

Talking to?

Music: [528 Hz - Tibetan Zen Sound Heals The Entire Body | Music For Inner Peace And Calming The Mind](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=e3T8ctg1D6I&list=RDe3T8ctg1D6I&start_radio=1)

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Good morning. A big welcome to you all. The music was called, 'Music for inner peace.' I invite you this morning to feel that inner peace. Let go of all outside thoughts, Let go of being judgemental, just be.

The first time I entered this church it was empty, except for a lady arranging the flowers. I noticed the wonderful atmosphere that had built up by people like yourselves coming here on Sunday mornings. We all have a part to play even when we are just being.

As is our custom we will start by lighting the chalice candle. This is followed by a prayer.

Prayer – To thee we raise our whole being, vessels emptied of self. Accept this our emptiness, and so fill us with Thy Self, Thy light, Thy Love and Thy Life. That these, thy precious gifts, may radiate through us and overflow the chalice of our hearts into the hearts of all. Revealing unto them Thy Joy and Wholeness and the serenity of Thy Peace, which nothing can destroy.

We are like a full glass of water. We cannot receive more until we are first emptied of our ego self. Once you let go you become full of the beauty that is all around you.

A Unitarian definition of Prayer is; a form of religious practice that seeks to activate a rapport with a deity, spirit, departed person or a higher consciousness.

My physical Guide asked me if I prayed, How do I get out of that one: She might ask me to recite one of the prayers that I should know off by heart. I was honest and said no, but I do talk to God. She said, "That is what prayer is, talking to God."

Prayer is talking, either said out loud or internally. Whereas, meditation and contemplation is listening. That is the difficult part, we can all talk but there are not many people that can listen in the silence. Not many people can let go of their ego and give themselves to that silence. Prayer happens in those moments when all else has failed, and it is also in that silence that we hear an answer.

Who is talking?

We all talk to ourselves. A part of the brain is set up to allow us to talk and listen to ourselves. Without it nothing would get done.

As we get older our inner conversation is often said out loud. It does help us when we are looking for an answer; looking for something; or opening a cupboard door and asking why. It can be embarrassing what we say when we bash our elbow or drop something heavy on

our foot. Even worse is when we say something out loud and the person in the next room says, 'you better not be saying that about me?'

It sometimes goes wrong; as when we constantly think of something that happened in the past or something that might happen in the future. This includes what might happen to us when we die. There is always that nagging feeling that we could have done more, we should not have done what we did. It is that, 'if only,' and 'what if.' *

But is it really us who are talking, or are we saying something that we have accumulated since childhood. Do we have free will?

In the Christian tradition we are told to be like sheep and follow the good shepherd. In schools we are told what to do and think. The list goes on, parents, bosses, politicians ... Some even submit to the will of their dog or cat.

I invite you now to sing **Hymn – 24 (P)** Come sing a song with me.

Come, sing a song with me,
come, sing a song with me,
come, sing a song with me,
that I might know your mind.

And I'll bring you hope when hope is hard to find,
and I'll bring a song of love and a rose in the winter time.

Come dream a dream with me,
come dream a dream with me,
come dream a dream with me,
that I might know your mind.

And I'll bring you hope when hope is hard to find,
and I'll bring a song of love and a rose in the winter time.

Come, walk in rain with me,
come, walk in rain with me,
come, walk in rain with me,
that I might know your mind.

And I'll bring you hope when hope is hard to find,
and I'll bring a song of love and a rose in the winter time.

Come, share a rose with me,
come, share a rose with me,
come, share a rose with me,
that I might know your mind.

And I'll bring you hope when hope is hard to find,
and I'll bring a song of love and a rose in the winter time.

Words and Music by Carolyn McDade b.1935 © Surtsey Publishing Company used with permission.

Ask yourself:

Who or what are you inwardly talking to when you are not talking to yourself?

Who or what do you praise when things go right?

Who or what do you blame when things go wrong?

Are they the same, or do you have one to praise and one to blame?

God can be divided into: God is in my heart, God is in heaven and God is. Although God cannot be described, many people including myself call God Cosmic consciousness. This gets around the problem of calling God a he or a she. The native Americans pray to the Great Spirit and try to live a natural life knowing that the whole universe and all of nature is the manifestation of God.

Mohammed said that God is closer to you than your jugular vein.

I am an open minded Unitarian so I try **not** to put a barrier between myself and the workings of the universe.

We went to a Humanist talk last month and I could agree with everything he said.

What we look up to, and what controls our life, is very personal. For some people it is the acumination of money, or even their football team. You can often see people at a grave talking to a departed one, and sometimes hoping for a reply, especially, when they can't find the will or a key to the safe.

I know someone, and he is not alone, who thinks that his ancestors are watching him, that they are present, that they are judging him. If he could hear them I am sure they are really there to guide him.

I know most of you know that Jesus meant healer. Records show that when he was born he was named Joshua. Historians now tell us that most of what is in the history books are wrong. This is why I prefer to talk and write about my own experiences.

I am the only person that I really know, and at times, I have doubts about that. On retreat I have had experiences but the first one was here in this church back in the '80s. I was sitting next to the aisle in a full church waiting for the service to start when I clearly saw a man walk towards me and when he got close he disappeared. This is the first time I have mentioned this.

A small group of us was asked to sit in a circle and just listen, we all sat there for a while and then I saw someone in my mind's eye. I asked him his name, which he gave me, then I asked if I could help, he said that he just wanted to say hello to someone in the group.

When I described him she recognised him from their university days. I didn't think this was anything special as I know lots of people who can do the same. What was different was the voice I then heard saying, "We have let you do this just this once to show you that you can do it." This helped me to not have expectations that it will happen again.

If we ask for help we must do it without expectation. Help is not always instant and if we expect something to happen it blurs the mind and we might miss out on something that we could have had.

Story: This Nasrudin story is about expectation;

(We all have nagging thoughts giving us reasons for not doing something, such as; what's the point, I am going to fail, people do it better than I can. If I had listened to these thoughts 11 years ago I would not be up here today. People laughed when I said I was going to write a book but I proved them wrong. Mind you we do need to listen to our inner voice when it's to do with health and safety.

We all have an inner guide waiting to be heard. Mine is hopeless with computers. When you have faith you no longer need expectation or a goal, you just know that you are being guided and your life is as it should be.)

We come to church for many reasons;

We want to feel that we are a part of something bigger.

To be part of the atmosphere that the church has built up.

We feel the need for support and friendship, and enjoy a cup of tea and a chat afterwards.

It is part of our belief, our faith.

To say prayers that fit in with specific occasions, such as the blessing of the harvest, the birth or death of a loved one, or days of the year that have special religious significance.

These are just a few reasons, I'm sure you will have more.

How do we communicate?

There are many ways to be one with the One. Who or what we connect to is not important, being wholehearted is. Love is the vehicle and beauty, which is the same as truth, is the destination. God listens to the heart, not to words.

We will now have music, followed by silent contemplation.

I agree with:

Music: - John Lennon; 'Love is real' https://youtu.be/7er_xx7Wmg8?si=2EocGK9-1z13tvoe

Prayer does not change things; prayer changes people, and people change things.

We cannot change anything out there until we have changed ourselves, and to do that we have to go within. There is a vast world within waiting to be discovered. It is unique to each one of us. The best prayers are when they come from within, that emotional outburst that can be felt in the atmosphere or in silent prayer that can be felt within.

My guide used to say that there are as many ways to God as there are people. We can communicate with prayer, be still in meditation, and receive in contemplation. Sound has been used for thousands of years to reach a higher state, this includes chanting, drumming and gongs, and has been used with turning and dance. Prayer can include a physical element such as a sand painting or forming a sacred circle as when the Pagans call in the four directions.

There are many types of prayer: petitionary, thanksgiving, praise, worship, requesting guidance or assistance, confessing sins and expressing thoughts and emotions. It can be silent, spoken or in the form of a poem or a song.

Sheikh Nazim writes that you can only receive information from reading, true knowledge and wisdom comes from within the heart. Your memory will decline with age, but the heart, once it has been awakened, strengthens with age.

I invite you now to make a connection with your inner self, your higher self, that is found within the heart.

Prayer can be for personal benefit or for the sake of others. Prayer often combines more than one type such as asking for help when the chips are down, being aware and accepting that help, then giving thanks.

When I pointed to the food in front of our cat he looked at the finger, in the same way when the historic figures pointed at the way, the truth and the light the majority of people preferred to stay where they were and be quick to condemn those who tried to live in the light. As in T'he Conference of the Birds' most of the birds found excuses for not going on the journey.

Hymn – 186 (P) We are travellers.

We are travellers on a journey
which brought us from the sun,
when primal star exploded
and earth in orbit spun;
but now as human dwellers
upon earth-planet's crust,
we strive for living systems
whose ways are kind and just.

We are travellers on a journey
which grows from human seed,
and through our birth and childhood
goes where life's path may lead;
but now we are delving deeper
in quest of greater worth
and reaching unknown regions
and planets of new birth.

We are travellers on a journey
through realms of inner space
where joy and peace are planets
that circle stars of grace;
and when we find the stillness
which comes at journey's end,
there'll be complete refreshment,
a resting place, a friend.

Words ©Andrew M.Hill b. 1942, used by permission. Music, Tune 'Ascension' Henry Hugh Bancroft, 1904 - 1988.

Prayer

There are many levels of prayer. Hazrat Inayat Khan wrote:

Life itself is a prayer. On a basic level we pray for a better world and better health for ourselves or for other people.

The next level of prayer is doing what we can to help. I'm sure you all fit into that category.

The third level is being more aware of what needs our help. This is where action and repose is so important. We need to listen to our inner selves.

The fourth level of prayer is one of being, your presence brings peace and unity.

The highest level of prayer is gnosis. You become a part of life's process. You have knowledge but not from learning. A realisation that comes from a feeling and is guided by higher emotions and beauty.

Above the fifth we no longer exist as an individual. We become part of that great ocean that some call eternal life. Sheikh Nazim called his books Mercy Oceans. All rivers return to the oceans.

Praying, going to church and singing, especially in a choir can lower blood pressure, stress and depression, and it can help us to live a more serene life.

Spiritual healing is a form of prayer where we ask for healing energy to move through us and into the person requiring healing. We never say that the healing comes from us alone. In distant healing there is a connection between the healer, the healing energy and the recipient. As with sound healing the aim is not to instantly cure someone but to help their body to heal itself.

When negative people are told that they have cancer they go home and die. Whereas positive people, surrounded by positive people and in a positive atmosphere live on for many years. Healing only works if the person, consciously or unconsciously, wants it. I knew someone who did not want healing until after the insurance had paid out.

A church did an experiment where they asked one member of the congregation to send healing to a person. That did not work so they asked 10 people to sit together and send healing, that did not work so they increased it to 25 without success, but when they increased it again the person was cured.

When I had skin cancer and went to Dermatology I stayed positive but they gave me sheets of paper with support groups and all the help I can receive. I put a stop to it when they gave me a card for Macmillan. I began to think that perhaps I only had weeks to live. What I would have preferred was for the person to say; don't worry, it's not a problem, we remove these all the time.

Hymn – 165 (P) The spirit lives to set us free.

Words: Anonymous.. Music 'Walk in the Light' Traditional Arr David Dawson

The Spirit lives to set us free,
walk, walk in the light.
It binds us all in unity,
walk, walk in the light.

Walk in the light (3 times) walk in the light of love.

The light that shines is in us all,
Walk, walk in the light.
We each must follow our own call,
walk, walk in the light.

Walk in the light (3 times) walk in the light of love.

Peace begins inside your heart,
walk, walk in the light.
We've got to live it from the start,
walk, walk in the light.

Walk in the light (3 times) walk in the light of love.

Seek the truth in what you see,
walk, walk in the light.
Then hold it firmly as can be,
walk, walk in the light.

Walk in the light (3 times) walk in the light of love.

The Spirit lives in you and me,
walk, walk in the light.
Its light will shine for all to see,
walk, walk in the light.

Walk in the light (3 times) walk in the light of love.

To sum up, there is more to life than life lets on, you do not need to try and analyse it, at any time you can, as Jesus said, ask and you will receive. Better still is to ask, 'how can I be of service,' because, as Rumi wrote, we are all here for a reason.

This final Prayer is similar to others in that it give a feeling of hope. They can produce an emotion and if done with sincerity can produce a positive result.

Remember; There is never a moment when we are alone;
Never a moment when our cries for help will not be answered;
Never a moment when we are left unsupported;
Never a moment when insight is not available to us;
Never a moment when we are not connected to God, the universe and all-that-is.

Prayers are not only for those dark times, they also work in the light.

I have heard the finishing music many times by many singers; this is the most beautiful; and is translated as

Music: - Om Mani Padmi Hum "Hail to the Jewel in the Lotus"

www.youtube.com/watch?v=GduID0-2G2c&list=RDe3T8ctg1D6I&index=11