

**“Claiming Imagination”  
Order of Worship  
Universalist Unitarian Church of Peoria  
Reverend Jennifer Innis  
January 10, 2021**

**Prelude**

**Welcome**

**Opening Song**           “America the Beautiful”           adapted by The Nields

**Opening Words**

**Chalice Lighting**

**Sacred Story**           *Walking with the Wind*           adapted from John Lewis

**Joys and Sorrows**

**Meditation**           “Prayer for Protection”           by Reverend Elizabeth Nguyen

**Hymn**                   “Though I May Speak”           by Hal Hopson

**Sermon**                 *Claiming Imagination*           Reverend Jennifer Innis

**Closing Hymn**       “How Can I Keep from Singing”   Early Quaker Song

**Sending Our Light into the World**

**Benediction**

**Postlude**

Many thanks to our voices, including Mary and Will Kuester, Jesse Laughlin and family, and Jeanette Gruber. Thank you to Rosa Chang for the music. Thank you to Austin Locke for technical support.

Our hymns and music come from several sources. Thank you to The Nields for permission to share their 2020 version of “America, The Beautiful.” Thank you to Community Church of New York Unitarian Universalist for their version of, “Though I May Speak with Bravest Fire.” Thank you to Brother Sun for their performance of “How Can I Keep from Singing?” at the General Assembly of the Unitarian Universalist Association in 2014.

## Lyrics

“America the Beautiful”  
Adapted by The Nields

O beautiful for spacious skies  
For amber waves of grain  
For purple mountains majesty  
Above the fruited plains  
America! America!  
God shed her grace on thee  
And crown thy good in neighborhoods  
From sea to shining sea.

O beautiful for reason in  
The founding of our rules  
The balance of the power trumps  
The tyranny of fools  
America, America,  
God mend thine ev’ry flaw  
Confirm thy soul in self control  
By liberty and law

O, beautiful our open skies  
How far our eyes do go  
We crave a land unlimited  
By anyone’s control  
America, our liberty  
Has blinded us with greed  
Our bounty has deluded us  
To take more than we need.

How humbling, that grace bestowed  
On our unworthy heads  
When we the people turn our backs  
On families that fled  
America, our borders ache  
O, let us find our soul  
Unite the families torn apart  
Each broken heart be whole.

O beautiful, to make amends  
For our abhorrent acts  
Our country built by labor forced  
On stolen lands and backs  
America, repent for this

Repair and say what’s true  
Let equity our promise be  
Declare these truths anew

O beautiful for spacious skies  
For amber waves of grain  
For purple mountains majesty  
Above the fruited plains  
America! America!  
God shed her grace on thee  
And crown thy good in neighborhoods  
From sea to shining sea.

New lyrics by Nerissa Nields  
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“Though I May Speak with Bravest Fire”  
By Hal Hopson

Though I may speak with bravest fire, and  
have the gift to all inspire,  
and have not love, my words are vain as  
sounding brass and hopeless gain.

Though I may give all I possess, and striving  
so my love profess,  
but not be given by love within, the profit  
soon turns strangely thin.

Come, Spirit, come, our hearts control, our  
spirits long to be made whole.  
Let inward love guide every deed; by this  
we worship, and are freed.

“How Can I Keep from Singing?”  
Early Quaker Song, adapted

My life flows on in endless song above  
earth’s lamentation.  
I hear that real though far-off hymn that  
hails a new creation.  
Through all the tumult and the strife I hear

that music ringing.  
It sounds an echo in my soul.  
How can I keep from singing!

What though the tempest 'round me roars,  
I hear the truth, it liveth.  
What though the darkness 'round me close,  
songs in the night it giveth.  
Through all the tumult and the strife  
I hear that music ringing  
It sounds an echo in my soul  
How can I keep from singing!

When tyrants tremble sick with fear and  
hear their death knells ringing  
when friends rejoice both far and near, how  
can I keep from singing!  
In prison cells and dungeon vile our  
thoughts to them are winging;  
when friends by shame are undefiled, how  
can I keep from singing!

My life flows on in endless song  
Above earth's lamentation  
I hear that real though far-off hymn that  
hails a new creation  
Through all the tumult and the strife  
I hear that music ringing  
It sounds an echo in my soul  
How can I keep from singing!