

OPENING WORDS  
Miles Chapin  
Sunday, January 14, 2018

Good morning to you, and welcome to this special service honoring the legacy and memory of Martin Luther King. My name is Miles Chapin, and I'm standing here in front of you because I'm one of the five candidates whose names have been put forward by our Nominating Committee for positions on our church's Board of Trustees.

I feel honored to be in this group. With a sterling roster of candidates such as we have to choose among this year I'm sure that the congregational roots of our community will be sustained with dignity, and sustained in the next phase of our church's growth; with loving cooperation from all of us who consider ourselves part of the Living Family of All Souls.

I'm one of the "legacy" members here, having been dedicated - right there - a few months after I was born, as were my daughter and my son. My family has gathered in this room on occasions both joyous and sad since this building was built in 1932. In our house my brothers and I were often reminded of the words of our Service of Dedication, that children are brought into this world "at our invitation and not their own." As my kids grow into their '20's I'm still pondering the full ramifications of those words. But when I was in my 20's, and I found out that those words came out of Khalil Gibran's book, *The Prophet*, I thought, "how cool"...

I mean, just look at the myriad sources in our hymnal -how can you not be moved by the human wisdom distilled within those pages, and how can one not be attracted to a space where that kind of free thinking is the norm?

Like many a good UU, my spiritual journey has ranged over much territory, but about 20 years ago I decided to commit to All Souls as my spiritual home, and I took the Right Hand of Fellowship to join this congregation. I've never regretted that choice - and for us UU's it IS a choice - and for those of you who may be toying with that same idea I would urge you to go ahead and take the plunge. You'll find this a stimulating, surprisingly diverse place, and that we're not as cranky a bunch of people as you might have thought. And where else could you hear the sublime artistry of our Chorus, and Holtkamp organ, every week? The music is worth getting out of bed on a Sunday morning! So I salute you all, I thank you for your faith in me by this nomination, and I hope that together we can make sure the "soul" stays in All Souls.

Won't you please rise as you are able, and say with us our Bond of Union.

*In the freedom of the truth,  
And in the spirit of love,  
We unite for the worship of god  
And the service of all.*