

# Worship transcript for June 20, 2021

## Prelude (All Souls Choir)

“Sun Giant” (Fleet Foxes)

What a life I lead in the summer  
What a life I lead in the spring  
What a life I lead in the winded breeze  
What a life I lead in the spring

What a life I lead when the sun breaks free  
As a giant torn from the clouds  
What a life indeed, when that ancient seed  
Is a-buried, watered and plowed

What a life, what a life!

What a life I lead in the summer  
What a life I lead in the spring  
What a life I lead in the winded breeze  
What a life I lead in the spring

## Call to Worship (Rev. Louise Green)

Hello and welcome, from the grounds of All Souls today. I’m Rev. Louise Green, and happy to be with you on this day of Summer Solstice in the Northern Hemisphere. Poet Mary Oliver wrote this poem to the Sun, called Why I Wake Early.

Hello, sun in my face.  
Hello, you who make the morning  
and spread it over the fields  
and into the faces of the tulips  
and the nodding morning glories,  
and into the windows of, even, the  
miserable and the crotchety—

Best preacher that ever was,  
dear star, that just happens  
to be where you are in the universe  
to keep us from ever-darkness,  
to ease us with warm touching,  
to hold us in the great hands of light—  
good morning, good morning, good morning.

Watch, now, how I start the day,  
In happiness, in kindness.

Let us worship and celebrate another day, for singing and loving life together.

### **Chalice Lighting (Courtney and David Arnold)**

### **Intro to Hymn (Jen Hayman)**

### **Hymn**

“Yonder Come Day”

Yonder come day, day is a-breakin’  
Yonder come day, oh my soul  
Yonder come day, day is a-breakin’  
Sun is a-risin’ in my soul!

### **Welcome (Morgan Duncan)**

Welcome to All Souls Church! My name is Morgan Duncan, and I get to be your Worship Associate this Father’s Day morning.

Welcome to a place where, for the last two hundred years, we have been collectively striving to make our hearts more peaceful, our congregation more embracing, our community more safe and healthy and our world more just and free. I invite you to join us as we strive to build a diverse, spirit-growing, justice-seeking community true to our name, All Souls.

This welcome goes to everyone in our growing, global community, especially those of you for whom this is your first time with us – or your first time in a long time. If you’d like to be included on our mailing list, please send a Direct Message to Gary Penn, our Membership Coordinator

In an effort to acknowledge and support Indigenous communities, it is important to recognize the land on which our church stands. The closest tribe was Nacotchtank, from which the name Anacostia is derived. They were part of the Piscataway group of tribes. We acknowledge that indigenous peoples were here before us, are here with us now, and will continue to be with us, as we look forward to the future. Let’s take a moment of silence to reflect on whose land we each reside, in our individual and collective locations around the U.S. and our planet Earth.

[Silence]

We come now to our time of Beholding. As the music plays, bask in the warmth of the smiles on gallery view, and feel free to drop of message in the chat as we take a moment to enjoy the blessing of being together.

## **Announcements and Prayer (Rev. Kathleen Rolenz)**

I'm Rev. Kathleen Rolenz, serving as your interim Senior Minister and delighted to be with you this morning from the All Souls Courtyard as we welcome and celebrate the summer solstice. We hope that many of you will join us here, this afternoon from 2 – 5 pm for our Summer Solstice Stroll – a celebration of music, arts, drumming, dance, activities for children and families. Detailed information can be found in the weekly bulletin – so come on down to All Souls to see old friends and make new ones.

Just as a reminder – next Sunday you won't be logging onto All Souls website; you'll be attending worship virtually at General Assembly. The link for that service will be available by late Saturday or early Sunday morning. You can watch it at our regular worship time of 10:30 AM; or at noon. Worship at General Assembly is always inspiring so we hope you'll plan to attend.

Please note that the final registration for All Souls Summer Camp for Children, held in August is June 30th. Friends, if you are on the fence about registering your child or children, all I can say is “just do it.” It is going to be an extraordinary experience and one that you and your children don't want to miss.

Finally, our plans for re-opening and offering in-person worship again can be found on the church's website at this link: (put link in chat). It may change between now and September 12th, but right now, our plans are for one service offered both in-person and on Zoom at 10:30 <https://all-souls.org/about-us/reopening/>. We will keep you posted as we get closer to our re-opening date.

We turn now to our pastoral concerns.

Happy Father's Day – especially to all of those who have the privilege and responsibility of being a father; and we recognize and honor those men who are or have been like a father to us.

We also celebrate the creation of Juneteenth as a Federally recognized holiday. Juneteenth, a day long known but often ignored except in individual states is now taking its rightful place in our collective consciousness. All of us owe a debt of gratitude to the decades long work of those who sought to make Juneteenth a national holiday.

We are thinking of Carol Chamberlain, still in rehab from hip surgery at Stoddard Baptist Nursing Home. She is doing well and walking the hallways, according to Margery Myers who saw her this week.

There is one among us who is going through surgery for breast cancer this week; we are holding her and her family in light, love and care – praying for a full and complete recovery;

In the silence that follows, please say aloud the names of those you carry on your heart this morning.

O Spirit of Life, known to us by many names,

We pause to hold the whole of our lives in this holy moment,

For those who have fathered us – from birth, or by marriage or mentoring; those who have given us their time, their wisdom, their support and their love; we give thanks; and for those fathers for whom we have struggled to love; we offer, in this moment, a respite of grace.

For those about to become fathers, we offer you our support; for your job is no less arduous or exhilarating than your partner's;

For those fathers who have died, may the good that they engendered in us, remain as a balm and a blessing.

For the beauty of this day and for the gift of a new season, may we lift our hearts and minds in gratitude and praise. Amen.

### **Hymn 123**

“Spirit of Life”

Fuente de amor, ven hacia mi  
Y al corazon cantale tu compasion  
Sopla al volar, sube en la mar  
Hasta moldear la justicia de la vida  
Arraigame, liberame  
Fuente de amor, ven a mi, ven a mi

Spirit of life, come unto me  
Sing in my heart all the stirrings of compassion  
Blow in the wind, rise in the sea  
Move in the hand, giving life the shape of justice  
Roots hold me close, wings set me free  
Spirit of life, come to me, come to me.

### **Reading (Morgan Duncan)**

“Transcendental Etude” (Adrienne Rich)

No one ever told us we had to study our lives,  
make of our lives a study, as if learning natural history  
or music, that we should begin with the simple exercises first  
and slowly go on trying  
the hard ones, practicing ‘til strength  
and accuracy became one with the daring  
to leap into transcendence, take the chance

of breaking down the wild arpeggio  
or faulting the full sentence of the fugue.

And in fact, we can't live like that: we take on  
everything at once before we've even begun  
to read or mark time, we're forced to begin  
in the midst of the hard movement

### **Sermon (Rev. Green)**

“Singing in Community”

### **Anthem (All Souls Choir)**

“Sunday in the Park with George” (Stephen Sondheim; arr. by Mac Huff)

Sunday, by the blue, purple, yellow, red water  
On the green, purple, yellow, red grass  
Let us pass [through](#) our [perfect](#) park  
Pausing on a Sunday

By the cool, blue, [triangular](#) water  
On the soft, green, [elliptical](#) grass  
As we pass [through](#) arrangements of shadows  
Towards the [verticals](#) of trees, forever

By the blue, purple, yellow, red water  
On the green, orange, [violet](#) mass of the grass  
In our [perfect](#) park, made of [flecks](#) of light  
And dark and parasols

People [strolling](#) through the trees  
Of a [small](#) suburban park  
On an [island](#) in the river  
On an [ordinary](#) Sunday  
Sunday, Sunday, Sunday

### **Offertory (Morgan Duncan)**

My father was 40 when I was born. I missed all the early days that my sisters and brothers saw.  
By the time I was around my father was a pillar of the community.

This had not always been so.

One Saturday afternoon when I was about 11, someone rang our front doorbell. This was strange,  
as anyone who visited us regularly would have come to the door on the back porch. I was nearest

to the front door, so I opened it. There was a large, angry man standing on the porch. He said, “Go get your daddy.” Now, this wasn’t the first time an angry person had showed up at our house, my father was the housing director for our town and, two or three times in my life, folk who’d been denied public housing or been evicted came to bring their grievances to my father at his home. But, none had shown up armed. The man’s pistol was held down by his side, but that was at eye level for me at that age. I turned to find my father, only to see him walking toward the door. Even before seeing the man, he told me to close the door behind him and stay away from the windows. My father walked out and cut the man off as he began to speak, telling him he wasn’t having this conversation on his front steps and backed the man down onto the sidewalk. I did not approach the window, but I watched the man rage and I watched my father stand his ground and speak quietly until, his shoulders slumping, the man turned and walked away.

I never asked my father what it had been about, I never mentioned it at all, but a few things that had been nebulous concepts came sharply into focus for me. One, the impression that my father was not a man to be trifled with was the absolute truth. Second that I was, indeed, as safe as I felt. But more important was the realization that all my current comfort, all my present luxury and ease had been paid for by a past that I knew nothing about, a past filled with privation and struggle and a good deal of conflict.

I was much more impressed with my father and appreciative of my blessings after that encounter.

On this Father’s Day, and this Juneteenth weekend, I find myself feeling a similar appreciation for All Souls. As I stand here, once again, in this beautiful building, a building I’ve missed, I am brought to a realization of the all the struggle and sacrifice that is woven into the fabric of this church. Emancipation wasn’t created by a stroke of Abraham Lincoln’s pen or General Granger’s announcement, the freedom of America’s enslaved people was brought about by the demands of thousands of voices – many of those voices raised right here in this church long before June 19, 1865. Why the bell that we hear tolling as we walk to church was known for a while as the Abolition Bell. This church is not stranger to conflict or its costs.

I think of these things and understand my feeling of belonging and safety here. I take in the work that All Souls has been doing for the past 200 hundred years and I feel impressed. And appreciative.

This morning’s offering will now be received.

## **Hymn**

“Blue Boat Home”

Though below me I feel no motion  
Standing on these mountains and plains  
Far away from the rolling ocean  
Still my dry land heart can say:  
I’ve been sailing all my life now  
Never harbor nor port have I known

The wide universe is the ocean I travel  
And the earth is my blue boat home.

Sun my sail and moon by rudder as I ply the stormy sea  
Leaning over the edge in wonder  
Casting questions into the deep  
Drifting here with my ship's companions  
All we kindred pilgrim souls  
Making our way by the lights of the heavens  
In our beautiful blue boat home.

I give thanks to the waves upholding me  
Hail the great winds urging me on  
Meet the infinite sea before  
Sing the sky my sailor's song  
I was born upon the fathoms  
Never harbor nor port have I know  
The wide universe is the ocean I travel  
And the earth is my blue boat home.

**Benediction (Rev. Green)**

**Music (All Souls Choir)**

“To My Old Brown Earth” (Pete Seeger; arr. by Paul Halley)

To my old brown earth and to my old blue sky  
I now give these last few molecules of ‘I’  
And you who sing and you who stand nearby  
I do charge you not to cry  
Guard well our human chain,  
Watch well you keep it strong  
As long as sun will shine  
And this, our home  
Keep pure and sweet and green  
For now I'm yours  
And you are also mine