

EASTER MORNING COMMUNION SERVICE 2009

FIRST UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CHURCH OF NEW ORLEANS

The Rev. Melanie Morel-Ensminger

Reese Brewer, Worship Associate

PRELUDE: "Pass It On" (Kaiser)

WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS Reese Brewer, Board rep

***OPENING HYMN:** #61, "Lo, The Earth Awakes Again"

CHALICE LIGHTING WORDS: adapted from Sarah York

- Reese- In the tomb of the soul, we carry secret yearnings, pains, frustrations, loneliness, fears, regrets, worries.
- Congregation - In the tomb of the soul, we take refuge from the world and its heaviness.
- MME - In the tomb of the soul, we wrap ourselves in the security of darkness.
- Congregation - Sometimes, this is a comfort. Sometimes, it is an escape.
- Reese - Sometimes it prepares us for experience. Sometimes it insulates and isolates us.
- Congregation - Sometimes this tomb-life gives us time to feel the pain of the world and reach out to heal others.
- MME - Sometimes it numbs us and locks us up with our own concerns.
- Congregation - In this season where light and darkness balance the day, we too seek balance.
- Reese - Grateful for the darkness that has nourished us, we push away the stone and invite the light to awaken us to the possibilities within and among us - possibilities for new life in ourselves and our world. In that hopeful spirit, we light our chalice. (MME20lights chalice.)

***INTROIT:** "Spirit of Life"/"Fuente de Amor"

OFFERING OF GIFTS:

(Pre-selected children have been given the cloth, candles in holders, lighter, flowers in vase, bread on plate, pitcher of grape juice, cup. DRE Lydia guides & prompts the children to bring forward each item in order.)

- MME - We offer this altar cloth...
- Congregation - Remembering all those who have no linen for their beds, or no bed at all, & all those who have no clothing for their bodies.
- Reese - We offer these candles in their metal holders...
- Congregation - Remembering all those who have neither gold nor silver.
- MME - We offer this light...
- Congregation - Remembering all those who have little light to pierce the darkness of their lives.
- Reese - We offer these flowers...
- Congregation - Remembering those in prisons & ghettos who live behind brick & concrete, & have no color or fragrance to lift their spirits.
- MME - We offer this bread...
- Congregation - Remembering all those who go hungry every day.

- Reese – We offer this juice of the fruit of the vine...
- Congregation – Remembering all those who thirst: children needing milk, drought-stricken peoples aching for water, oppressed people thirsting for justice, captives thirsting for freedom.
- MME – We offer this cup to hold the wine...
- Congregation – Remembering that a cup can be shared, yet so often we fear to share.
- Reese – We offer our financial resources...
- Congregation – Remembering that the work of our church requires our participation.
- MME – We will now take up the offering for the life & work & future of this congregation of liberal faith.

OFFERING & SPECIAL MUSIC: “Cantar!”

OFFERING UNISON READING:

We are grateful for these gifts we receive for the work of our church community & the sustenance these gifts provide.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE:

MME – In the quiet of this sacred space & time, we offer up the concerns of our hearts: people we love in need of care, those who have died that we remember, the ills of a wounded world that demand our committed response. Let those who wish to speak be heard now in our presence. (Congregation members call out names & concerns. Go to Response when last person has spoken.)

RESPONSE:

Congregation – For all of these, and for the unspoken concerns in our hearts, we offer the prayers & loving care of this congregation.

WORDS OF INSTITUTION:

Reese – During his last meal the night before he was killed, Jesus took the bread & broke it, & gave it to his friends, saying, “As often as you eat this, do it in memory of me.” (Break the bread on the plate.)

MME – When the meal was over, he took the cup of wine & held it, saying, “As often as you drink of this, do it in memory of me.” (Pour juice in to cup & hold up.)

Let us share communion in memory of Jesus, & in memory of all those who give their lives for peace & justice.

COMMUNION UNISON READING:

We give thanks for the bounty of the earth,
for grains that grow & ripen & are made into bread;
for grapes that swell & ripen & are crushed for their sweet juice.

We give thanks for the labor of human hands & bodies
that made this bread & this juice possible.

We give thanks for our lives & for the strength & love of this faith community.

COMMUNION WORDS:

Sharing Communion: Love & peace be with you always.

Response: And also with you.

***COMMUNION HYMN:** #266, "Now the Green Blade Riseth"

***HYMN:** #268, "Jesus Christ is Risen Today"

***CHALICE EXTINGUISHING:**

We extinguish this flame, but not the light of truth,
the warmth of community, or the fire of commitment.
These we carry in our hearts until we are together again.

***ASCRPTION (FINLANDIA):**

May I who live, be true unto my being.
One in my thoughts, my words and every deed
I was born free... an ever-changing river
is what I am, and neighbor, so are you.
We have the power, through laughter, love, and tears
to face all fears, and live forever free.

***BENEDICTION & SHARING OF PEACE:**

MME – May the peace that
passes understanding & the love that casts out
fear be with you now & in all the days to come. Let us now exchange
signs of peace with each other.

POSTLUDE: "Easter Parade" (Berlin):

<NOTE: Music begins even as people are kissing and hugging. After the Postlude, the
Easter Egg Hunt is announced.>