

Welcome to Sacred Service Sunday, part two! I am so grateful to all of you who shared with us two weeks ago what *your* loving service looks like, and how it has shaped your experience at Unity. Over the months I spent in discernment about stepping into this role, there were two things that immediately and deeply resonated. The principle of Oneness in a God of ever-present goodness, and Unity Albany's commitment to be of sacred service in the world. The vision and mission of this church speaks volumes. Our threshold moment invites us now to re-envision how we live up to, and into, that vision and mission together.

Holy discomfort. That phrase has been a touchstone since I read the article ***Where Will You Stand***, by Rev Ogun Holder. He calls us to remember Martin Luther King's words that provoke *Holy discomfort* as we ask ourselves if we are good people "who prefer a negative peace that is the absence of tension to a positive peace which is the presence of justice."

Today's Daily word "Compassionate" is a wonderful grounding as we continue to open ourselves to the Holy Discomfort that leads us into living out our mission. And in one more affirmation of Divine synergy, at Thursday's Prayer Hour, Deb Foss shared a beautiful prayer by Andrew Harvey, whose work I'll draw on today, and which made its way into my revisions for this morning.

Two weeks ago, we heard about some of the ways Unity folks show up to be the heart, hands and voice of Spirit. Over the past month or so, from many voices and different angles, we've been invited to consider the question: what *is mine to do?*

This morning, we're going to tiptoe in the work of Andrew Harvey, a prolific British writer, religious scholar, and mystic that I first encountered at One Spirit. He is the founder and director of the [Institute for Sacred Activism](#), a term he defines as "a transforming force of compassion-in-action that is born of a fusion of deep spiritual knowledge, courage, love, and passion, with wise radical action in the world."

Harvey writes:

“A spirituality that is only private and self-absorbed, one devoid of an authentic political and social consciousness, does little to halt the suicidal juggernaut of history.

On the other hand, an activism that is not purified by profound spiritual and psychological self-awareness and rooted in divine truth, wisdom, and compassion will only perpetuate the problem it is trying to solve, however righteous its intentions.

When, however, the deepest and most grounded spiritual vision is married to a practical and pragmatic drive to transform all existing political, economic, and social institutions, a holy force – the power of wisdom and love in action – is born.

This force I define as Sacred Activism.”

There is so much to celebrate about the ways this community shows up, authentically, prayerfully, in all the glory of being fully human and fully divine. And yet as we continue to live into our vision and mission, we continue to ask “What is mine to do?” And we trust that in discernment we will hear the voice of God-within calling us, in ways that are sometimes small and tender, and in ways that sometimes require much of us.

So in the spirit of Holy discomfort here is an invitation to enter a space of envisioning a positive peace, not one devoid of tension, but one built on justice.

Based on the work of Andrew Harvey and others, co-founders of the [Brooklyn Center of Sacred Activism](#), Chelsea MacMillan (another One Spirit grad!) and Leo Bierman offer a guide for discerning “What is mine to do?”

(Show slide) The two slides I’m showing with permission this morning are from a class I took with Rev Chelsea. As we engage with each question from the slide, I’ll insert a short centering practice inspired by each.

Holy Imagination

“Where is my holy imagination leading?”

- What do you want to say yes to?
- What do you see that you can nurture?
- What's missing that you will help create?

Holy imagination is where your creativity is called to come out and play, where your beautiful mind and strategic mastery are summoned to envision a brand new world. Close your eyes, connect to the divine and allow the magic to flow through you.”

So, let's pause to center on our holy imagination...breathing in, I say yes breathing out...connect to your divine imagination, breathing in I nurture... breathing out...invite in creative mind, just breathe...

Holy Heartbreak

“Where do I find holy heartbreak?

- You see suffering?
- Who or what needs care?
- How can you help?

Holy heartbreak is the sacred activism of tender, loving care. It's a sacred activism of non-duality, in which you say neither yes or no, right or wrong, but, how can I serve? We are here to take care of each other and a hurting world. Where can you create love right here right now?”

So let's pause to center on our holy heartbreak...breathing in, sense the suffering present in the world... breathing out, send your compassion... breathing in, sense the hurting, breathing out, send peace...simply breathe...

Holy Rebellion

“Am I called to holy rebellion?

- What do you want to say no to?
- Where can you speak truth to power?
- What system of oppression will you help dismantle?

Holy Rebellion is where your willpower, strength, and courage are ignited as you unleash a full-bellied, full-throat “NO!”rejecting the status quo. You are taking power from the hands of the few, standing up to injustice, and helping us all let go of that which no longer serves.”

Let's pause to center in on our holy rebellion...breathing in, sense your power in Christ-love, breathing out, sense your healthy boundaries... breathe in standing with the oppressed, breathe out courage and strength...breathe in Spirit of justice, breathe out Spirit of peace

The gift of the self-compassion portion of loving kindness is that we are called to see ourselves clearly, to be stewards of the grace of God, called to love and accept ourselves as one with God and with each other. We are not called to deplete ourselves in service to others, but recognizing who we are, through prayerful discernment, we are called to co-create with God the *world transformed through the spiritual awakening of all*.

We find our path into service by truly seeing into our own hearts what makes us come alive. Where do I find joy? Where does my sacred purpose and passion lead me? What does the world need of me, from me, and what does God need from me as I follow the call to be the heart and hands and voice of Spirit alive in the world?

I'm going to share the paragraphs from Harvey's book ***The Hope: a Guide to Sacred Activism***, that surround the prayer Deb shared on Thursday, a prayer that evokes the Divine Mother. Before I read it, I invite you to consider the word "mother" and what it means to you. How have you been nurtured, and who has been that nurturing presence? How have you nurtured yourself, or other beings?

Harvey writes:

You will find that being a mother to yourself ...will bring a peace and joy into your life that acts as a perfect "ground: to receive the Divine Energy.

There is nothing narcissistic about this care you give yourself to stay as clear and balanced an instrument for the Divine as possible. Every human being is an incarnation of the Divine...; by honoring and taking care of all aspects of your human self, you are honoring your creator, whose presence in you is your secret truth. Your human self is the living Temple of your Divine self...

If you honor the need to serve yourself as an instrument of the Divine, you will discover, over time, that you will have far more compassionate and healthy energy to give to your work in the world. You will also find that because you are truly treating yourself with patience, generosity, and respect, you naturally treat others better; how we treat ourselves is mirrored in the way we treat others.

Because I have always found the sacred service of myself hard to do and I've had to remind myself constantly of its necessity, I have written a short prayer that I will share with you:

Divine Mother, give me Your eyes so I can see myself through them and see how holy in Your eyes is my soul, and how holy in Your eyes is my mind, and how holy in Your eyes is my heart, and how holy and sacred in Your eyes is my

body. Help me be as merciful and generous with myself as You would always want me to be; help me honor myself as I have found to my amazement You honor me; help me live and work from the peace and balance and compassion from which You live and work and help. Help me in these ways, mother, so I can at last truly become the instrument You need me to become, the sacred instrument of Your compassion and action that you created me to be, and that I already am in Your holy and illumined eyes.

I have found that I constantly need to correct and align and temper myself and asked for the Mother's help to be less ruthless and careless with myself; whenever I have forgotten to do this... the work I do in the world has been edged with anger or infused with exhaustion and I haven't been able to give others my best.

If we, as Sacred Activists, are going to inspire others, it will be by the kindness, balance, truth and radiance of our presence and of our whole being, by the health and joy we radiate. In order to bring such radiance to others, you need to tend its subtle and tender flame in yourself.

And as always this leads me to the twin aspects of living a life of spirit: we are called to do our own deep, individual work, in prayer, meditation and through all of our spiritual practices to listen to the voice of God with-in.

And then we are called to bring all of us to bear in service to our community and the world, called to use our gifts for the common good. We are not all called to the same service *but we are called into the fullness of both our divinity and our humanity by the same voice of God!* Can we hear the call?

Methodist Founder John Wesley, is credited with these words:

Do all the good you can, by all the means you can, in all the ways you can, in all the places you can, at all the times you can, to all the people you can, as long as ever you can.

Mother-Father God, Source of All Love, we are listening. May we do all the good we can, as long as ever we can.

May it be so, and so it is. Amen.

Harvey, Andrew. ***The Hope: a Guide to Sacred Activism***. Hay House, Inc. 2009.

Brooklyn Center for Sacred Activism: sacredactivism.nyc

Andrew Harvey, The Institute for Sacred Activism: andrewharvey.net