

Miracle

1 There must be always remaining in every life, some place for the singing of angels, some place for that which in itself is breathless and beautiful. **Howard Thurman**

2 A miracle is an event which creates faith. That is the purpose and nature of miracles. Frauds deceive. An event which creates faith does not deceive: therefore it is not a fraud, but a miracle. **George Bernard Shaw**

3 The miracle is not to walk on water. The miracle is to walk on the green earth, dwelling deeply in the present moment and feeling truly alive. **Thich Nhat Hanh**

4 “Nature” is another name for the miracles that are so commonplace in our lives that we take for granted and have grown used to seeing them. **Shalom Arush**, Women’s Wisdom: ‘The Garden of Peace’ for Women

5 Whether we experience God’s power in an obviously miraculous way, such as a healing, or simply through his providential guiding of a surgeon’s hands, God is equally near to us, for “in him we live and move and have our being” (Acts 17:27-28). **Justin Holcolm**, “How Is God Working in the World? Understanding Miracles and Providence” for blog by the Gospel Coalition

6 There are only two ways to live your life. One is as though nothing is a miracle. The other is as though everything is a miracle. Often attributed to **Albert Einstein**

7 The invariable mark of wisdom is to see the miraculous in the common. **Ralph Waldo Emerson**

8 Fertilizer does no good in a heap, but a little spread around works miracles all over. **Richard Sheridan**

9 All is miracle. The stupendous order of nature, the revolution of a hundred million of worlds around a million of suns, the activity of light, the life of animals, all are grand and perpetual miracles. **Voltaire**

10 Miracles are those lovely things that you see when you shift your focus from your thoughts to the present moment. **Liam Tinker**

11 My personal preference regarding miracles is to see them as poetry, not in the realm of history and science and logic. I prefer the Augustinian view of seeing the miraculous in the regular processes of nature itself, rather than the Thomistic view of miracles happening outside of or contrary to the order of nature. I resonate to Ralph Waldo Emerson's notion that "the Highest dwells within us," although we're not usually in touch with that reality. "There is a deep power in which we exist and whose beatitude is accessible to us... It comes to the lowly and simple; it comes to whosoever will put off what is...proud; it comes as insight; it comes as security and grandeur."

Emerson does not assume that all of us will know this life force all of the time, or even some of the time. Yet, it can arrive through spiritual disciplines like meditation and prayer and through moral disciplines of character building. Then, when it comes, it seems miraculous. "When it breaks through our intellect, it is genius; when it breathes through our will, it is virtue; when it flows through our affections, it is love."

--Excerpted from **Scotty McLennan's** book, *Christ for Unitarian Universalists* (Skinner House Books)

12 [God] has written the promise of the resurrection not in books alone, but in every leaf in springtime. **Martin Luther**

13 Clouds

All afternoon, sir,
your ambassadors have been turning
into lakes and rivers.
At first they were just clouds, like any other.
Then they swelled and swirled; then they hung very still'
then they broke open. This is, I suppose,
just one of the common miracles,
a transformation, not a vision,
not an answer, not a proof, but I put it
there, close against my heart, where the need is, and it serves
the purpose. I go on, soaked through, my hair
slicked back;

like corn, or wheat, shining and useful.

Mary Oliver, from her collection of poems, *Why I Wake Early*

About Easter and the Miracle of the Resurrection

14 Easter gives us inspiration and confidence to keep working for everything that Jesus' life represented, which is that no matter how many times truth is crushed to earth, it rises again.

Rev. Edgar Peara

15 Let me leave you with a question. What if this is your last Easter? Or the last Easter you are blessed to share with someone you love? Will anything you do or feel today remain? In your heart you know the answer. Only love remains, only the love we give away remains, the rest is dross.

For you and for me, for Jesus and for Peter. . . , when death is the occasion, love is the only saving medium and forgiveness, love's most perfect catalyst. That is the message of Easter, its hope and its promise. Death doesn't conquer love, love conquers death. Those who love us live on in the love we receive. By their love we will always know them. And our own bequest of love, however imperfect, this too will outlast us. It will outlast us and it will perfect us. For not only does the love we give live on in our name. It redeems our own and saves our loved ones lives.

--**Rev. Forest Church**, from his Easter Sunday 2005 sermon at All Souls Church (Unitarian) in New York City

16 Through a historic lens, the arrest, torture, and execution of Jesus is, sadly, the most logically believable part of the Easter story. We are not surprised when empire executes those whom it cannot control.

But as Unitarian Universalists, we believe in the power of that irresistible Love, and we believe in resisting the dominion and violence of empire the way that Jesus himself did. Thus, ironically, given our usual skepticism, the truly Unitarian Universalist approach to the story of Easter may be to lift up as paramount the story's final and most unbelievable claim – the resurrection.

The resurrection – the claim of Jesus' followers that crucifixion would not, could not be the final word. The claim that you can kill Love incarnate, and roll a stone across its tomb, but Love will not be defeated. It will rise up again and again.

--**Rev. Molly Housh Gordon**, from her 2014 Easter sermon, UU Church of Columbia, MO

For Reflection and Discussion

A What is your thinking on the subject of miracles? Is belief in miracles a foundation of your spirituality? How has your thinking changed over time?

B Is Easter a holy day for you and your family? Does your observance of Easter relate to your understanding of the Resurrection of Jesus Christ?

C How does your experience of All Souls relate to your understanding of miracles?

---Mary Beth Hatem, for covenant groups at All Souls Church, Unitarian