

“Two Wars, Two Presidents, Two Gods”
Quimper Unitarian Universalist Fellowship
October 22, 2006
Sermon prepared by Jeffrey L. Schad
Delivered by Bruce A. Bode

Call to Worship

Holy and beautiful is the custom by which we gather on this Sunday morning.

Here we are come to give our thanks, to face our ideals, to remember our loved ones, to seek that which is permanent, and to serve goodness, beauty, and the qualities of life that make it rich and whole.

Through this hour breathes the worship of all ages, the cathedral music of all history; blessed are the ears that hear that eternal sound.

Lighting the Chalice (spoken in unison)

We come together this Sunday
To renew our faith in the holiness, goodness and beauty of life;
To reaffirm the way of the open mind and the full heart;
To reclaim the vision of an earth more fair, with all her people one.

Responsive Reading

MINISTER: As labor is the common burden of our race, so the effort of some to shift their share of the burden onto the shoulders of others is the great, durable curse of the race.

CONGREGATION: As I would not be a slave, so I would not be a master.

MINISTER: This expresses my idea of democracy. Whatever differs from this, to the extent of the difference, is no democracy.

CONGREGATION: Our reliance is in our love for liberty; our defense is in the spirit which prizes liberty as the heritage of all people in all lands everywhere.

MINISTER: Destroy this spirit, and we have planted the seeds of despotism at our own doors.

CONGREGATION: Those who deny freedom to others deserve it not for themselves, and cannot long retain it.

MINISTER: Why should there not be a patient confidence in the ultimate justice of the people? Is there any better or equal hope in the world?

CONGREGATION: Let us have faith that right makes might, and in that faith, let us, to the end, dare to do our duty as we understand it.

(Statements of Abraham Lincoln related to his idea of democracy)

Meditation

Let us enter into our time of meditation and prayer with these words of Psalm 15, translated by Stephen Mitchell:

Lord, who can be trusted with power,
and who may act in your place?
Those with a passion for justice,
who speak the truth from their hearts;
who have let go of selfish interests
and grown beyond their own lives;
who see the wretched as their family
and the poor as their flesh and blood.
They alone are impartial
and worthy of the people's trust.
Their compassion lights up the whole earth,
and their kindness endures forever.

(The Psalms, tr., Stephen Mitchell)

Introduction to Reading

My reading this morning is Abraham Lincoln's Second Inaugural Address delivered on March 4, 1865, an address much shorter than present inaugural addresses and laced with Lincoln's personal theology. It was praised by The London Spectator as "the noblest political document known to history."

In the weeks preceding Lincoln's second inauguration, Washington D.C. had received a great deal of wet weather and Pennsylvania Avenue had become a sea of mud and standing water so that the thousands of spectators who had gathered to hear the President stood in thick mud.

Journalist Noah Brooks, an eyewitness to the speech, said that as Lincoln advanced from his seat, "a roar of applause shook the air, and, again and again repeated, finally died away on the outer fringe of the throng, like a sweeping wave upon the shore. Just at that moment the sun, which had been obscured all day, burst forth in its unclouded meridian splendor, and flooded the spectacle with glory and with light." Brooks said Lincoln told him the next day, "Did you notice that sunburst? It made my heart jump."

According to Brooks, the audience received the speech in "profound silence," although some passages provoked cheers and applause. "Looking down into the faces of the people, illuminated by the bright rays of the sun, one could see moist eyes and even tearful faces."

Brooks also observed, “But chiefly memorable in the mind of those who saw that second inauguration must still remain the tall, pathetic, melancholy figure of the man who, then inducted into office in the midst of the glad acclaim of thousands of people, and illumined by the deceptive brilliance of a March sunburst, was already standing in the shadow of death.” Indeed, a little more than a month later, on April 15, at the age of 56, Abraham Lincoln would be dead by the hand of an assassin. (This introduction has drawn from “Abraham Lincoln ON Line – Speeches and Writings”)

ABRAHAM LINCOLN
Second Inaugural Address
Saturday, March 4, 1865

Fellow-Countrymen:

At this second appearing to take the oath of the Presidential office there is less occasion for an extended address than there was at the first. Then a statement somewhat in detail of a course to be pursued seemed fitting and proper. Now, at the expiration of four years, during which public declarations have been constantly called forth on every point and phase of the great contest which still absorbs the attention and engrosses the energies of the nation, little that is new could be presented. The progress of our arms, upon which all else chiefly depends, is as well known to the public as to myself, and it is, I trust, reasonably satisfactory and encouraging to all. With high hope for the future, no prediction in regard to it is ventured.

On the occasion corresponding to this four years ago all thoughts were anxiously directed to an impending civil war. All dreaded it, all sought to avert it. While the inaugural address was being delivered from this place, devoted altogether to *saving* the Union without war, insurgents were in the city seeking to *destroy* it without war—seeking to dissolve the Union and divide effects by negotiation. Both parties deprecated war, but one of them would *make* war rather than let the nation survive, and the other would *accept* war rather than let it perish, and the war came.

One-eighth of the whole population were colored slaves, not distributed generally over the Union, but localized in the southern part of it. These slaves constituted a peculiar and powerful interest. All knew that this interest was somehow the cause of the war. To strengthen, perpetuate, and extend this interest was the object for which the insurgents would rend the Union even by war, while the Government claimed no right to do more than to restrict the territorial enlargement of it. Neither party expected for the war the magnitude or the duration which it has already attained. Neither anticipated that the *cause* of the conflict might cease with or even before the conflict itself should cease. Each looked for an easier triumph, and a result less fundamental and astounding. Both read the same Bible and pray to the same God, and each invokes His aid against the other. It may seem strange that any men should dare to ask a just God's assistance in wringing their bread from the sweat of other men's faces, but let us judge not, that we be not judged. The prayers of both could not be answered. That of neither has been answered fully. The Almighty has His own purposes. "Woe unto the world because of offenses; for it must needs be that offenses come, but woe to that man by whom the offense cometh." If we shall suppose that American slavery is one of those offenses which, in the providence of God,

must needs come, but which, having continued through His appointed time, He now wills to remove, and that He gives to both North and South this terrible war as the woe due to those by whom the offense came, shall we discern therein any departure from those divine attributes which the believers in a living God always ascribe to Him? Fondly do we hope, fervently do we pray, that this mighty scourge of war may speedily pass away. Yet, if God wills that it continue until all the wealth piled by the bondsman's two hundred and fifty years of unrequited toil shall be sunk, and until every drop of blood drawn with the lash shall be paid by another drawn with the sword, as was said three thousand years ago, so still it must be said, "the judgments of the Lord are true and righteous altogether."

With malice toward none, with charity for all, with firmness in the right as God gives us to see the right, let us strive on to finish the work we are in, to bind up the nation's wounds, to care for him who shall have borne the battle and for his widow and his orphan, to do all which may achieve and cherish a just and lasting peace among ourselves and with all nations.

(Source: Collected Works of Abraham Lincoln, edited by Roy P. Basler.)

“TWO WARS, TWO PRESIDENTS, TWO GODS”

By Jeffrey L. Schad

Introduction (by Bruce Bode)

As I was planning my sermons for this church year, I noted the mid-term elections in early November and considered what I might say in regard to that. Just at the time I was thinking about this, a print version of a sermon from a lay member of the congregation I served in Grand Rapids, Michigan – the Fountain Street Church – came into my hands. Actually, it wasn't by accident that it came into my hands. I had heard that the sermon was a fine one and so requested a copy. Upon reading it, I found it to be not only well-researched but both thoughtful and thought-provoking.

I considered, then, how I might incorporate some of its ideas into a sermon of my own. But as I worked with that possibility, I wondered how I make it my own or get the its ideas as well as they were already laid out. So I decided to do something I have never done before in my ministry, namely, seek permission to deliver a sermon prepared by someone else.

Thus, I phoned its author, Jeffrey Schad, a practicing attorney for 32 years with a life-long interest in American history, especially the Civil War era – not a close friend, but certainly someone I know and respect – and asked him what he would think if I delivered his sermon. Well, that was more than fine with him, and he sent me in addition to the text of the sermon I already had, the readings he had used in the service.

His sermon compares the American Civil War and our present Iraqi War, focusing on the two American presidents during these wars and, in particular, their religious orientations and world- and life-views.

There is an historian's attempt in this sermon to stand back from the situation and take an objective perspective. But, of course, there are always filters at work, also among historians, nor can one divorce one's own world- and life-view from an examination of history. Nevertheless, with all the heat that is emitted as these mid-term elections near us, and with all the rage that I know many of us feel with respect to our current president and his administration, there is a certain coolness in this sermon that I appreciate. I hope you will appreciate this coolness, and find it interesting and perhaps helpful.

"TWO WARS, TWO PRESIDENTS, TWO GODS"

By Jeffrey L. Schad

Delivered at Fountain Street Church

Grand Rapids, Michigan

July 9, 2006

The war had begun during the Republican President's first term. Many thought the war was unnecessary, a war of choice. The justification for the war itself had changed during its course. The President had eventually come to describe it as a struggle for human freedom.

The President, who had first assumed office with a minority of the popular vote in an election many considered illegitimate, appeared to be heading toward re-election defeat as the war dragged on with no clear resolution. The Democrats, themselves bitterly divided over the war, had nominated a war hero who tepidly supported the war but ultimately proved to be an inept presidential candidate. Winning a second term in office by a larger margin, the President vowed to press on with the war to promote liberty and democracy in the world.

The year is 1865...and 2005. And I am referring, of course, to the presidency of Abraham Lincoln...and of George W. Bush, our often-described greatest president and our sometimes-described worst president.

Did their religious beliefs at all influence the meanings they assigned to their conflicts and their methods of prosecuting their wars? This is the question I would like to explore with you this morning.

To begin, we must first review the religious backgrounds and beliefs of the two presidents. George W. Bush is surely the easier case. His religious journey is well known to most Americans. Born into an upper class New England Episcopal family (Bush's grandfather, Prescott Bush, was a United States Senator from Connecticut), Bush's family moved to the Texas oil patch where Bush was raised. There, the religious landscape was dominated by Southern Baptists and Methodists, not high church establishment Protestants.

During his early adult years, however, it appears that Bush was as indifferent to religion as he was to philosophy or history, for that matter. His hard drinking and somewhat careless lifestyle eventually caused a domestic crisis; Laura made him choose between the bottle and his family. He began to regularly attend a men's Bible study group, embraced his wife's Methodism and successfully confronted his alcohol addiction. He had been "born again" through a newfound personal faith in Christ.

There is no reason to question the sincerity of his conversion. By the time he was inaugurated as Texas governor, Richard Land, head of the Southern Baptist Convention, recalls Bush saying to him at the Governor's Mansion, "I believe that God wants me to be President."

Lincoln's religious views are harder to get at. He was, after all, an intensely ambitious man who knew full well that in rural Illinois the touting of unorthodox beliefs was not the ticket to electoral success. Lincoln never joined a church, though he attended services from time to time at Presbyterian churches in Springfield and later in Washington D.C. But he was an avid reader of the Bible. Some historians believe that his religious views evolved over time, with the crisis of the Civil War steering him at last to more orthodox Christian views. Although there is substantial evidence for evolution, there is scant evidence for orthodoxy.

At the age of 22 in 1831, Lincoln moved to the frontier town of New Salem, Illinois, where he was employed as a shopkeeper and spent many hours in discussions with the local freethinkers. One of the great influences on Lincoln at that time was Thomas Paine's book The Age of Reason, in which Paine argued against a superstitious religion and for a rational faith:

"I believe in one God and no more... I believe in the equality of man; and I believe that religious duties consist in doing justice, loving mercy, and endeavoring to make our fellow creatures happy... My own mind is my own church."

During this time there is strong evidence that Lincoln wrote a closely guarded essay on his own religious convictions. In it he reportedly denied the virgin birth, the divinity of Christ, the divine inspiration of the Bible and the afterlife as inconsistent with reason. Instead, he affirmed that the God of the universe was never "excited, mad or angry" and would not consign mankind to eternal damnation. Lincoln applied a skeptical reason and logic to all religious assertions by the orthodox. According to a young deputy court clerk in Springfield, Lincoln would "pick up the Bible - read a passage - and then comment on it - show its falsity - and its follies on the grounds of reason."

A striking feature of Lincoln's early religious thinking was his belief in the doctrine of necessity. As he put it, "the human mind is impelled to action, or held in rest by some power, over which the mind has no control." The doctrine of necessity was fatalistic in character - that nothing could deflect the will of Providence, that what would be would be, that events were largely outside of human control. So God was in command even if humans could not fully divine his purposes and actions.

As the Civil War approached during the 1850s, Lincoln was also strongly influenced by Transcendentalism, in the human form of Theodore Parker, the Unitarian preacher and firebrand abolitionist. Parker believed in the ultimate progress of humanity toward freedom, represented by democratic government, and the ultimate progress of religion toward mercy and love, represented by Jesus.

Both Parker and Lincoln saw the claims of the Declaration of Independence, that all men should be equal in the eyes of the law as in the eyes of their Creator, as representing a transcendent ideal

accessible not only to Americans but to all people everywhere. They considered the Constitution a paler reflection of that ideal, a watering down of democracy and equality necessitated by the politics of forging a union out of dissimilar states and regions.

Most importantly, it was the duty of each generation of Americans to continue the work of the founders, to be founders themselves, in advancing humanity toward that ideal. Thus, America was to serve as a beacon and example to the whole world toward the ideal of human equality. That is why Parker and Lincoln were so alarmed by the extension, not retreat, of slavery during the years preceding the Civil War.

To sum up Lincoln then, religious belief, to be credible to Lincoln, had to pass the test of his skeptical reason. The exercise of that reason convinced him that there was a Providence whose will could not fully be known but which was active in human affairs and which pointed to the enlargement of human liberty over time. As we shall see, during the Civil War years, Lincoln became ever more convinced of God's role in human affairs and of God's sense of justice, which he believed the American people had offended.

Lincoln's religious viewpoint is quite different, of course, from modern evangelical Christianity of which George W. Bush counts himself a member.

To evangelicals the will of God can, in fact, be known through the Bible, and the role of faith, not reason, is paramount. The good news of the New Testament is essential for salvation and evangelicals are duty-bound to promote the gospel throughout the world. Many evangelicals see a world sharply divided between good and evil and believe that the world will end in an apocalyptic battle between Christ and the anti-Christ. Opposition to stem cell research, to abortion and to gay marriage are driven by what they perceive as Biblical moral absolutes of right and wrong. Where Lincoln employed a skeptical reason, many evangelicals employ a skepticism of reason when it conflicts with Biblical assertions.

With this background in mind, we are now ready to examine the influence of religious belief on Bush's and Lincoln's understandings of their wars. As we shall see, the differing views of the two leaders on the relative merits of faith and reason, and on the human ability to know with confidence what God wills, have implications for the reasons for, and the conduct of, their wars.

But first a significant point of agreement between the two: the importance of the spread of freedom through the world. Lincoln came to believe that the Civil War was a crucial test of the founders' belief in representative government as the best guarantor of the God-given rights of equality and liberty. If the American experiment failed, he feared that democratic government would, along with any notion of equal rights for all, perish from the earth. The transcendental ideal, toward which Americans must always strive, would not be realized. So the war had to be won for the sake of humanity at large.

George Bush expressed similar thoughts on the linkage of God-given rights and self-government in his second inaugural address:

"Advancing these ideals is the mission that created our nation...Now it is the urgent requirement of our nation's security...So it is the policy of the United States to seek and support the growth of democratic movements and institutions in every nation and culture with the ultimate goal of ending tyranny in our world. We will persistently clarify the choice before every ruler and every nation: The moral choice between oppression, which is always wrong, and freedom, which is eternally right."

Note that in Bush's formulation there is the urgent call to America to aggressively promote this vision throughout the world rather than passively serving as an example and motivator to other nations. There is also this from Bush's address:

"We go forward with complete confidence in the eventual triumph of freedom. We have confidence because freedom is the permanent hope of mankind, the hunger in dark places, the longing of the soul....History has a visible direction, set by...the Author of Liberty."

One might expect Bush, as a Christian, to associate such words, the "permanent hope of mankind" and the "longing of the soul," not with political and personal freedom, but with communion with God in Christ. But Bush raises "freedom" to one of God's highest purposes for humanity and thus makes the obligation to spread freedom an article of his religious faith.

In doing so, Bush effectively lifts the actions calculated to fulfill this obligation out of the realm of normal political debate and analysis. For if we accept Bush's assertion, then America is carrying out the very will of God in aggressively, even by force, advancing freedom throughout the world. As Bush explained to author Bob Woodward in 2002:

"I say that freedom is not America's gift to the world. Freedom is God's gift to everybody in the world... And I believe we have a duty to free people. I would hope we wouldn't have to do it militarily but we have a duty."

Much becomes clearer with this understanding. First, we see an almost messianic conception of America's, and Bush's, mission. Shortly after the 9/11 attacks, Bush told a *Time* magazine reporter that he believed he had been chosen by the grace of God to lead at that moment. In recalling to Bob Woodward his state of mind on the night he authorized the invasion of Iraq, Bush said:

"Going into this, I was praying for strength to do the Lord's will...I'm surely not going to justify war based upon God, understand that. Nevertheless in my case, I pray that I be as good a messenger of His will as possible."

Second, the belief that one is the very instrumentality of God's will tends to limit self-reflection and doubt and contributes to stubbornness. To doubt or change one's course, after all, would be to question God's judgment. When Bob Woodward reminded Bush that Tony Blair had openly confessed his own uncertainties about the war in Iraq, Bush retorted, "I haven't suffered doubt." And when Woodward then asked Bush if he had relied at all on his father, an earlier war president, for counsel, Bush replied, "You know, he is the wrong father to appeal to in terms of strength. There is a higher Father that I appeal to."

One manifestation of this sense of certainty and divine purpose is a curious detachment from the human cost of war. The Bush administration has tried to deflect attention from the human toll of war by barring pictures of flag-draped coffins, avoiding sending representatives to funerals of soldiers, refusing to meet with or give speeches before citizens who oppose the war, and deliberately not counting civilian casualties in Iraq. When asked a few months ago about the civilian death toll in Iraq, Bush casually and disconcertingly remarked, "30,000 more or less" without voicing regret or apparent concern.

Bush's sense of certainty has also manifested itself in a willful stubbornness: the initial decision to go it alone in Iraq, despite the objections of many of our traditional allies and religious leaders around the world; the unwillingness to demand any sacrifice from the American people in wartime other than the acceptance of more tax cuts; the stubborn refusal to provide sufficient troops to pacify Iraq; the unwillingness to consider any strategy other than the fond hope that the Iraqis will eventually "stand up;" and the inexplicable refusal to hold Defense Secretary Rumsfeld and top generals accountable for failure to plan adequately for the post-war environment and for American excesses committed during the occupation.

Third, Bush appears to define the conflict as that between absolute good and absolute evil, without nuance. This can be seen in his "Axis of Evil" pronouncement and his admonition that nations must choose between us and the terrorists. In a recent opinion piece, commentator Andrew Sullivan reflected on Bush's response to the Abu Ghraib and Haditha abuses:

"Bush spoke of Abu Ghraib as something that had somehow happened to him and to his country, almost as if he were not the Commander in Chief or President of a country that had committed such abuse...In his mind America is a force for good and so it cannot commit evil. And if he says that often enough, it will somehow become true."

Jim Wallis, editor of *Sojourners Magazine*, has noted the theological problem with this "good versus evil" dichotomy:

"In Christian theology, it is not nations that rid the world of evil, they are too often caught up in complicated webs of political power, economic interests, cultural clashes and nationalist dreams. The confrontation with evil is a role reserved for God and for the people of God when they faithfully exercise moral conscience...To confuse the role of God with that of the American nation as George Bush seems to do is a serious theological error."

Finally and unfortunately, the conviction that America represents the "good" can all too easily morph into the conviction that the ends justify the means. How else can one explain the prison camp at Guantanamo and the denial of due process to its detainees; the approval of inhumane interrogation techniques; the warrantless invasions of American privacy; and the presidential signing statement appended to the new anti-torture law which states, in effect, that the President may choose to ignore it?

When we look at Abraham Lincoln's war, do we also see a sense of detachment from the human cost, a stubborn refusal to take changing circumstances into account in formulating strategy, a

belief that the president was an instrument of divine will, and a conviction that absolute good was confronting absolute evil?

Lincoln was deeply affected by the trauma and human toll of the Civil War. He went out of his way to issue pardons to court-martialed soldiers, saying at one juncture that he was trying to evade the "butchering business." His compassion for a suffering humanity was evident both in his public proclamations during the war and in his private correspondence to survivors of the fallen.

Lincoln also adjusted his strategy during the war as circumstances dictated. During the first years of the war, he regularly dismissed generals who would not or could not fight; he instituted a military draft midway through the war; and he changed course to permit blacks to serve as combat troops. Most significantly, he came to the conclusion over time that emancipation was a necessary war measure to save the union and was consistent with the nation's highest ideals. No better evidence of Lincoln's pragmatic approach to the conflict can be found than in his reply to newspaper editor Horace Greeley's letter (prior to the Emancipation Proclamation) accusing him of fainthearted abolitionism:

"My paramount object in this struggle is to save the Union...If I could save the Union without freeing any slave, I would do it, and if I could save it by freeing all the slaves, I would do it; and if I could save it by freeing some and leaving others alone, I would also do that...I shall try to correct errors when shown to be errors; and I shall adopt new views so fast as they shall appear to be true views."

Lincoln was also fundamentally humble about his role in the war. "I plainly confess," he said, "that events have controlled me." Rather than claiming to know the divine will, he struggled throughout the war to understand God's purposes in the conflict. As historian Ronald White has said:

"Convinced of God's activity, Lincoln would never speak about God in the language of triumphalism or jingoism. He was always suspicious of visiting church delegations...who knew exactly when, where and how God was on their side."

Even in his second inaugural address, he balanced the phrase "with firmness in the right" with the humble "as God gives us to see the right." Responding by letter to a compliment on his second inaugural address, Lincoln said,

"Men are not flattered by being shown that there has been a difference of purpose between the Almighty and them...It is a truth which I thought needed to be told; and, as whatever of humiliation there is in it, falls most directly on myself, I thought others might afford for me to tell it."

Indeed, it is in the second inaugural address, delivered just six weeks before his death, that we see the culmination of Lincoln's religious insights gleaned during the war. Lincoln had concluded that although God's purposes in allowing and then prolonging the war could not be fully fathomed, the institution of slavery had been an offense against a just God. And,

astonishingly, for a president on the brink of total victory and eradication of the last vestiges of slavery, Lincoln was neither self-righteous nor overbearing toward the nearly vanquished South. Rather, he assigned blame for the war to the country as a whole, both North and South:

"If we shall suppose that American slavery is one of those offenses which, in the providence of God, must needs come, but which, having continued through his appointed time, he now wills to remove, and that he gives to both North and South, this terrible war, as the woe due to those by whom the offense came, shall we discern therein any departure from those divine attributes which the believers in a living God always ascribe to him?"

Thus, the war was the result of the American (not merely Southern) sin of slavery, an offense against both the justice of God and the truths of the Declaration of Independence. There was no notion in the address of absolute good confronting absolute evil, rather this from Lincoln:

"Both parties read the same Bible, and pray to the same God; and each invokes his aid against the other...The prayers of both could not be answered; that of neither has been answered fully. The Almighty has his own purposes."

To Lincoln, the people of the North should not claim God's blessing and endorsement for their war efforts, but should, in humility, "pray and worry earnestly whether we are on God's side." Because America as a whole had failed to live up to its own transcendent ideals, it was bound to suffer punishment for it. But it was a shared punishment and the end of the war would bring a shared redemption, with malice toward none and with charity for all.

What are we at last to make of these two very different leaders with such divergent understandings of the role of God, and of God's human agents, in their conflicts?

Bush, the orthodox Christian, while striving to be the faithful messenger of the will of God, appears instead to have succumbed to the very human sin of pride. That pride has manifested itself in a blind faith in his mission, in a stubborn resolve and refusal to admit error, and in a detachment from the "realities on the ground," all of which mask the true cost of the war in lives, in treasure, and in America's reputation.

Lincoln, the unorthodox freethinker, through years of struggle and reflection, came to an appreciation of the essential mystery of God's real presence in human affairs, a process that led him to walk humbly with his own understanding of God. This humility manifested itself most completely in his second inaugural address where Lincoln frankly acknowledged that God's purposes may be at odds with our own and spoke of healing rather than triumph.

In America's political history, there has been no greater sermon than Lincoln's second inaugural address. On the night following the address, Lincoln hosted an inaugural reception at the White House. Frederick Douglass, the runaway slave and abolitionist agitator, who at times had been a fierce critic of Lincoln, was first denied entrance to the event. He persisted however and was noticed by Lincoln in the crowd. Lincoln warmly greeted him and asked him what he had thought of the speech. Douglass demurred at first, but Lincoln insisted that he wanted Douglass' opinion. Douglass finally relented. "Mr. Lincoln," Douglass said, "that was a sacred effort."

Benediction

Now may peace be in our hearts,
and understanding in our minds,
may courage steel our wills,
and the love of truth forever guide us. Amen.

Extinguishing the Chalice

We extinguish this chalice
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.

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(NOTE: This is a manuscript version of the sermon prepared and first delivered by Jeffrey L. Schad at the Fountain Street Church in Grand Rapids, Michigan on July 9, 2006. It was repeated by the Rev. Bruce A. Bode on October 22, 2006 at the Quimper Unitarian Universalist Fellowship in Port Townsend, Washington. This print version is published with the permission of its author. The spoken sermon delivered by Rev. Bode is available on audio cassette at the Quimper Fellowship.)

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