

OPENING WORDS  
Shawn Bartels  
Sunday, April 8, 2018

Good morning. Welcome to All Souls. My name is Shawn Bartels, and I have been walking through these doors since 1996, when Walter Klauss hired me as a tenor soloist with the choir. In subsequent years, I have shared with this fellowship, times of both joy and sadness. I have performed for weekly worship, weddings, dedications of children, and memorial services. I, myself, was married right here 18 years ago.

Once, on yet another late-Saturday night, as I stole my wife away from a gathering preceded by the words "Sorry, but I have to SING in the morning," a friend asked, "How much longer are you going to do this? Don't you get tired of it?"

I will admit that that spending nearly every Sunday morning of my adult life in a New York City Unitarian Universalist church was not part of the path this (previously) non-church going Wyoming boy envisioned. In 1996, I was piecing together a mosaic of church, synagogue, choral and temp jobs, with the occasional month away with an opera company. But the "temp job" became the "job," and All Souls became the place where I was allowed, expected, to be an artist, where I could make music with supremely talented people. And those people, in that loft, became my second family.

To be given the privilege to share in your worship, to make music with you and with those musicians up there, is among the most rewarding parts of my life. Which is why, if you see me late some Saturday night, you will most likely find me heading for the door preceded by the words "Sorry, but I have to SING in the morning."

Now, as you are willing and able, please stand and join me in repeating the 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.*