

GOOD NEWS

unitarianuniversalist
CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP

freely following jesus



"Witnessing the Transforming Power of the Holy Spirit in our Lives"

September/October 2009

SOMETHING WE DO

UUCF COMMUNION SERMON AT GENERAL ASSEMBLY
The Rev. Earl K. Holt III Saturday, June 27, 2009 Salt Lake City

Text: John 21:1-19

Our text, which was most likely not read or preached on in your church this year, is the last of three appearance stories that conclude the gospel of John. The disciples are fishing in the Sea of Tiberius, better known by its more familiar name, the sea of Galilee. Jesus is seen standing on the beach but the text relates that, "they did not know it was Jesus." This follows a pattern common to several of these post-Resurrection appearance stories: the disciples at first do not recognize him, though here it could have been just because of distance and the early-morning mist. The passage concludes with Jesus saying to them: "Follow me."

This story comes at the very end of John's gospel, but in highlighting these elements of the story and as you may have already noticed, it contains evocative parallels to a famous passage that occurs near the very beginning of all three of the other, earlier-written gospels, when Jesus calls his first disciples. As you will remember, Jesus, walking along the shore of the Sea of Galilee comes upon two young fishermen, brothers, Peter and Andrew. They did not know it was Jesus then either, Jesus who cries out to them: "Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men." And they do. They drop their nets and follow. Shortly afterwards, two other fisher-brothers, James and John, do the same. They followed him.



They followed -- without knowing where he would lead them, on a journey they could hardly have even begun to imagine. But now, as John tells us, they have returned. After all that they had experienced, all they had witnessed, the teaching and healing, the trial and travail, their own betrayal and desertion of the one they had promised faithfully to follow, after his death and resurrection, here they are, back at their nets, seemingly much as they were. John certainly intends this parallel.

And again in the dawn of this new day he calls them, and here is his call: "Come and have breakfast." Don't you love it? "Come and have breakfast." Let's eat. And now, as the text says, *now* they knew it was the Lord. So much of their time with him had been like this, gathered together to break bread together. Jesus loved nothing more than to sit at table with others to eat and drink -- with them, and in fact with just about anyone, including all the "wrong people" -- tax collectors, publicans, prostitutes, sinners. So much of his ministry had to do with food, with being fed, in body as well as spirit. And with him there was always enough; even when there were thousands to feed, there was enough. Enough, and a little to spare. Even if it was only a little bread and wine, it was enough. And often, as it was once again on that morning, their nets over-flowing with fish, abundance. Is it any wonder that through all the centuries Christians have remembered the life of Jesus and celebrated the spirit of Jesus by sharing a simple meal together. A little meal that is always enough.

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A Communion of Saints

Rev. Kathleen Rolenz, UUCF President

This month I wrote an email to every UUCF address I could find on my address book, and asked "how are you doing? What's been happening in your spiritual life as a Unitarian Universalist Christian?" I wanted to know, because I rarely am in touch with all six hundred or so of you personally. When we put this Good News in the mail, it finds its way into your mailbox and as it makes its way around the country, I wonder how many of you read it—how many of you check the UUCF website—how many of you still feel connected to this organization.

Lately, the Board and I have revisited a conversation that has been discussed by many previous Boards—"what would a Christian Church of the Larger Fellowship look like?" With all the new technologies at our command, from live feeds to webinars to e-zines and digital downloads, is there a way for all of us to feel more connected than we do through reading this newsletter in the privacy of our homes, or watching a DVD of a Revival service, or attending General Assembly?

The new 2009-2010 Board of Trustees will be holding a retreat at the end of October where we will gather to review the progress of the 2006 retreat and set goals for the next three to five years of the life of the UUCF. Below are some thoughts on each one of our current ministries that will be part of the conversation at the Board retreat.

UUCF Publications: Good News & The UU Christian Journal. Some UUCF members have said they like having "something in their hands," while others read everything on line. A new copy of the UU Christian Journal will be published in June 2010. During the course of this year the Board would like to recruit a team of people interested in being part of the Publications portfolio, which could include a new format for both the Good News & Christian journal.

www.uuchristian.org website. The UUCF website continues to be an important feature of the UUCF—but how could we do more with it? How could it be more useful to you—or, do you visit it regularly—or, at all? We want to discuss ways that the website can be an even more robust presence as the gateway to UU Christianity and as the "living room" that is—a place that you'll want to come in and "hang out" for a while. What about having our own "wikipedia" type site that could house our founding documents, important essays, back copies of the UU Christian journal and the Good News, accessible to anyone who needs or wants it? The brainstorming has just begun!

Small Groups are at the heart and soul of the Unitarian Universalist Christian Fellowship. Each week, at some place all over the country—even the world—there are small groups gathering for Bible Study, for worship, for communion and for prayer (see page four for more news about small groups). Sometimes these small groups are welcomed and embraced in their larger communities, sometimes they are not. Some small groups meet in members homes instead of UU churches, some meet in coffee shops, parks or living rooms—wherever two or more are gathered in the name of Christ, there Christ is also.

Revivals and General Assemblies are key points of entry for those who are seeming a liberal religious Christianity and for long-time members who want to stay connected to friends and fellow travelers on the path. We'll look at how we do revivals and General Assembly to make them as accessible as possible.

Doing this good work with you, I truly feel surrounded by a communion of saints—of faithful members of the UUCF who care deeply for this institution. Thank you for being a part of it. *Love and Blessings, Kathleen Rolenz*

Please keep our beloved sister Suzanne Meyers in your thoughts and prayers. Suzanne regretfully resigned from the Board because of health issues.

Communion and Community

By Rev. Ron Robinson, Executive Director, UUCF

As I write this we are approaching one of my favorite days of the church year, the first Sunday in October as World Communion Day. We know that every day is a world communion day, as every day around the world at all hours of the day the eucharistic meal of the Jesus tradition is shared, and in as many different ways as different languages, as has been the case for two thousand years. In my own particular small group missional church we have free and open communion as a part of worship every Sunday, and yet it seems to make the experience fresher and newer and more meaningful all the time; there are so many different ways we find that communion is an emblem itself of what we are striving for in community, in our personal and family lives, and what we are working toward in the world. And yet though it is somewhat ironic to do so, it is good and fitting to lift up and commemorate the sacrament for itself, while still understanding it as a tangible act pointing toward an intangible truth. It is important given the history of conflict and even at times violence that has marked this sacrament that we pause during this occasion to see how communion connects our diverse communities as one, how it is essentially all about the practice and praxis of community.

But you may know the story of Ralph Waldo Emerson leaving the Unitarian ministry over the practice of communion which he felt had grown so formal it had lost its life and significance for him, and that it in fact took people's focus away from the Christian duties of right living and justice, that it promoted the worship of Jesus instead of God alone, and that it had more to do with "Jewish and Pagan" practices of the time than for Emerson's own times, and detracted from the essence of Christianity which Emerson found in the thoughts of Jesus and the moral principles he espoused.

Emerson was in the minority of Unitarians in his place and time on his feelings about communion, but he has been in the majority I suspect with many Unitarians in generations of late. Given his circumstances and passions and the local church life of his time, I can't say for sure that I wouldn't have felt the same as him. I resonate with his feelings that much of our worship doesn't deepen our priority for living missionally in the Jesus way but that it substitutes feel good spirituality and faux community for the real thing, and that if we put service first we would rush to worship with new life and spirit out of gratitude and thirst for its refreshment to sustain our service.



But our time is not Emerson's time either. There is a stirring and a movement even among us who are known, and rightly and blessedly so, as honoring the life of the mind and the intellect and individuality, that calls us deeply into the life of the body and feelings of the heart and soul and participating in deep communal experience. Christian communion is a response to such a calling, and it reminds us to embody the practice in our daily lives. Particularly in our generous inclusive theological commitment and liberation-oriented fashion where communion is open to all regardless of belief, it even more so than a flower or water communion honors both our journeys of self and yet reminds us we are more than self, that we are Whose before we are a who. Emerson rightly criticizes communion as an aspect of traditionalism, and he is right in some of his concerns about its historicity and what Jesus' intentions might have been surrounding communion as an institution, but ours is also a time that is able to embrace more of the Spirit than what is contained in the evidences of history about Jesus. Communion reminds us we are part of a living tradition that has a history of experiences of faithfulness.

In his book "The Soul of Christianity" Huston Smith writes that "Christianity is basically a historical religion. That is to say, it is founded not on abstract principles but concrete events, actual historical happenings. The most important of these is the life of a Jewish carpenter who, as has often been pointed out, was born in a stable, was executed as a criminal at age thirty-three, never travelled more than ninety miles from his birthplace, owned nothing, attended no school, marshalled no army, and instead of producing books did his only writing in the sand. Nevertheless his birthday is kept across the world, and his death day sets a gallows against almost every skyline."

So it is with the life, the history, the stories, of all the communities that have sprung up ever since in the spirit of such a one. We are more than our changing ideas and our plans; we are lives committed to the Life Sacramental. So it has been with the UUCF. I have lately been looking through old photographs of UUCF gatherings, back into the 80s and back into the 60s. Back to the time when the UUCF was given the old parsonage, the Charles Park House, of the old First Church in downtown Boston for our offices and a dedication service was held. Many of the faces in the photographs I know--some are still among us; some like James Luther Adams and Rhys Williams and Palfrey Perkins and Charles Forman and

UU Christians around the World



Florida, USA. The *Circle of Light*, which has met continuously for the last nine years, has sustained itself as a small group of five or so members who mostly attend *River of Grass UU Congregation* in Plantation, Florida. We meet the second Wednesday of the month. At our next meeting, we will be looking to review our liturgy and either preserve what we have or change the format and content of our meetings. We have always been a prayer group, but in a very liberal sense. Up until now we have kept the same format, opening with a prayer and a member "check-in" where each of us would light a candle. This was followed by readings, biblical and spiritual, with some discussion. Then we celebrated a communion service, usually downloaded from the internet, breaking eating the bread and drinking the wine. We closed with a prayer, holding hands, where we spoke as the spirit moved us. Jon Kitner—*The Circle of Light /UUCF Chapter*

UU Church of the Philippines. The UU Church of the Philippines is offering an opportunity to a UU minister to spend part of her/his sabbatical months with us in the Philippines especially one with liberal Christian perspective. The UUCP wants to cultivate strongly its Christian heritage. The task will mainly be teaching the faith to Bicutan congregation and UU discussion group in Quezon City as well as in Negros Oriental. The output will be for UUCP participants to come up a Lay Formation Course for the adults and youth. We will provide free housing and domestic transportation. If you are interested, please pply directly to Rev. Eric Cherry of the UUA International office or Rebecca Sienes, at rqsienes@uuphilippines.org

Chicago, IL, USA. The Chicago Chapter of the UUCF recently had devotionals and discussed upcoming events, such as a movie showing of *the 13 Apostles*. We are planning an open memorial service from a Christian perspective for those who wish to remember those who have died, whether recently or in the past, using a video movie presentation of Mozart's *Requiem*. We are planning three holyday services: Advent, Maundy Thursday, and a Harrowing of Hell Saturday, the latter featuring William Klein's version of *Handel's Messiah*, and we are planning a dialogue with Humanists on our respective beliefs. We also indirectly sponsor a Bible class called the *Bible as Docu-Fiction*, featuring the Gospel according to the writer who called himself St Matthew. Member Finley C. Campbell conducted a four day revival at a Baptist Church in South Carolina from a UU Christian perspective and was quite well received. A DVD of this service will be available for purchase. Finally, the group plans to visit the congregation of Bishop Carlton Pearson, formerly of Tulsa, OK who is presently a minister in the Chicago area—Rev. Finley C. Campbell, *Chicago/UUCF Chapter*

Richmond, VA, USA. First Unitarian of Richmond has started a Christian thesis group. We have seven members and have been meeting on the 2nd and 4th Thursday of each month since Ash Wednesday. We have had bible studies using the Lectio Divina model and we are currently reviewing *Christian Voices in Unitarian Universalism*. —Sherman Z. Logan, Jr. *Richmond, VA/UUCF Chapter*.

Cleveland, OH, USA. The UUCF group of West Shore has finished a DVD discussion series on talks between Father Thomas Keating and Ken Wilbur. In October we begin a year-long study of the Parables of Jesus and other parables from the world's religious traditions. The curriculum is being written for this course and will be available on the UU Christian website soon—Rev. Kathleen C. Rolenz, *Cleveland, UUCF Chapter*

Communion and Community (continued from page 3)

George Huntston Williams are not--and many more of the faces in the crowds I do not know. But I know the communion they shared. So when we celebrate communion in our Revivals or General Assembly or in our small groups, we also live in their lives shaping who we are, real lives of those who have taken communion through us; through us they still live; through those who follow us as the UUCF with the sharing of cup and plate we too will still live.

Do this in remembrance of me" means more than remembering ideas and beliefs, but creating and sustaining a life together for the purpose of making Jesus visible in the world. You can and should do that in many ways, but the UUCF is one of them. I invite you to deepen your life in our life, and help us reach more lives. Buy a second membership today and share us with a designated friend, family, a church or minister, a seminary or seminarian, either a Unitarian Universalist or especially, in the spirit of world communion day, share us with those in other communities and faiths. Or we will designate such a gift from you. Pass on to others our online groups and help create a meeting with others in your area. Help us add more lives and increase the life abundant around the welcome table. *Blessings, Ron Robinson.*

“SOMETHING WE DO” (continued from page one)

By the Reverend Earl K. Holt

One of the special joys for me these last several years, in which I have been privileged to share in the ministry of King’s Chapel, has been the opportunity to welcome and meet with the groups of young people from our churches all over the country, who with their advisors come to Boston each year on their heritage trips. More and more have come each year. I’ve met with hundreds of them by now. Most come to visit us on weekdays, to see the historic building and learn a little about our long history. But at my encouragement more and more groups each year come to attend worship, for within the context of our Association at least, it is the worship of King’s Chapel, the liturgy even more than its explicitly Christian theology, that is its most distinctive, nearly unique, feature.

Whether they come on a Sunday or on a weekday, I try to meet personally with as many of the UU youth groups as I can, ever hopeful that I might instill not so much historical facts as historical perspective. My hope is that they get at least a glimmer of what it means to belong to a tradition, and that our tradition -- eclectic as it has become especially in the last half-century -- has not only what we now like to call “Sources” but also a deep and substantial root, a tap root, that whether acknowledged or not, appreciated or not, understood or not, continues to feed and nourish us. And, as I believe, if we allow ourselves to become estranged or cut off from that root we will surely wither and in time we will surely die. That there are those who think this would be a good thing, who are embarrassed or worse about our deep roots in historical Christianity, I do not doubt, but I do disagree.

Since no one who knows me would expect a sermon without a quote from T. S. Eliot, let me borrow from him this succinct summary of what it means to belong to a tradition:

Of all that was done in the past, you eat the fruit, either rotten or ripe.

And the Church must be forever building, and always decaying, and always being restored.

For every ill deed in the past we suffer the consequence: For sloth, for avarice, gluttony, neglect of the Word of God, For pride, for lechery, treachery, for every act of sin. And of all that was done that was good, you have the inheritance.

For good and evil deeds belong to a man alone, when he stands alone on the other side of death,

But here upon earth you have the reward of the good and ill that was done by those who have gone before you.

All that is ill you may repair if you walk together in humble repentance, expiating the sins of your fathers;

All all that was good you must fight to keep with hearts as devoted as those of your fathers who fought to gain it.

Since teenagers are a particularly a-historical species and they live in a basically a-historical culture, as we all do, I don’t expect to be able to teach them in a few minutes about what tradition means, but I do try to plant a seed, hoping that at least a few will get it, that tradition is not primarily about the past but rather the connection of past and present --and future as well, that they belong to a community that exists not only in time but through time. And as they sit there in King’s Chapel, in the same pews where others sat more than 250 years ago, looking around at plaques placed in memory of people who died generations before even their grandparents were born, at least some do get it, something about not just the pastness of the past but its presence.

I always ask the kids on tour to walk around the church and not only see what they see but try to notice what they see. Notice what is familiar to them, what is different. Then we discuss. Surprisingly few mention the presence of the silver cross prominently centered over the altar, but often, most recently just this past Sunday, someone will question the absence of a Chalice. “You don’t have a chalice,” they say, sometimes almost accusingly. The first time I was asked this, it actually came as a bit of a surprise, and I responded spontaneously as I now routinely do: “Yes, that’s true. There are many very odd things about King’s Chapel, and one of the oddest is that we don’t light our chalice, we drink from it.” (I think this may actually goes over the heads of most of the kids, but the adults seemed to appreciate it.)

Chalice lightings, which didn’t exist when I came into the ministry, have become increasingly common in UU worship over the past 20 years or so, usually accompanied by spoken words. What I’ve noticed is that the vast majority of these, 90% or more, refer the light, the flame, while relatively few talk about the container, the chalice; in its earliest symbolic usage it was a communion cup. This led me to a further reflection. Before the Unitarian Service Committee adopted the Flaming Chalice as a symbol shortly after its founding during the Second World War, later adopted by the UUA itself as a logo and more recently for ritual use in worship and other meetings; long, long before that it was best known as the symbol of Jan Hus, an early 15th century priest and martyr to the cause of religious freedom, and also of equality, specifically the freedom of the common people, equally with the priests, to take not only the bread of communion but the wine as well. Knowingly defying an established doctrinal practice of the church, Jan Hus served both elements to his congreg-

“SOMETHING WE DO” (continued from page five)

By the Reverend Earl K. Holt

gation, for which he was formally condemned as a heretic in the year 1415 and was burned at the stake. The flaming chalice became for his followers the symbol of his courage and his sacrifice.

So today we are left with what seems to me a great irony, that the flaming chalice, symbol of the freedom of the people to take Communion, has become the logo and widely used symbol of a denomination that effectively denies Communion to almost all of its membership. Not, of course, by any doctrine, which we claim not to have, but by – what to call it? – a mostly unspoken but near unanimous common consent. You could say it’s something that, with rare exception, we *don’t* do.

As I said I encourage youth groups to attend worship at King’s Chapel, and whatever they may make of it, they don’t forget it. High Anglican worship, ancient chants, readings only from the Bible, prayers repeated as they were written in centuries long past, the ministers and sometimes a few parishioners kneeling as they pray. They know they’re not in Kansas any more. And I especially encourage them to come on a Communion Sundays, if they can.

We talk about that too, before the service, and someone always asks what it means. Why would Unitarians take Communion? I tell them that there are probably as many answers to that question as the people who partake. Or, for that matter, who don’t, since there are many members of King’s Chapel who never take Communion. We have as many feisty individualists in our church as you do in yours. But mainly I tell them this: that Communion is not something you believe, it’s something you do. The interpretation of that doing is for each person to decide.

And we do it together, so actually, its something we do. Together -- not only with those who kneel with us at the Communion rail, but with all those unseen others who through the long centuries of Christian history have done the same. I tell them that in the established tradition of King’s Chapel, everyone, without exception, is invited to come to the table. Or not. And I leave them with that invitation.

Sometimes a few come forward, sometimes many. And I know that for some of them it’s their First Communion. It’s very moving to watch the young people as

somewhat nervously they approach and kneel down at the Communion Rail. Sometimes there are tears in their eyes, and certainly in mine. Occasionally, as I hand them the little wafer that we at KC pretend is bread, one of them will say aloud a spontaneous, “Thank you.” I’m always charmed by that. Then they are dismissed, as I say, “Go in peace.” They return to their pews and we say together the Lord’s Prayer, which I hope they do but fear they do not know by heart.

At King’s Chapel it’s just something we do, month by month, year by year. It’s something we do, something Christians do together. But if you think about it, faith in general is also like that. Not something we have, or think, or feel but something we do. As Christian Wiman, editor of *Poetry* magazine writes in his forthcoming book, *My Bright Abyss: Meditation of a Modern Believer*, “The fundamental vanity of the intellectual Christian [is] the belief that faith may be forged within oneself like a little spiritual pearl, which one may then present to the world as a rare treasure....[But] Faith is forged not by the mind alone but by the mind’s risky, messy encounter with the world at large. Faith is not something you have; it is something you do. Silence is the language of faith. Action—be it church or charity, politics or poetry – is the translation.”

In simpler words this is what Jesus told Peter, at their very last meeting. “Do you love me, Peter?” Jesus asks the man who in the night of his own greatest need had denied him three times, loudly shouting, “I do not know the man.” Even so, Jesus asks him three times: “Do you love me?” “Yes, Lord. You know that I love you.” Then, Jesus says: “Feed my lambs....Tend my sheep....Feed my sheep.” And finally, as he had done by the sea at their first meeting, and though Peter had proven himself faithless, had utterly failed his Lord and himself, become with all the others a betrayer, a deserter, a run-away, Jesus invites him yet again: “Follow me.”

Jesus who called him once, now calls him once again. And Jesus is still calling us. Peter gave up on Jesus, but Jesus never gave up on him. A non-canonical book called the Acts of Peter tells of him using the memory of his own denial and restoration as an example and encouragement to Christians whose faith was faltering.

In this Christ who forgives even those who betray him, who is faithful even to those who have proven faithless, this Christ who grants second chances -- and third and fourth chances -- to those who have fallen short, is an image, a reflection of the God prophesied by Jeremiah, a God who is more faithful than we are, who will not forsake us even when we forsake him, or even when we may deserve to be forsaken, a God whose mercy endureth forever.

Continued on the back page





In Memoriam

The Unitarian Universalist Christian Fellowship and the world at large has lost two good friends this past month. The editor felt it important to dedicate this space to their legacy of writing and fellowship that has supported the UUCF and to honor their memory.

The Reverend Tim Jensen

Former UUCF Board Member and officer The Rev. Tim Jensen died of cancer on a Sunday morning at 11 a.m. in August. Many have commented on the timing of the death of one who was so committed to the life of the local church, and one with a good sense of humor and grand sense of history. Tim was an active scholar, graduate of Harvard Divinity School with graduate degrees also in English and Creative Writing and a doctorate in American History; not long before his death he sent to the UUCF a copy of his dissertation book on "The Wares' that influential family of Unitarian ministers who helped shape liberal Christianity in the late 18th and into the 19th centuries. Tim was a good colleague to many; up until a few days before his death he was still writing wonderfully insightful responses to concerns and issues raised by colleagues. Tim was a good UUCF Board member and officer, always a voice to be heard at just the right moments in conversations, a voice committed to new wineskins and new wine but a voice with a long perspective, a voice that would bring us around to ultimate values and mission in our deliberations.

Tim's ministry was served on both coasts and in the heartlands of the country; in Oregon where he began his ministry and academic career and where he died with family; in Midland Texas where he served a UU church without any other nearby UU churches for hundreds of miles, and growing in his ecumenical spirit all the moreso; and on the east coast in Massachusetts and Maine. He had a passion for new congregations and extension and growth, and loved to converse with others about it, and had a realistic yet visionary understanding of what our movement needed to enlarge its influence in the world. And he served some of our historic Unitarian churches well using his love of history to help bring life back into their communities. You can read a sample of some of Tim's sermons at our UUCF site, at http://www.uuchristian.org/R_SermonsPodcasts.html. You can still read his commentaries at his popular blog at www.eclectic-cleric.blogspot.com. Personal and longer remembrances of Tim written by others: one by The Rev. Victoria Weinstein at www.liberalchristian.net issue number four Sept. 2009, and one by The Rev. Thom Belote at <http://revthom.blogspot.com/2009/08/loss-of-minister-tribute-born-of-grief.html>.

Well done, good and faithful servant

In Memoriam

The Reverend Dr. Forrest Church

Written by UUCF Executive Director Rev. Ron Robinson

The Reverend Dr. Forrest Church, long-time minister of All Souls Church in New York City, died on September 25, 2009. Rev. Church had been treated for cancer for a few years; in fact, the news of his condition was breaking at about the time of our UUCF revival in New York City back in the fall of 2006 He has continued over the past few years to be present at some events, to continue writing and publishing books, the latest will be out soon, and to preach and keep people posted on his struggle with cancer and his lessons of life and love through it. I point you to [_www.forrestchurch.com_](http://www.forrestchurch.com) (<http://www.forrestchurch.com>) for more. A memorial service was held at All Souls on Saturday Oct. 3 at 4 pm.



I remember him from around 1980 when he delivered theme talks at our summer church camp and published them in a volume called "Born-Again Unitarian Universalism." He often came to Tulsa to preach and be interviewed by the UU cable TV programs here and to introduce many of his books that followed. He was one of our leading theologians and pastors, as mentioned in the third volume of Gary Dorrien's *The Making of American Liberal Theology*. His book about to be published is on Universalist theology. I remember reading an interview with him in the UU World several years ago where he described himself as a kind of trinitarian Universalist among the

UUs, which opened some doors for me at the time; of late his preaching and writing has been shaped by his knowledge of his impending death and has been about the primacy of love. His books like *God and Other Famous Liberals* and *Bringing God Home*, as well as his smaller books of essays, helped to shape UUism and keep alive these past few generations among many of our churches a language of faith. His books on American politics and religion also brought him wider attention beyond liberal religion's sphere too. His love of Unitarian Universalism and his deep interest in theology has made him a luminary in the wider movement, and his thought, his passion and his presence will be greatly missed.

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“SOMETHING WE DO” (continued from page six)

By the Reverend Earl K. Holt

Earlier in his gospel John presents an extended image and metaphor of Jesus the Good Shepherd. Now, at the conclusion of his book, this image is indirectly evoked, as Jesus calls Peter to become the Good Shepherd, saying to him: “Feed my lambs...Tend my sheep...Feed my sheep.” It is so simple, what Jesus asks: Peter, do you love me. Yes, Lord, you know that I love you. Then: “Feed my lambs.” “Tend my sheep.” “Feed my sheep.” If you love me, Jesus says, then give your life to the shepherding of the sheep and lambs of my flock. He says the same to each of us who say we love him. If you love me, care for those I care about -- which is every one. The gospel in one word is love. Not only: “Thou shalt love the Lord your God with all your heart and mind and strength; and your neighbor as your self.” But also, “Love one another, as I have loved you.” “Do you love me, Peter?” The question is addressed not only to Peter, but to us. “Do you love me, Ron, Kathleen, Joanne, Earl,,you” “Yes, Lord, you know I love you.” As with faith, so it is with love, not something we have or think or feel, but something we do: “Feed my lambs. Tend my sheep. Feed my sheep. “If you love me, keep my commandments. Let us pray:

Help us, O Lord, to become masters of ourselves that we may become the servants of others. Take our minds and think through them. Take our minds and think through them. Take our lips and speak through them. Take our hands and work through them. And take our hearts and set them on fire, through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen. (King’s Chapel Prayerbook, page 168)