

Love, Peace and Beauty

All hymns are from 'Hymns for Living' (The Green Hymn book)

Opening Music: 'Hail The Conquering Hero Comes', by Tim Wheater. 4m 54s

11.00 Introduction:

Good morning. Welcome to you all, especially those who are here for the first time, those who are here in spirit and those who have joined us on Zoom.

Light candle: As is our custom we will now light the chalice candle. And a chance for people on Zoom to also light a candle if they wish.

Unison affirmation

Here, let no man be a stranger!

Let us accept ourselves with dignity and others will accept us in gratitude.

If we see an unfamiliar face, unaccustomed eyes or skin, or hear a strange accent,

May we know that beneath all difference there is manhood, womanhood,
the same in all places.

There is but one journey upon which we are all engaged.

Hymn: 172 'All are Welcome Here'.

Tune: 'Westminster' James Turle, 1802 – 82; Words by Peter Gilbraith, Used by permission

Now open wide your hearts, my friends,
And I will open mine,
And let us share all that is fair,
All that is true and fine.

We gather in this meeting house –
People of many kinds:
Let us below the surface, seek
A meeting of true minds.
For in our company shall be

Great witnesses of light:
The Buddha, Krishna, Jesus – those
Gifted with clearest sight.

Like them, we seek to know ourselves,
To seek, in spite of fear;
To open wide to, to all, our hearts –
For all are welcome here.

Let us spend a while in prayer and thought for all those caught up in the disasters that have taken place in the Atlas Mountains and in Libya.

This morning we are delving into
Love, peace, and beauty! Don't they go well together? The three together form our highest emotions. As I have found out they are very difficult to separate, if not impossible. Throughout this service you will see how they are so intertwined starting with this from Muinuddin Chishti, A 13th century humanitarian:

Love all and hate none. Mere talk of peace will avail you naught.

Mere talk of God and religion will not take you far.

Bring out all of the latent powers of your being
and reveal the full magnificence of your immortal self.

Be surcharged with peace and joy,
and scatter these wherever you are and wherever you go.

Be a blazing fire of truth, be a beautiful blossom of love,
and be a soothing balm of peace.

With your spiritual light, dispel the darkness of ignorance.

Dissolve the clouds of discord and war, and spread goodwill, peace and harmony
among the people.

When love works its magic there is harmony and peace and everything around
becomes that much more beautiful. You could say that:

Love is action; Action is knowledge; Knowledge is truth; Truth is love.

We start with **love**.

LOVE IS

Love is blue and red and yellow

Love is warm and dark and mellow,

Love that binds and love that frees

Love is the flowers, birds and trees.

Love is new and love is old

Love engulfs you, love is bold.

Love, a journey with life in toll

Love is the lover and love the goal.

Love is a teacher, love a learning

Love is a union, love a yearning,

Love is the moment, love eternal

Love says yes and love the kernel.

We know reality through love, and love is that reality. Love is an attracting and creative force that holds the whole universe together and just as we have organs to pick up smells, taste, sound and light, we have an organ that picks up that energy we call love. That organ, of course, is the heart. Love permeates all of our senses; we love a beautiful view, a work of art, music, the smell and taste of food. Love attracts us to others and others to us. Without love life would not be worth living.

To the one who knows what it means, love means patience, love means endurance, love means tolerance, love means sacrifice, love means service. All things such as gentleness, humility, modesty, graciousness, kindness, all are the different manifestations of love. It is the same as to say,

'Love is all and all is love.' And it is to find it, to feel it, to experience its warmth, and to see in the world, the light of love, and to keep its glow, and to hold love's flame high, as the sacred torch, to guide one in life's journey. It is in this that the purpose of life is fulfilled.

Unconditional Love is most sacred. To utter the word love without meaning it is a vain repetition. The lips of a person to whom it means something, are closed. They can say little. For love is a revelation in itself. No study is necessary, no meditation is needed, and no piety is required. If love is pure, if the spark of love has begun to

glow, then there is no need to go somewhere to gain love. Then love is within. One must keep blowing the spark till it turns into a perpetual fire. The fire worshippers of old did not worship a fire which went out; they worshipped a perpetual fire. Where is that perpetual fire to be found? In one's heart.

Self-knowledge is the real wisdom – Vedanta.

The kingdom of God is within you – Bible.

He who knows himself knows God – Koran

Knowledge without love and service is useless. Love must be without conditions.

You cannot know love by reading about it, just as you cannot fully understand the depths of love by it being described to you.

It is what's in the heart that is important, not outward appearances.

Love is what is present when there is no object-subject, when there are not two.

Love is not causal. You cannot create love, you cannot practise love and it cannot be taught.

We find love through the inner yearning of the heart. It is the inner yearning of the heart that has kept me on the spiritual path.)

Reading: 'An emerald Earth', page 122 'Awakening in life'. Read by Ann

It is said that God is love, and that love is in our heart. This is because this is where we first feel the pangs of love. You have to start by loving life and then yourself. You cannot expect someone else to love you if you do not love yourself. Despite what some say you are not unique. You are part of a community. By loving life and yourself for what you are, brings harmony and beauty.

It is not who or what you pray to, or whether you pray at all, it is what's in your heart that counts. There are two aspects to love; service and passion. Service, giving your life to the service of others, welcoming to all.

What stops us from welcoming to all? The word my, my family, my country, my team, my religion. Mine infers a yours; mine is better than yours.

We need to remove I, me and mine which separates us from others, nature and life. This is best done with loving kindness. With true loving kindness we are no longer thinking of ourselves. If we remove I, me and mine and all the baggage we carry around in our mind, what do we have left, intuition and inspiration.

All rivers, whether they flow to the east or to the west, have arisen from the sea and will return to it again. Yet once these rivers have merged with the sea they no longer think "I am this river", "I am that river". In the same way, my son, all these creatures, when they merge again with Being, do not remember that they originally arose from being and wound their individual ways through life. ~ *Chandogya Upanishad*

Passion goes together with creativity. All the great artists were passionate about what they were doing; they did not start wars; they did not fight each other; they appreciated other people's art and tolerated that which they were not drawn to. Peace, beauty and creativity comes from freedom; freedom from dogma; freedom from the veils that bind us.

When people prefer the love of money, status or promotion it often goes wrong because it is one sided. Money does not return that love. Unconditional love requires two people being attracted to each other. When it is one sided it leads to misery. Loving someone who does not respond can lead to desperation.

I would like now to give you the first part of a practice that, if done regularly, could change your life. It is very simple; all you have to do is take three very slow breaths in and out with intention. As you breath in feel that you are breathing in **love**; then on the out breath feel **compassion** radiating from your heart and reaching everyone in the church.

PEACE

Hymn: 176 'Come together in Love'

Tune 'Come together' Dorothy Grover, arr. Douglas L. Butler; Words Dorothy Grover By permission of the Religious Arts Guild, Boston

O come together in truth;
O come together in peace;
O come together in joy and sharing,
Come together in knowing and caring;
Come together,
O come together,
O come together in love.

We come together in search
Of new beginnings for all,
Where understanding and trust surround us –
Gone the hate and fear that bound us;
Come together,
O come together,
O come together in love.

Reading(s): 'The Peace' by Alice Walker.

Knock and the door shall be opened. Ask and you shall receive. Whatsoever you do unto the least of these, you do also unto me – and to yourself. For we are one. God answers prayers. Which is another way of saying “the universe responds.” We are indeed the world. Only if we have reason to fear what is in our own heart need we fear for the planet. Teach yourself peace. Pass it on.

Each year the International Day of Peace (IDP) is observed around the world on **21st September**. The UN General Assembly has declared this as a day devoted to strengthening the ideals of peace, through observing 24 hours of non-violence and cease-fire. In 2014 the 21st was on a Sunday and I gave the service here on Peace.

May the Great Spirit grant you peace of mind,

May peace be there in everything you find,

May peace be there in all you leave behind

Peace, peace, peace.

Silence

You can come together in peace, you can bring about harmony and peace through love but you cannot actively be at peace. Peace is when you stop, when there is nothing left to do. Peace is when you stop thinking about the past or the future. Peace is in the moment and can last for just a moment or a long time.

We need action and repose. To attain peace, what one has to do is to seek that rhythm of action and repose. Facts are not the most important things in life. Love, joy, peace, courage, loyalty, unselfishness, self-control and generosity; these are the considerations that make for healthy, happy and peaceful living conditions. which is in the depth of our being. It is just like the ocean; the surface is ever-moving; the depth of the ocean is still,

I would like you again to take three very slow breaths in and out with intention. As you breath in feel that you are breathing in **harmony**; then on the out breath feel **peace** radiating from your heart and reaching out to the world.

BEAUTY

Hymn: 237 'Seek not Afar for Beauty'

Tune: 'Limpsfield' Andrew Freeman; Words by Minot Judson Savage, 1841 – 1918

Seek not afar for beauty; lo it glows
In dew- wet grasses all about your feet;
In birds, in sunshine, childlike faces sweet,
In stars and mountain summits topped with snows.

Go not abroad for happiness – for see,
It is a flower blooming at your door.
Bring love and justice home, and then no more
You'll wonder in what dwelling joy may be.

Dream not of noble service elsewhere wrought;
The simple duty that awaits your hand
Is God's voice speaking with divine command:
Life's common deeds build all that saints have thought.

In wonder-workings, or some bush aflame,
We look for God who seems to be concealed;
But in earth's common things God stands revealed,
While grass and flowers and stars spell out the name.

Reading: 'An emerald Earth', page 148 'The secret of life', Read by Kathryn

We all see beauty differently, what is beautiful for one person is common place to another. How many times do we ignore the beauty that is all around us?

When you see or hear something and you think, 'that is beautiful,' it is just a thought? True beauty does not need thought, you cannot reduce it to words.

Beauty is love made manifest. It is an emotion that you feel deep inside.

True beauty requires truthfulness and purity in the observer and the object. We require the authentic object, not a copy. We do not want something that has been watered down or changed.

I would like you again to take three very slow breaths in and out with intention. As you breath in feel that you are breathing in **purity**; then on the out breath feel **beauty** radiating from your heart and reaching out to all those who need more beauty in their lives.

To finish:

“A human being is a part of the whole called by us universe, a part limited in time and space. He experiences himself, his thoughts and feeling as something separated from the rest. This delusion is a kind of prison, restricting us to our personal desires and to affection for a few persons nearest to us. Our task must be to free ourselves from this prison by widening our circle of compassion to embrace all living creatures and the whole of nature in its beauty.” ~ *Albert Einstein*

Beauty produces the highest emotion that we have. Love produces harmony and peace, and harmony and peace produces all beauty. Our aim should be, a beautiful world full of beautiful people. It means attaining an awe and reverence for the magic and mystery in life and for the power and beauty of nature. And the most important thing for yourself, ‘don’t worry, be happy’

Benediction: The Universal Prayer for Peace.

Let us go in peace, to live together in harmony,
to see beauty in everything,
to know wonder in each passing moment
and to walk gently with our God. Amen

Music: ‘Weaving the Heartbeat’ by Tim Wheeler

5m 2s

Notices: