

Letter for December 15, 2020 CUC enews
Ministerial Message from Reverend Anne Barker

“Glad Tidings of Comfort and Joy,” said Pooh

“ ... and Justice,” said Piglet.

“ ... and Honey,” said Pooh.*

**from ‘Emergence in the 100 Acre Wood’, continuously being rewritten....*

Here we are, amid the holiday season, in a time like none we’ve ever known. So many of you are sharing stories of resilience and creativity, and we celebrate these bountiful resources.

And this season – *especially this year!* – does not arrive without grief and loss. We offer our deepest sympathies, to all who are suffering.

2020 has delivered astounding challenges and deep disruption. The global crisis of extremism, with constant attacks on culture and identity and lives, were already bound up with climate destruction. Then, the arrival of COVID-19 threatened to untether our already fragile moorings.

Our growing experience of vulnerability has amplified the lessons we are always learning: how deeply we are bound together; how different our lived realities may be from one another; and the profound necessity for justice, responsibility, deep caring, and respect for our precious interdependence.

When times are hard, we need to draw deeply on our sustaining practices, to seek out new resources, and to embrace traditions that bring comfort and joy ... and justice ... and honey ... to nourish our spirits.

A Prayer for the Season:

Spirit of Life and Truth and Love,

As we enter this season of ritual and tradition, let us help one another to remember that we are all connected, whatever our story, wherever our home, that each of us is as essential as the other. May we continue to stretch our weary joints – even into the most uncomfortable places – to risk our limitations, in the service of our dreams.

For all who serve, in our health care facilities, schools, agencies and industries, in our homes - in every aspect of our lives – we come with praise and thanks.

For those who have reimagined our local, national, and global religious communities, so that we might continue to gather together and to grow in faith – from our congregations, to our leaders, to our religious professionals, for the gifts of the Canadian Unitarian Council and the Unitarian Universalist Association, and so many others – we lift our hearts in gratitude.

For all whose marginalization has been amplified – who have suffered increased isolation, division, and harm – we commit our heightened awareness not only to the promise of practical justice, but to the actions that make it so.

For the gift of life – to serve another day – whether we are leading movements, helping others, offering hope and promise to the weary, creating beauty, nurturing wisdom, or accepting the care that others provide to us – may we breathe in peace, and breathe out love.

As people called to help create the common good, may we hold one another in compassion and in grace, as we imagine, work toward, challenge and support a collective vision of beloved community for all.

May each of us be filled with the spirit of the season – the spirit of hope, renewal, and grace. May we be held in the love of community, abundant with the gifts of life.

Blessed Be and Amen.

Please use this sentence as either the intro or end description for this piece. Thanks, Anne

Anne Barker serves Unitarian Universalism as the minister to Westwood Unitarian in Edmonton, President of the UU Ministers of Canada, and partner in “The Cracked Cup” podcast with Liz James.

Video Link:

<https://youtu.be/uteIUObJqXM>