindsey Press.