

*Celebrating Sixty-Eight Years of Liberal Ministry*

# Mount Vernon Unitarian Church

Unitarian Universalist

Affirming Respect for All People and the Earth

November 26, 2023, 10:00 a.m. Online

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## THE ORDER OF SERVICE

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### **Why Are We Afraid to Stretch Ourselves to Help Others?**

Brian McDonald

When called upon to be involved in someone's life in a way that is new to us, why do we often demur? Is this a natural response or a selfish one? How do we make an accurate choice? In many cases, what needs to be done is really not in anyone's wheelhouse. Should we be willing to try?

Brian, an active member of MVUC, currently practices as a psychotherapist in Alexandria, VA. Prior to this, he dedicated nearly three decades of his life to serving as a conservative/evangelical missionary and pastor. Drawing from this rich and diverse background, he has authored a book detailing his experiences. This insightful work is readily available for you to explore in our church's Book Nook.

**At this symbol ▲, please rise in body or spirit.**

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*The music begins. Worship emerges. Let our bodies and hearts be present. Let us give our attention to the moment.*

Prelude.....Stephen Czarkowski, cello; Ria Yang, piano; Ron Brandt, song leader  
“You Say” & “Sonata Pathétique” mashup  
By Paul Mabury & Beethoven; arr. by Al Van Der Beek & Steven Sharp Nelson

Welcome and Announcements.....Bonnie Brandt

Introit.....Stephen Czarkowski and Ria Yang  
“Over the Rainbow” & “Simple Gifts” mashup  
By Harold Arlen; arr. by Al Van Deer Beek & Steven Sharp Nelson

Chalice Lighting & Opening Words

▲ Opening Hymn, № 298, “Wake, Now, My Senses” By T. Mikelson, arr. Carlton Young

1. **Wake, now, my senses, and hear the earth call;  
Feel the deep power of being in all;  
Keep, with the web of creation your vow,  
Giving, receiving as love shows us how.**
2. **Wake, now, my reason, reach out to the new;  
Join with each pilgrim who quests for the true;  
Honor the beauty and wisdom of time;  
Suffer thy limit, and praise the sublime.**
3. **Wake, now, compassion, give heed to the cry;  
Voices of suffering fill the wide sky;  
Take as your neighbor both stranger and friend,  
Praying and striving their hardship to end.**
4. **Wake, now, my conscience, with justice thy guide;  
Join with all people whose rights are denied;  
Take not for granted a privileged place;  
God’s love embraces the whole human race.**
5. **Wake, now, my vision of ministry clear;  
Brighten my pathway with radiance here;  
Mingle my calling with all who will share;  
Work toward a planet transformed by our care.**

▲ Our Covenant (inside the hymnal on the back cover)

**Love is the teaching of this church. The quest of truth is its daily task,  
And service is its prayer. To dwell together in peace,  
To seek knowledge in freedom, to serve life in community  
To the end that all souls shall grow in harmony—  
This is our Covenant, with each and with all.**

Readings

“Wild Geese” by Mary Oliver and “The Props Assist the House” by Emily Dickinson

Meditation & Prayer

Offertory

Sharing Our Gifts.....Arcadia Center for Sustainable Food and Agriculture

Music: “Love” by David Foster.....Ria Yang

To support our fellowship you can visit <https://onrealm.org> or download the **Realm app**.

Or use one of the following options:

Scan to Give



Click to Give: <https://onrealm.org/MountVernonUnit/-/form/give/now>

Click to Pledge: <https://mvuc.org/giving/stewardship>

Text to Give: Put **73256** in the *To:* box and enter **MVUC** and the dollar amount in the *Text Message* box.

Hymn, № 318, “We Would Be One” By Samuel Wright and Jean Sibelius

- 1. We would be one as now we join in singing  
Our hymn of love, to pledge ourselves anew  
To that high cause of greater understanding  
Of who we are, and what in us is true.  
We would be one in living for each other  
To show to all a new community.**
- 2. We would be one in the building for tomorrow  
A nobler world than we have known today.  
We would be one in searching for that meaning  
Which bends our hearts and points us on our way.  
As one, we pledge ourselves to greater service,  
With love and justice, strive to make us free.**

Sermon: “Why Are We Afraid to Stretch Ourselves to Help Others” .....Brian McDonald

Musical Reflection: Prelude to Suite #1, G Major by Bach.....Stephen Czarkowski

▲ Closing Hymn, № 121, “We’ll Build a Land” by Carolyn McDade

- 1. We’ll build a land where we bind up the broken.  
We’ll build a land where the captives go free,  
Where the oil of gladness dissolves all mourning.  
Oh, we’ll build a promised land that can be.**

Chorus

- Come build a land where sisters and brothers,  
Anointed by God, may then create peace:  
Where justice shall roll down like waters,  
And peace like an ever flowing stream.**
- 2. We’ll build a land where we bring the good tidings  
To all the afflicted and all those who mourn.  
And we’ll give them garlands instead of ashes.  
Oh, we’ll build a land where peace is born.**

(Chorus)

- 3. We’ll be a land building up ancient cities,  
Raising up devastations from old;  
Restoring ruins of generations.  
Oh, we’ll build a land of people so bold.**

(Chorus)

(Song continues on next page)

4. **Come, build a land where the mantles of praises  
Resound from spirits once faint and once weak;  
Where like oaks of righteousness stand her people.  
Oh, come build the land, my people we seek.**

(Chorus)

▲ Extinguishing the Chalice (Nº 456)

**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.**

Benediction

Postlude: “Bourée” Op.24 (G Major section).....Stephen Czarkowski and Ria Yang  
By William Squire

~ *When* our worship ends, our service begins. ~

Next Week: December 3, 2023, 10:00 a.m. In-person & Online \_\_\_\_\_ Rev. Ian White Maher  
“The Beauty of the Begging Bowl”

Annie Dillard, reflecting on the writing process, once said, “Do not hoard what seems good for a later place in the book or for another book; give it, give it all, give it now... the impulse to keep to yourself what you have learned is not only shameful, it is destructive. Anything you do not give freely and abundantly becomes lost to you. You open your safe and find ashes.” There is a false belief that we can hold onto things whether it is money or status or even friendship. But we cannot hold onto anything. When we understand this, we can try, instead, to give it away and, in doing so, live a life rich with meaning.

## Welcome, Guests!

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We are glad you are here this morning! Please join us for refreshments after our service so that we may meet you, and visit our Greeter's Table in the Commons for information about Unitarian Universalism, our church, and membership.

- **Large-print** weekly bulletins and order of services are available from our ushers.
- **Personal receivers** tuned to the chapel sound system are available in the Commons.
- **Please turn cell phones off** or to worship mode during the service.
- **If your children are restless** in the chapel, please take them to the nursery, where you may continue to listen to the service.
- **Religious Education classes end fifteen minutes** after the scheduled end of the service to give parents an opportunity to attend our fellowship hour.

## Serving Us This Morning

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Mt. Vernon Unitarian Church is a volunteer-based community with a few paid staff. From Sunday worship to governance to creek cleanup, we celebrate everyone who helps support our rich and diverse community.

## Path to Membership

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Membership is open to anyone fifteen years of age and older.

If interested, we suggest you do the following:

- Attend a Meet-and-Greet Luncheon (held after Sunday service about once per month).
- Attend an *Introduction to MVUC and UU* (held quarterly).
- Sign the Membership Book with the minister or a board member as witness.

All members are expected to contribute their time, talent, and treasure. To discuss your interest in joining MVUC, please talk with the Rev. Ian. He may be reached by email at [minister@mvuc.org](mailto:minister@mvuc.org). You may also contact Jim Burke at [MembershipChair@mvuc.org](mailto:MembershipChair@mvuc.org).

Subscribe to online services and news at <https://mvuc.org/newsletters/>

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## Mount Vernon Unitarian Church

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A Welcoming Congregation and Certified Green Sanctuary

MVUC is a 10+ Year Honors Congregation member of the Unitarian Universalist Association, Central East Region