

Unitarian Universalist Church in Reston

October 5, 2014, 9:00 a.m.

Ceremony of Dedication of

Memorial Grove Deck

Service Leader: Rev. Dr. Barbara Coeyman

Director of Music: Nichole Hodges-Abbasi

UUCR Memorial Garden

Prelude:

Dana Sheppard

Opening Words

Hymn: "Open My Heart"

Open My Heart to all that I seek; let me be part of the Love You give.

History of UUCR Memorial Garden

Rev. Coeyman, John Welch

Music of Dedication: "Breaths," Ysaye M. Barnwell

Nichole Hodges-Abbasi

Prayer for Those Who Have Gone Before Us

Dedication of New Structure

Responsive Reading #718: "All Souls," May Sarton

Did someone say that there would be an end,
An end, Oh, an end, to love and mourning?

What has been once so interwoven cannot be raveled, nor the gift ungiven.
Now the dead move through all of us still glowing.

Mother and child, lover and lover mated, are wound and bound together and enflowing.
What has been plaited cannot be unplaited -- only the strands grow richer with each loss.

And memory makes kings and queens of us.
*Dark into light, light into darkness, spin. When all the birds have flown
to some real haven,*

We who find shelter in the warmth within, Listen and feel new-cherished, new-forgiven,
*As the lost human voices speak through us and blend our complex love,
our mourning without end.*

Hymn: "Go Now in Peace"

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Opening Words

Welcome to this place dedicated to what has been called by one poet a place for ‘the choir invisible,’ a place for ‘those immortal dead who live again in minds made better by their presence.’ This place of the choir invisible, ‘whose music is the gladness of the world.’ Let us be here together now as the VISIBLE choir, as we dedicate this new addition to UUCR’s memorial garden. Let us be here together as we Open Our Hearts to this place of remembering departed loved ones.

Hymn: “Open My Heart”

Open My Heart to all that I seek; let me be part of the Love You give.

We are gathered here today in what almost feels like a new memorial garden, when really it is the same old garden with upgraded access. UUCR's memorial garden has been here for many years: it was dedicate in June 1989 in a ceremony led by the then minister, Rev. Tim Haley. The garden was created for the offering of ashes of members, former members, and their loved ones. The garden has been here since that time, but accessible only on a dirt path. That is, not easily accessible by many wishing to visit this sacred space.

What we are dedicating today is what is new: this structure, this deck that we are standing on and around. New is this realization of a vision for making the existing garden more usable, not only for persons with limitations of mobility, but also for any of us not wishing to decend or climb the path. What a wonderful addition to the garden this new deck is.

The vision and concept of this new deck came from many of you. The design and implementing came from two of you in particular: I'd like to invite John Welch to remind us of a bit more about how this deck came to be.

Music of Dedication: "Breaths," Ysaye M. Barnwell

Nichole

Hodges-Abbasi

Prayer for Those Who Have Gone Before Us

Great Spirit, let us come together in moments of prayer and meditation. Let us give thanks for this special space on these church grounds, a space dedicated to honoring and remembering loved ones. Let us give especial thanks for this new structure and how it invites everyone to come to this place.

Let us today then remember how this space has already served this community by recalling the names of those whose ashes have already been placed in this garden of remember. The remnants of their physical selves lie here in this sacred place, yet their spirits live forever in the hearts of those near to them. Let us remember:

- Asfd
- Asf
- Asf
- Asf

Great spirit, let us also remember any in our lives who are separated from us by time or space, or whose physical lives are in the past. Let us rejoice together in honoring their spirits and the collective spirit of life that influences how our lives are going forward, day by day. Let us remember all those who have gone before us, many of whom we may not even know the names of; many who have lighted our path in Universalist and Unitarian history; many through the ages who have shaped life on this planet Earth.

Let us take some moments of silence to reflect and remember... Blessed Be,
Amen

Dedication of New Structure

Let us offer words to dedicate this new deck, this garden in its transformed state, as sacred space set aside as a place of remembering and honoring loved ones associated with this community of free faith.

May we dedicate this space as a place to remember all those who have gone before us.

May we dedicate this space as a sacred space that all may visit so to be reminded of the interconnectedness of all life: connections with loved ones past and present, connections with others of liberal faith, connections with all humanity, all life on this earth, and with Mother Earth herself.

May we be glad in our dedication to one another.

In sharing this celebration of dedication, I invite us to read together the passage by May Sarton printed in the order of service, as we then as the choir **VISIBLE** sing ourselves out.

Responsive Reading #718: "All Souls," May Sarton

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