

## Earth Day 2020—50 years

Unitarian Universalist Community Church of Washington County, Hillsboro, OR,

Kathryn Warrior, April 19, 2020

**Chalice Lighting:** Committed to respond to the call of a wounded world...

We join together this day with loving hearts, hands and minds.

Embracing the interconnected web of water, air and earth...

We light a fire of sustaining hope, ever bright with love and justice.

May we bring forth this day new wisdom, strength and courage

To create a new world not of wealth, but well-being.

A world of new peace and abundance for all.

As we give thanks for this earth, our shared and singular home,

May we dedicate ourselves to its ongoing care.

Rising to the calls deep within us, and all around us...

May we respond today and always with courage and with love.—Lynn Harrison

**Check in:** Share briefly what's been on your mind, or your joys and concerns since we last met.

### Topic Introduction: Earth Day

- The commemoration known as Earth Day, first held on April 22, 1970, marks the beginning of what was to become the modern environmental movement. The Earth Day celebration in 1990 led to widespread recycling efforts that our children now see as commonplace in our homes and communities. Given how Unitarian Universalism's Seventh Principle guides us to protect our planet and the "independent web of all existence," then if ever there were a Holy Day for Unitarian Universalists, this would be it.—Michelle Richards, "Making Earth Day A Holy Day," UU World 4/20/2012
- The theme for Earth Day 2020 is climate action. The enormous challenge — but also the vast opportunities — of action on climate change have distinguished the issue as the most pressing topic for the 50th anniversary.

Climate change represents the biggest challenge to the future of humanity and the life-support systems that make our world habitable.—[earthday.org/earth-day-2020/](http://earthday.org/earth-day-2020/)

### Quotes related to Earth Day

1. "You have stolen my dreams and my childhood with your empty words. And yet I'm one of the lucky ones. People are suffering. People are dying. Entire ecosystems are collapsing. We are in the beginning of a mass extinction, and all you can talk about is money and fairy tales of eternal economic growth. How dare you!" —*Climate activist—Greta Thunberg*
2. "The environment is where we all meet; where all have a mutual interest; it is the one thing all of us share." —*Lady Bird Johnson*
3. "A true conservationist is a man who knows that the world is not given by his fathers, but borrowed from his children." —*John James Audubon*
4. "In every walk with nature one receives far more than he seeks." —*John Muir*

5. "Look deep into nature, and then you will understand everything better." —*Albert Einstein*
6. "Here is your country. Cherish these natural wonders, cherish the natural resources, cherish the history and romance as a sacred heritage, for your children and your children's children. Do not let selfish men or greedy interests skin your country of its beauty, its riches or its romance." —*Theodore Roosevelt*
7. "Humankind has not woven the web of life. We are but one thread within it. Whatever we do to the web, we do to ourselves. All things are bound together ... all things connect." —*Chief Seattle*
8. "You cannot get through a single day without having an impact on the world around you. What you do makes a difference, and you have to decide what kind of difference you want to make." —*Jane Goodall*
9. "The earth is what we all have in common." – *Wendell Berry*
10. "Earth Day should encourage us to reflect on what we are doing to make our planet a more sustainable and livable place." –*Scott Peters*
11. "To leave the world better than you found it, sometimes you have to pick up other people's trash." – *Bill Nye*
12. "Every day is Earth Day, and I vote we start investing in a secure climate future right now." - *Jackie Speier*

### Questions for Discussion:

1. Is there anything that struck a chord with you in the topic introduction or the quotes?
2. How do you think of the planet Earth and your relationship to it? In what way is this view related to your personal spirituality, beliefs, the Unitarian Universalist Principles and the way you live your life?
3. What ways can we celebrate Earth Day every day?
4. Who do you feel is ultimately responsible for caring for the Earth and the ecosystem on which we depend on?

### Song: Blue Boat Home

Though below me, I feel no motion  
 Standing on these mountains and plains  
 Far away from the rolling ocean  
 Still my dry land heart can say  
 I've been sailing all my life now  
 Never harbor or port have I known  
 The wide universe is the ocean I travel  
 And the earth is my blue boat home

Sun, my sail and moon, my rudder  
 As I ply the starry sea  
 Leaning over the edge in wonder  
 Casting questions into the deep  
 Drifting here with my ship's companions  
 All we kindred pilgrim souls  
 Making our way by the lights of the heavens  
 In our beautiful blue boat home

I give thanks to the waves upholding me  
Hail the great winds urging me on  
Greet the infinite sea before me  
Sing the sky my sailor's song  
I was born upon the fathoms  
Never harbor or port have I known  
The wide universe is the ocean I travel  
And the earth is my blue boat home—Peter Mayer, Singing the Journey, pg. 1064

### **Likes & Wishes/Take Away**

#### **Closing Words:**

“Teach your children what we have taught our children that the earth is our mother. Whatever befalls the earth befalls the sons of the earth. If men spit upon the ground, they spit upon themselves.

This we know: the earth does not belong to man - man belongs to the earth. This we know. All things are connected like the blood that unites one's family. All things are connected.”

– **Chief Seattle (Sealth), Suquamish Chief**