



October 26, 2025
“Don’t Forget The Plates”

“Death is not an ending, but a transition to another realm. Let's celebrate those who have journeyed there, not with sadness, but with joy and laughter” — Author unknown

The First Parish Church in Billerica,
Unitarian Universalist
On the Common - Billerica, Massachusetts

Worship Leader:
Musician:
Worship Assistant:

Catherine Shubin
Liz Cardenas
Brita Learned

CALL TO WORSHIP AND WELCOME

GATHERING CHANT* STLT#73

Chant of The Seasons

CHALICE LIGHTING*

By Jean L. Wahlstrom

In this small flame dwell: the beacon light of
lanterns guiding travelers home; the warmth of
hearth fires tended through the generations;
the transforming energy of furnaces and the power
and life of our sun.

May these blessings — warmth and light and life-
giving energy — be kindled in each of us.

OPENING SONG:

Come to the Labyrinth
by S.J. Tucker

MEDITATION

By Alberto Rios

It is not simply the Day of the Dead—loud, and parties.
More quietly, it is the day of my dead. The day of your
dead. These days, the neon of it all, the big-teeth,
laughing skulls, the posed calacas and Catrinas and
happy dead people doing funny things—It's all in good
humor, and sometimes I can't help myself: I laugh out
loud, too.

But I miss my father. My grandmother has been gone
Almost so long I can't grab hold of her voice with my
ears anymore, Not easily. My mother-in-law, she's still
here, still in things packed In boxes, her laughter on
videotape, and in conversations.

Our dog died several years ago and I try to say his name
Whenever I leave the house—You take care of this
house now, I say to him, the way I always have, the way
he knows.

I grew up with the trips to the cemetery and pan de
muerto, The prayers and the favorite foods, the carne
asada, the beer.

But that was in the small town where my memory still
lives. Today, I'm in the big city, and that small town
feels far away.

LORE OF THE SEASON Samhain & Diá los muertos
- speaker Paul Daley

“DON'T FORGET THE PLATE”
- Catherine Shubin

A Reminder to Remember

STORIES OF OUR ANCESTORS

Let us take stock in our memories and joyous
remembrance of those past. What is dead is not gone
- their energy never dissipated; just changed.

CALL OF THE ANCESTORS

We call in our ancestors and light a candle of
remembrance. Come up and share a story and light a
candle.

LITANY OF GRATITUDE:

One: We are a community brought together in peace and prayer.

Many: Let us remember what peace there may be in prayer.

One: we raise up our voices in unison bringing forth the knowledge of generations past.

Many: We remember them in our daily lives. In our recipes, our quirks, and our memories for those past. Ones who have past are not gone just changed.

One: May we be thankful for having met and connected with all who cross our paths. For they bring teaching and knowledge of our deeper selves, and in turn a deeper knowledge of the truth of life.

Many: within it we seek truth and clarity. For even the rainy days bring flowers.

One: On this day when the veils are thinned, know your ancestors stand with you. Show gratitude by holding space for them, and setting the table to include those who have past. Let us reconnect with them by sharing stories of old, and rekindle the joy that their lives brought us.

Many: We remember and never forget. Let us raise up our memories with joyous hearts to remember all who we have lost.... And so it is.

COMMUNITY PRAYER

We give thanks for this day. Thanks for life, love, health. We are grateful and fortunate for what we have. Let us try our best to do and be our best every day; and not to be so hard on ourselves. We remember and send healing thoughts to those who are sick and in pain and we hope for their speedy recovery. Might we be reminded of our highest aspirations in our quest for beloved community. Blessings on this community. May it be so.

SONG OF PRAYER STLT #55
Dark of Winter

OFFERTORY

CLOSING SONG * STJ #1051
We Are

EXTINGUISHING THE CHALICE # 456
Words by: Elizabeth Selle Jones

**We extinguish this flame
but not the light of truth,
the warmth of community,
or the fire of commitment.
These we carry in our hearts
until we are together again.**

EPITAPH / BENEDICTION

As we end our time together today in spiritual community, may we depart this sacred space:

Knowing that blessings shall follow us all the days of our lives If we live in and return to right relationships,

If we extend grace and forgiveness to ourselves and others,

If we behold mercy as a spiritual superpower.

If we emanate the Greater Love that holds us close.

May our lives radiate the blessings that we have been given,

May kindness and compassion fall gently from us.

May there be peace in the world, and may it begin again with us.

- By Rebekah Savage

MUSIC FOR GOING FORTH STLT# 118

This Little Light of Mine

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As Unitarian Universalists, we covenant, congregation-to-congregation and through our Association, to support and assist one another in our ministries. We draw from our heritages of freedom, reason, hope, and courage, building on the foundation of love. Love is the power that holds us together and is at the center of our shared values. We are accountable to one another for doing the work of living our shared values through the spiritual discipline of Love. Inseparable from one another, these shared values are: Interdependence, Equity, Transformation, Pluralism, Generosity, and Justice.