A person with a beard

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**A Call to Selflessness** Vocation, as defined in this sermon, is the gift we bring not necessarily to ourselves but to others. It is a call to selflessness and finds its expression in the service of others...especially the service of those in need. How do we apply this concept to help strengthen our congregations and our Unitarian Universalist faith and help heal a troubled world?

**A Night Already Devoid of Stars** Violence has been and continues to be a stain that has darkened the landscape of our country and our world. What has caused us to become such a violent society and how do we as Unitarian Universalists respond in ways that affirm our beliefs and principles?

**A Rising Tide** The word "spirituality" means different things to different UUs. Here's one interpretation of spirituality that represents a call to action consistent with our seven principles.

**Among Friends – Martin Luther King, Jr., and Unitarian Universalism** We’ll explore the fascinating relationship between Dr King and Unitarian Universalism, why Dr. King did not choose to become a UU, and how the teachings of Dr. King can further strengthen our faith tradition.

**Balancing the Egg** A sense of balance is required in order for us to remain upright and steady. This applies not only to our physical selves, but our spiritual selves as well. How do we maintain an equal balance between our secular and our UU lives so that one does not overwhelm the other and cause us to fall?

**Being in Awe** To be in awe of someone or something is to have an overwhelming amount of respect or admiration, tinged with surprise, wonder and even fear. What are you in awe of? How has our Unitarian Universalist faith helped us to recognize and appreciate such moments of awe?

**Driven by Waves** New beginnings are ongoing. A chance for renewal. An opportunity to start over. How will you renew yourself? What will you create that never was? What will you leave behind?

**Eating Well: The Role of Hope in our Unitarian Universalist Lives** Sir Francis Bacon wrote, “Hope is a good breakfast but it is a bad supper.” While Hope springs eternal, what good is it if we don’t spring into action? In this sermon, Mark will explore the relationship between Hope and Action and share his thoughts on our responsibility as Unitarian Universalists to engage in both.

**Finding Echoes** Novelist Mohsin Hamid wrote, “Empathy is about finding echoes of another person in yourself.” We can only console another who is grieving, lonely, or depressed by connecting within ourselves something that knows that feeling. It requires understanding, vulnerability, a listening ear, and an open heart. In this sermon, we’ll explore the nature and power of empathy.

**Going Platinum** Showing reverence for another human being is deeply embedded in our Unitarian Universalist principles. But what does it mean to show reverence and why is important particularly during these stressful, inequitable, and polarizing times?

**Is Superman a Closet UU? and other compelling questions** Does the Man of Steel light a chalice in his Fortress of Solitude? Do the Caped Crusader and Robin the Boy Wonder secretly share joys and concerns deep in the bowels of the Bat Cave? And what about Betty and Veronica? Come explore the connection between our comic book heroes and our UU principles.

**Language of the Unheard** Power dynamics play as much of a role in our congregational life as joys and concerns and coffee hour. How does power serve us and hurt us, both in our congregations and in the wider world?

**On Moral Courage**  E.E. Cummings wrote, “Courage is not living without fear. Courage is being scared to death and doing the right thing anyway. As we negotiate these troubling and uncertain times, how do we exercise courage in ourselves and celebrate courage in others?

**Paying Attention** Our busy and often chaotic lives require that we pay attention to many things, often at once. In so doing, we find ourselves pulled in different directions, confused, exhausted, and often overwhelmed. How do we know where to direct our attention and how can our Unitarian Universalist faith help us to pay attention to that which is most important to us?

**Promises to Keep: The Power of Covenant** As Unitarian Universalists, there is no authority that governs our actions other than the promises we make to each other through covenant. Yet, in many congregations, covenants either do not exist or fail in their efforts to create harmony and understanding. We’ll explore the reasons for this and the fascinating concept of covenant as the basis of our UU system of governing.

**Stealing Second Base** A meaningful life requires that we work without a net; that we take risks in order to reap rewards. Why is it so hard to let go and how can our Unitarian Universalist faith help us to journey into the unknown?

**The Case Against Gratitude** Poets, novelists, and self-help gurus tell us to count our blessings…to be grateful for what we have. But sometimes, gratitude doesn’t work, especially when life is hard, or things aren’t going our way. If we can’t draw on gratitude when we’re not feeling grateful, what other options do we have?

**The Hobgoblin of Little Minds** In 1841, the transcendentalist philosopher Ralph Waldo Emerson wrote his famous essay entitled “Self-Reliance” in which he promoted the need for each person to avoid conformity and follow their own instincts and ideas. We’ll examine this landmark document and the lessons it holds for us Unitarian Universalists in today’s society.

**The Hunger to Belong** Healthy congregations do more than create a welcoming environment. They create a culture of belonging. To truly belong means to bridge the gulf between isolation and intimacy. How are we helping to create a culture of belonging in our congregation and what more do we need to do to feed the hunger to belong?

**The Only Way Out** The pandemic and its aftermath have tested the resilience of our congregations in ways that we could not have imagined three years ago. Both on a personal and institutional level, we are now challenged to bounce back from this adversity and even find new strength and growth in the process. How do we do this? Perhaps we follow the advice of the Greek essayist Plutarch who wrote, “The only way out is through.”

**The Price of Loss** The major religions of the world offer a variety of rituals and practices to help people cope with grief. Unitarian Universalism, not surprisingly, offers its own unique ways to assist individuals and spiritual communities in dealing with loss.

**Through Love and In Love: Pondering Sin and Salvation** In traditional Christian theology, salvation is the deliverance from the penalty of sin. One who has sinned is saved from the wrath of God by having faith and trust in the Lord Jesus. Unitarian Universalists do not subscribe to these beliefs. What does it mean, though, in our Faith Tradition, to sin and to be saved? How do the concepts of sin and salvation impact on our lives as UUs and in our relationships with the world?

**Toward Unbecoming** The spiritual journey that we take as Unitarian Universalists can lead us to a better understanding of who we are. More importantly, it may help us to see with greater clarity who we are not. Let’s discuss.

**Two Wings of the Human Spirit** Many UUs among us would have us believe that Reason and Faith are mutually exclusive. But others will argue that they are compatible, even nurturing one another. Where does Faith begin and Reason end, and vice versa? Let’s consider how we marry these two ways of looking at the world in order to forge greater relationships and lessen conflict in our congregations.

**Willing to Be Little** Practicing humility in our congregation and in our lives is the way in which we live out our Unitarian Universalist principles. Do we have the courage to live lives of humility? What would our congregation, and our world, look like if everyone did?