

Meditation and Prayer
First Unitarian Church of Baltimore
February 8, 2009
Rev. Lyn Oglesby, Ph.D.

Olympia Brown would not have had this problem. She believed in an all-knowing god that might help in times of trouble. Every Sunday I wish I believed in a god that would fix things. Every Sunday I struggle to express my hopes and dreams for this church and for all of you, without begging for intercession or intervention from a supernatural being. Every Sunday I struggle to express my gratitude and thanks, to some abstraction that I don't understand. There has to be a way to express the fullness of my heart without an object. There has to be a way to articulate hopes and dreams with asking for an outside being to fulfill them. So please join me in the expression of the fullness of our hearts, our hopes and dreams, and our gratitude, for life and love and the joy of worshipping all that we don't understand, here, today, together.

Spirit of life, wondrous mystery, we gather this morning to honor our founders, to pay homage to our longtime members, to plan for a glorious future, to be together as one, Each of us is an individual, one separate, discrete human being. Yet without one another, we are lost, isolated, lonely, confused. Thus we gather to share our hopes and dreams, to smile and hug one another, in this place of safety, in this refuge for free and liberal religion.

Wherever we come from, wherever we live, when we gather here, or enter this place, we feel at home, we feel different. We are in a place where all are welcomed and accepted. For this place where we can share our joys and sorrows, we give thanks.

For friends and family to laugh and cry with us, those we can lean on, we give thanks.

For this beautiful day, this opportunity to do a good deed, speak a kind word, hold a frail hand, we give thanks.

For those who would do us harm, and who provide us opportunity to show that love can conquer hate, and for the privilege of that practice and discipline, we give thanks.

For all those who came before us, who left us this house of worship, we give thanks.

For those who endured torture and burning at the stake for their liberal religious beliefs, who fled from country to country, and for those who settled here to lay the foundations of our unique heritage, we give thanks.

For sunshine, and snow and rain and wind and the earth that nourishes life and produces the food that sustains us, we give thanks.

For the animals that we love for their friendship and companionship, and for their wild beauty, for all the animals that make our lives richer and more interesting, we give thanks.

For the flowers that bloom, and those plants that simply glory in their greenness, all shapes and forms and sizes, we give thanks.

For people who see the humor in the outlandish and absurdities of life, for the brave souls who seldom get discouraged, but always have time to encourage others, we give thanks.

For energy and athletics, for tennis and swimming and walking and running, and for the exhilaration of a good game of whatever, we give thanks.

For books, and the talented people who research, write, and create beauty with imagination and grace, for the poets and songsters, we give thanks.

For the variety of religions we can learn from, for the joys of searching for truth, and for the bliss of finding truth from time to time, we give thanks.

Especially for children, and the future they represent, for their soft skin

and sweet smiles, and mischievous ways, we give thanks. May we leave them a cleaner, healthier world to grow up in. May we leave them with religious and moral and ethical notions to guide them when we are gone.

For honest work and the opportunity to make a difference in the lives of those we love and in our community, we give thanks. We are blessed with opportunities every day to transform the world, to change things for the better. May we seize those opportunities and give thanks for them.

Let us remain together in silence.

Amen.